

Nash sovremennik 1981-1991:

A case study in the politics of

Soviet literature

with special reference to Russian nationalism

98

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## Abstract

This study of the Moscow-based, Russian-language 'thick' journal, *Nash sovremennik*, with special reference to Russian nationalism, in the last decade of the Soviet polity (1981-1991), is based on a distinction between popular and statist Russian nationalist tendencies. In the conditions of an 'imperial state', such as the Soviet Union, it is argued, nationalist ideology exhibited a strong polarisation between a 'popular' tendency, oriented towards the idea of the nation; and a 'statist' tendency, oriented towards the state. The exigencies of Soviet politics meant that both popular and statist nationalist tendencies appeared in the journal in 'truncated' form: the popular nationalist tendency lacked an idea of statehood appropriate to its vision of the nation; and the statist tendency was inhibited from advocating a policy of thorough-going cultural Russification, appropriate to its views of the state. In the Gorbachev period, while Westernising policies tended to make nationalists of both types oppose reform, the issue of the state was fundamental in determining the conservative political orientation of nationalists.

There are five conclusions of the study, with regard to the period 1981-1991: 1 *Nash sovremennik* played an important role in the articulation of Russian nationalist ideology; 2 the publication policy of *Nash sovremennik* was strongly influenced by the appointments to the key internal posts, not only of chief editor, but also of deputy chief editor; 3 conservative political elites in the Soviet Union sought to use nationalist ideology to control and limit reform; 4 Russian nationalist ideology was characterised by a marked polarity between statist and popular tendencies; 5 the 'imperial' nature of the Soviet state, and the ethnic heterogeneity of Soviet elites and masses alike, made Russian nationalist ideology unsuitable, as an ideological instrument, for Soviet political elites.



# CONTENTS

<i>Abstract</i>	2
<i>Contents</i>	3
<i>A Note on the Text</i>	4
<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>	5
<i>Chapter 2: The Brezhnev Succession Crisis &amp; the Russian Challenge</i>	59
<i>Chapter 3: Yurii Andropov: Russian Nationalist Ideology Suppressed</i>	104
<i>Chapter 4: From Chernenko to Gorbachev: Continuity &amp; Change in a Time of Leadership Transition</i>	145
<i>Chapter 5: Aleksandr Yakovlev &amp; the 'Cultural Offensive'</i>	189
<i>Chapter 6: Ligachev &amp; the Conservative Counter-Offensive.</i>	229
<i>Chapter 7: Chief Editor Kunyaev: from Gorbachev to El'tsin.</i>	278
<i>Chapter 8: Conclusions</i>	329
<i>Appendix: Editorial Structures and Policy-making</i>	374
<i>Sources &amp; Bibliography</i>	397
<i>Interviews</i>	397
<i>Archives</i>	403
<i>Newspapers</i>	403
<i>Journals</i>	403
<i>Books &amp; Articles</i>	404



## A Note on the Text

The system of transliteration is modified Library of Congress, using 'ya' (not 'ia') for 'я', and 'yu' (not 'iu') for 'ю', as in the journal *Europe-Asia Studies*. All personal names are also transliterated according to this system.

All translations are the author's, unless otherwise indicated.

In references to journals, the model used is: "M. Antonov, 'Sluzhenie zemle', NS, No. 1, 1983, pp. 125-38". Where the reference is to more than one issue in a year, the year comes last, as in: "M. Antonov, 'Vykhod est'!", NS, No. 8, pp. 71-110; No. 9, pp. 139-62, 1989".

### Abbreviations

CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
GKChP	Gosudarstvennyi komitet po chrezvychainomu polozeniyu (The State Committee for the State of Emergency)
IMEMO	Institut mirovoi ekonomiki i mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii (Institute of World Economy and International Relations [of the USSR Academy of Sciences])
IMLI	Institut mirovoi literatury imeni Gor'kogo (The Gor'kii Institute of World Literature)
KGB	Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti (Committee of State Security)
MVD	Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del (Ministry of Internal Affairs)
NEP	New Economic Policy
NKVD	Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennykh del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs)
NS	<i>Nash sovremennik</i> (Our Contemporary)
TASS	Telegrafnoe agentsvo Sovetskogo Soyuza (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union)
TsDL	Tsentr'al'nyi dom literatorov (The Central House of Writers)
TsKhSD	Tsentr khraneniya sovremennoi dokumentatsii (Centre of Preservation of Contemporary Documentation)
VOOPIK	Vserossiiskoe obshchestvo okhraneniya pamyatnikov istorii i kul'tury (All-Russian Society for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture)
VSKhSON	Vserossiiskii Sotsial-Khristianskii Soyuz Osvobozhdeniya Naroda (All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Freedom of the People)
ZhZL	Zhizn' zamechatel'nykh lyudei (The Life of Remarkable People - a series of biographical works published by the Molodaya gvardiya publishing house)



# 1. Introduction

## The Hypotheses

This study of the Moscow-based, Russian-language 'thick' journal, *Nash sovremennik* in the last decade of the Soviet polity has five hypotheses:

1 *Nash sovremennik (1981-1991) played an important role in the articulation of Russian nationalist ideology.*

2 *The publication policy of Nash sovremennik was strongly influenced by the appointments to the key internal posts, not only of chief editor, but also of deputy chief editor.*

3 *In 1981-1991, conservative political elites in the Soviet Union sought to use nationalist ideology to control and limit reform.*

4 *Russian nationalist ideology was characterised by a marked polarity between statist and popular tendencies.*

5 *The 'imperial' nature of the Soviet state, and the ethnic heterogeneity of Soviet elites and masses alike,*

made Russian nationalist ideology unsuitable as an ideological instrument for Soviet political elites.

## An Approach to Nationalism

The contemporary literature on nationalism may be classified in terms of three broad types of approach to the definition of the nation. These define the nation, respectively, in terms of 1) characteristic features; 2) historical innovation; and 3) historical continuity.

1) *The Characteristic Features of the Nation* Two types of view can be distinguished within this general current. One argues that a satisfactory definition of the nation can be given by focusing on the generally *non-political* aspects of cultural homogeneity. For example, Geoffrey Hosking, in his recent work *Russia: Empire and People*, has defined the nation as:

a large, territorially extended and socially differentiated aggregate of people who share a sense of a common fate or of belonging together, which we call nationhood.<sup>1</sup>

John Hutchinson, in his study of nationalism in Ireland, argues that:

the essence of a nation is its distinctive civilisation, which is the product of its unique history, culture and geographical profile.<sup>2</sup>

A second type of view gives equal weight to *political* factors. James Kellas, for example, notes that nations are 'culturally or politically defined'<sup>3</sup>. Hobsbawm has observed that 'all nationalism not already identified with

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<sup>1</sup>G. Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*, HarperCollins, London, 1997, p. xx.

<sup>2</sup>J. Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, Allen & Unwin, London, 1987, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>J. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Macmillan, Basingstoke & London, 1991, p. 4 (emphasis added).

a state necessarily *became* political'<sup>4</sup>. Anthony Smith has included political factors in a defining list of elements, which also includes cultural aspects:

A nation can therefore be defined as a *named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.*<sup>5</sup>

Other writers have sought to give a more exclusively political definition of the nation. For Max Weber, the nation is:

[...] a community of sentiment which would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own; hence a nation is a community which normally tends to produce a state of its own.<sup>6</sup>

2) *The Nation - a New Historical Phenomenon* A second approach places the nation and nationalism in historical perspective as products of processes of economic, social and political modernisation in Western Europe. Two leading exponents of variants of this view are Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner. Anderson stresses the historically innovative and contingent nature of the nation, in his words a 'cultural artefact of a particular kind'. The nation, in his much-quoted phrase the 'imagined community', is a product, he argues, of new forms of social production, organisation and perception:

[...] the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p. 96 (emphasis added).

<sup>5</sup>A. Smith, *National Identity*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1991, p. 14 (emphasis in original).

<sup>6</sup>M. Weber, 'Structures of Power: The Nation', in H. Gerth & C. Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1947, p. 176.

<sup>7</sup>B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 49.



Anderson also argues that the nation, the 'imagined community', is above all 'an imagined *political* community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'<sup>9</sup>.

Gellner shares the view of the nation as a product of particular processes of modernisation and industrialisation, and therefore 'a contingency, and not a universal necessity'<sup>10</sup>. He defines nationalism (a term he uses as a synonym for 'nation') as:

[...] that generalised diffusion of a school-mediated, academy-supervised idiom, codified for the requirements of reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication. It is the establishment of an anonymous, impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomised individuals, held together above all by a shared culture of this kind, in place of a previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by cultures reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves.<sup>11</sup>

3) *The Nation - Continuity* A third school argues that, for all its strength in nineteenth-century Europe, the antecedents of nationalism are strong. Both John Armstrong and Anthony Smith, in different ways, have sought to show the 'pre-national' roots of the nation. Smith has examined nations as 'historical processes that possess continuity and require a serviceable past'<sup>12</sup>. He has written: 'If there was no model of past ethnicity and no pre-existent *ethnie*, there could be neither nations nor nationalism'<sup>13</sup>. This continuity, Smith argues, is embodied in the concept of national identity. 'The communal past', he has written, 'defines to a large extent our identity, which in turn

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<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15 (emphasis added).

<sup>10</sup>E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford & London, 1983, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>12</sup>A. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford & Cambridge, Mass., 1986, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 214.

helps to determine collective goals and destinies'<sup>14</sup>. National identity, in Smith's view, is the 'main form of collective identification', providing 'the dominant criterion of culture and identity, the sole principle of government and the chief focus of social and economic activity' in the contemporary world<sup>15</sup>. Armstrong has investigated 'patterns of identity that directly affected developments through long periods of time', and which explain 'why such nations as the French, the Spanish [...] exist today'<sup>16</sup>. Liah Greenfeld has also traced the historical development of national identity in selected Western countries, and in Russia<sup>17</sup>.

### Challenging Nationalist Ideology

In my view, these three types of 'definition of the nation' are, in fact, better considered as descriptions enriching our understanding of the multifaceted nation-state. The approach to nationalism I shall adopt is based on a distinction between the *nation-state* as a particular model of political, social and economic life, and *nationalist ideology* as a view of the world and the purposes of politics.

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<sup>14</sup>A. Smith, 'The Nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed?', in M. Ringrose & A. Lerner (eds.), *Reimagining the Nation*, Open University Press, Buckingham & Philadelphia, 1993, p. 16.

<sup>15</sup>Smith, *National Identity*, p. 170.

<sup>16</sup>J. Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1982, p. 287.

<sup>17</sup>L. Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., & London, 1995 (see, in particular, pp. 6, 7 & 10).

## The Nation-State

If, in nationalist ideology, the nation-state is, to use Anthony Smith's phrase, the 'nationalist ideal'<sup>18</sup>, for the non-nationalist, 'nation-state' is a term designating something in the historical record, namely specific political, social and economic formations which arose in western Europe from the eighteenth century onwards (initially, in France and Britain). In this latter sense, the nation-state fits well into the taxonomy of human communities identified by historians and political scientists, which includes the tribe, the city-state and the empire<sup>19</sup>.

From the literature, I would argue that eleven key elements in the development of the west European 'nation-state' can be distinguished:

1. The growth of centralised state power.<sup>20</sup>
2. The development of contiguous territory and defined borders.<sup>21</sup>
3. Relations with neighbouring states, characterised by conflict, communication and mutual recognition.<sup>22</sup>
4. A relatively strong civil society, as distinct from the state, which has a legal monopoly on the means of coercion.<sup>23</sup>
5. A marked trend to cultural homogenisation of population groups within these borders, including

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<sup>18</sup>A. Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1979, pp. 2-3.

<sup>19</sup>See, for example, the typology developed by Eisenstadt in S. Eisenstadt, *The Political System of Empires*, Free Press, Glencoe, 1963.

<sup>20</sup>Armstrong, *Nations Before Nationalism*, p. 157.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10, 158; Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, p. 130.

<sup>22</sup>A. Smith, 'War and ethnicity: the role of warfare in the formation, self-images and cohesion of ethnic communities', in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 4, October 1981, pp. 375-397.

<sup>23</sup>M. Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe. A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*, trans. Ben Fowkes, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, p. 8.



language, religion, communications (especially the press) and economic life.<sup>24</sup>

6. A strong rationalist influence in all realms of social life, accompanied by a decline in religious belief.<sup>25</sup>

7. The growth of material wealth in civil society, accompanied by powerful processes of economic modernisation.<sup>26</sup>

8. The rise of democratic ideology and politics.<sup>27</sup>

9. The growth of *national consciousness*, a new kind of social and political consciousness, giving special recognition both to the borders of the political state and to the cultural identity of the population-community within them<sup>28</sup>. One element of national consciousness can be the affective identification of the individual with the nation-state, denoted as *national identity*.<sup>29</sup>

10. The prominent role played by *nationalist ideology*, which 1) identifies (imagines) the 'nation'; 2) legitimises the 'national' state; 3) provides a nationalist historiography; and 4) contributes a language for justifying policy and political action.<sup>30</sup>

11. The rise of *nationalism*, i.e. the use of nationalist ideology by political actors and movements to influence and win control of state power.<sup>31</sup>

## The Definition of the Nation

In my interpretation, then, the nation is a *concept of nationalist ideology*, and nationalist ideology is one aspect of the development of the nation-state. A similar view has been put forward by John Breuilly. Breuilly has pointed to the importance of the relationship between nationalism and political power:

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<sup>24</sup>Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 44; Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 37-39.

<sup>25</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 19; Gellner, *op. cit.* pp. 19-21; Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, second edition, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1993, p. 379.

<sup>26</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, p. 131-3.

<sup>27</sup>Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, pp. 83, 88.

<sup>28</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>29</sup>Greenfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-21; Smith, *National Identity*, pp. 1-18.

<sup>30</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16; Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p. 382; Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-100.

<sup>31</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p. 382.

[...] the fundamental point [is] that nationalism is, above and beyond all else, about politics and that politics is about power. Power, in the modern world, is principally about control of the state. The central task is to relate nationalism to the objectives of obtaining and using state power.<sup>32</sup>

Breuilly argues that the term 'nation' needs to be understood within the context of the 'nationalist arguments' developed as justifications by nationalist 'political movements seeking or exercising state power'<sup>33</sup>. In Breuilly's interpretation then, the 'nation' is less an objective social phenomenon than a hypothetical term in an *argument* put forward by nationalists within the terms of nationalist ideology<sup>34</sup>. Unlike the nation-state, therefore, nationalist ideology and its creation, the idea of the nation, cannot be approached by asking the question, is it (are they) true or false?<sup>35</sup> They are better approached by asking for what purposes, and by whom, are they being used?

This in no way diminishes the significance of nationalist ideology and the nation. Alter, for example, has rightly described nationalism as:

a largely dynamic principle capable of engendering hopes, emotions and action; it is a vehicle for activating human beings and creating political solidarity amongst them for the purposes of achieving a common goal.<sup>36</sup>

Nationalist mythology, therefore, like other political mythologies, is important and powerful, regardless of whether it is 'true' or not.

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<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2. These arguments, in Breuilly's view, are threefold: 'a) There exists a nation with an explicit national character. b) The interests and values of this nation take priority over all other interests and values. c) The nation must be as independent as possible. This usually means at least the attainment of political sovereignty' (*ibid.*).

<sup>34</sup>For a similar view, see Gellner, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>35</sup>Armstrong has defined the nationalist myth as 'a coherent, strongly held identity belief, without implication as to its truth or falsity' (Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 292).

<sup>36</sup>P. Alter, *Nationalism*, second edition, Edward Arnold, London, 1994, p. 4.

## Two Functions: Two Myths

In my view, two distinct aspects of the concept of the nation in nationalist ideology can be distinguished. These may be considered as two 'myths': Myth 1) identification of a hypothetical homogeneous human population as the nation; Myth 2) provision of an argument for the legitimacy of the state (i.e. that, for a state to be legitimate, it must be the state of a particular nation).

### **Myth 1: Identification of a hypothetically homogeneous human population as a nation, or 'Identifying the Nation'.**

The nationalist concept of the 'nation' depends upon the premise that there are certain objective and permanent characteristics of a population group which, if present, allow it to be defined as a nation. Typical criteria for identification of a population group as a 'nation' are factors generating social homogeneity, for example genetic make-up, social custom, language, religion, history and social and political institutions.

Nationalist pretensions to a pseudo-scientific objectivity, however, run up against the difficulty of providing a generally accepted list of such criteria. This points to what may be called the key *psychological* aspect of nationalist ideology: to adapt Anderson's phrase, the nationalist does not define the nation as such, but rather *imagines* it, and invites others to do so<sup>37</sup>. Anderson himself writes:

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<sup>37</sup>Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 15.



In fact, all communities larger than the primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even them) are imagined. [...] Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.<sup>38</sup>

It is this 'deep, horizontal comradeship' which gives this aspect of nationalism its 'popular' nature. It also explains the importance of the arts, especially literature, in the rise of nationalist ideology. Miroslav Hroch has pointed to the special role in the development of nationalism played by intellectuals, especially writers, painters, musicians and historians, who share 'a passionate concern [...] for the study of the language, the culture, the history of the oppressed nationality'<sup>39</sup>.

Yet clearly, 'imagining the nation' needs some basis, some raw material, upon which to work. Following Fredrik Barth, Armstrong has suggested adopting a 'social interaction model of ethnic identity that does not posit a fixed "character" or "essence" for the group, but examines the perceptions of its members which distinguish them from other groups'<sup>40</sup>. This 'boundary approach', Armstrong argues (according to which an ethnic group is defined 'by exclusion'), 'clearly implies that ethnicity is a bundle of shifting interactions rather than a nuclear component of social organisation'<sup>41</sup>.

The boundary approach also explains certain ambiguities inherent in the phenomenon of nationalism, noted by many

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<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>39</sup>M. Hroch, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>40</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 4. See F. Barth, 'Introduction', in F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Universitets Forlaget, Bergen & Oslo; George Allen & Unwin, London, 1970, pp. 9-10.

<sup>41</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

writers<sup>42</sup>. Firstly, making the definition of the nation dependent on the perceptions of community members gives nationalism a profoundly *popular* aspect. However, in practice, in this view the existence of group identity - or a claimed identity - presumes the existence of 'an elite with the communications and bargaining skills needed to legitimise the boundary mechanisms'<sup>43</sup>. There is, then, a tension between *popular* and *elitist* elements in nationalist ideology.

Secondly, boundary mechanisms are open to interpretation in two distinct ways, which might be described as 'positive' and 'negative'. A 'positive' interpretation of a boundary mechanism is when group members believe the group is distinguished by a feature, or features, which members of the group *have in common with each other*. A 'negative' interpretation of a boundary mechanism treats the *distinguishing* feature as belonging to 'the Other' - in other words, something *not shared by the group in question but typical of members of another group*. For example, a religious boundary mechanism, interpreted positively, could define a community as 'those who are of the Orthodox faith'. A negative interpretation of the same boundary mechanism could define the community as 'those who are not Jews, Catholics or Protestants (etc.)'.

Thirdly, and more specifically, Breuilly has argued that 'only in relation to the requirements of political action does nationalist ideology tend to become specific,

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<sup>42</sup>Alter, *Nationalism*, p. 58. Anthony Smith has referred to the 'protean variety' of nationalism (Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, p. 13).

<sup>43</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

outlining clear objectives and targeting potential supporters'". Nationalist 'boundary mechanisms' are open to interpretation by political thinkers and activists of widely differing positions on the left-right political spectrum. A corollary is, as Walter Laqueur has remarked, that 'Nationalism *pur sang* does not have a specific economic and social doctrine'<sup>45</sup>. Breuilly suggests that the student of nationalism should focus less on what nationalist ideology says, than on how it can be used by political leaders and elites. He suggests three such functions: co-ordination between political elites; mobilisation of public support; and legitimisation vis à vis the international state system<sup>46</sup>.

**Myth 2: Provision of an argument for the legitimacy of the state (i.e. that, for a state to be legitimate, it must be the state of a particular nation) or 'Legitimising the State'.**

Nationalist ideology provides an argument for the legitimacy of the state: the state is judged legitimate if it reflects the attributes, needs and desires of a previously defined nation<sup>47</sup>. The nationalist claims that particular population groups, namely nations, deserve to have 'their own', and therefore legitimate, states.

There are three chief problems with this nationalist view. Firstly, the nationalist assertion that there is only *one type* of population group for which there can be

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<sup>45</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p. 382.

<sup>46</sup>W. Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, HarperCollins, London, 1993, p. x.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 181-190.

<sup>48</sup>Alter, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Gellner, *op. cit.*, p. 1.



legitimate government, namely the 'nation', is open to question. The notion of political legitimacy implies the consent of the governed for the political system in which they live: historical experience shows that a wide variety of political systems can enjoy legitimacy among a large number of different population groups. As John Breuilly has noted:

There is no cultural or any other non-political unit of humanity which can be regarded as the true basis of legitimate politics.<sup>48</sup>

Secondly, a nationalist response by elites to the difficulties encountered in defining the nation, is to turn the nationalist argument on its head and begin with the idea that the state is legitimate. In these terms, the goal of the nationalist then becomes to 'fit' the nation into the legitimate state. This 'statist' version of nationalism, therefore, begs the question of whether the claimed 'nation' really is a nation. The circularity of this nationalist argument deprives it of much of its intellectual force. Its appeal, however, as political experience shows, derives from the strength of the state which it seeks to legitimise.

Thirdly, the nationalist myth of political legitimacy creates a conceptual framework for a nationalist historiography, according to which history tells how nations acquire their own states in a process of more-or-less conscious struggle. Studies of the development of nation-states, however, show the mythic nature of this claim. John Armstrong, for example, in his study of France,

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<sup>48</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

has demonstrated how the creation of the French nation-state was not the story of how a 'nation' achieved statehood, but rather of how the bureaucratic state played a crucial role in the formation of the French nation-state<sup>49</sup>. As Uri Ra'anán has written of France and Britain:

In a sense, it was these new states that assisted the process of creating modern French and British nations, rather than the other way around [...].<sup>50</sup>

Anthony Smith has provided a *popular*, as opposed to *statist*, version of this process. He has identified three distinct types of social formation, each of which, he argues, represents a stage in the development of the nation-state. The first of these is the *ethnie*, a form of collective social life, not necessarily political, which exhibits a certain degree of homogeneity<sup>51</sup>. Smith distinguishes two types of *ethnie* - the 'lateral-aristocratic' and the 'vertical demotic'<sup>52</sup> - which can give rise to the second type of social formation, what he calls an 'ethnic state' - a state in which the majority of the population are incorporated into a single *ethnie*, and the culture and symbolism of the dominant *ethnie* become the culture and symbolism of the state<sup>53</sup>. The aristocratic *ethnie* creates an ethnic state by using the levers of state power to homogenise the state's population; the demotic *ethnie* does so by struggling against an existing state.

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<sup>49</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 129, 158, 198-9.

<sup>50</sup>U. Ra'anán, 'Nation and state: order out of chaos', in U. Ra'anán, M. Mesner, K. Ames & K. Martin, (eds.), *State and Nation in Multi-Ethnic Societies: The Break-up of Multinational States*, Manchester University Press, Manchester & New York, 1991, p. 11.

<sup>51</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations.*, pp. 22-31. Smith adopts the French term *ethnie* because it 'unites an emphasis upon cultural differences with the sense of an historical community' (pp. 21-22). Smith argues the *ethnie* has six typical components: a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a distinctive shared culture, an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity (p. 89).

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 76-89.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 89-91.

Smith argues that ethnic states were subsequently transformed into the third type of social formation, nation-states, by the processes of modernisation, which he describes in terms of the impact of the 'triple revolution' in the division of labour, the control of administration and cultural co-ordination<sup>54</sup>.

### Two Nationalist Ideological Tendencies

Two nationalist ideological tendencies can be defined related to the two myths outlined above. A tendency oriented towards 'Myth 1' ('Identifying the Nation') can be denoted as *popular*. A second tendency, oriented towards 'Myth 2' ('Legitimising the State'), can be denoted as *statist*.

In practice, as noted above, nationalists invariably encounter difficulties in both 'defining the nation' and 'legitimising the state'. As Gellner has pithily summarised, 'Nationalism is primarily a political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent'<sup>55</sup>. Or, as Alter has written:

There should be perfect congruence between political and ethno-cultural unity; the unity of the cultural nation should not be impaired by political borders.<sup>56</sup>

However, in reality the political and the national units (respectively, the state and the hypothetical population-as-nation) are frequently *not* congruent. As Ra'anana has observed:

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>55</sup>Gellner, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>Alter, *loc. cit.*



[...] genuine 'nation-states', far from constituting the rule on the contemporary political map, remain an exceptional phenomenon - if a high degree of ethnic homogeneity and congruity between the geographic outlines of the state and nation are regarded as the primary criteria of the 'nation-state'.<sup>57</sup>

Two reactions to this incongruence can be identified. In the *popular* nationalist tendency, if the state does not correspond to the (hypothetical) nation, then the state is rejected as illegitimate, and must either be destroyed or reformed. Smith calls adherents of such a *popular* view 'ethnicists', defining them as those who 'see the nation as a large, politicised ethnic group, defined by common culture and alleged descent'<sup>58</sup>. In general, popular nationalists, therefore, tend to stress *positive* interpretations of boundary mechanisms (as features held in common by the group) in their attempt to affirm the place of their *ethnie* in the world, and its right to a political state.

In the *statist* nationalist tendency, difficulties encountered in reconciling nation and state are resolved in favour of the state. *Statist* nationalist ideologists, therefore, tend to accept an existing state as legitimate, and generally seek to define, or create, the nation as the *population within state borders*<sup>59</sup>. Statist nationalism, therefore, tends to occur in what Smith has called 'state-nations', 'political formations with de facto sovereignty, i.e. states, which do not (yet) possess [...] cultural differentiae and in-group sentiment'<sup>60</sup>. The prerequisite of

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<sup>57</sup>Ra'anan, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>58</sup>Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 176.

<sup>59</sup>Smith writes: 'Statists define the nation as a territorial-political unit' (*ibid.*).

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 189.

statist nationalism is therefore cultural homogenisation. The attempt to create, or manipulate, ethnic boundary mechanisms in order to generate 'in-group sentiment' means that the statist nationalist tends to be attracted to negative interpretations of boundary mechanisms: when a population group lacks characteristic features of its own, these may be generated by contrasting the group with 'the Other'.

What Anderson has described as 'official nationalism' can be said to be a form of statist nationalism typical of some imperial polities, which arises as a result of the 'willed merger of nation and dynastic empire'<sup>61</sup>:

[Official nationalism is] a means for combining naturalisation with retention of dynastic power, in particular over the huge polyglot domains accumulated since the Middle Ages; or, to put it another way, for stretching the short, tight skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire.<sup>62</sup>

When adopted by rulers or ruling elites, statist nationalist ideology, as 'official nationalism', could be, as Hobsbawm has remarked, 'an enormously powerful asset of government, it could be integrated into state patriotism, to become its central emotional component'<sup>63</sup>. A major problem, confronted by multi-ethnic states seeking to manipulate nationalism, however, is the potential for antagonism between the *Staatsvolk*, or dominant, eponymous *ethnie* in the empire-state, and other communities which refuse to be assimilated<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 82-3.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 93.

## Nationalism Beyond the Nation-State

The rise of the nation-state in the eighteenth century in western Europe gave vast political and economic power, as well as cultural prestige and influence, to Britain and France<sup>65</sup>, 'national states' which exhibited a generally high level of congruence between 'nation' and state<sup>66</sup>. As a result of these developments, other states and populations were presented both with a serious military, economic and cultural challenge, and a highly attractive model for future development. It was, in Anderson's phrase, a model 'available for pirating'<sup>67</sup>.

The aspiration, in societies quite different from Britain and France, to enjoy the benefits of a nation-state prompted the adoption of nationalist ideology in these societies, which, in turn, motivated many to attempt to create their own 'nation-state'. Indeed, Gellner has forcefully noted: 'It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round'<sup>68</sup>. Thus, as Ra'anan has observed, 'multi-ethnic states, rather than posing an obstacle, constitute a breeding ground for the growth of nationalist manifestations'<sup>69</sup>.

However, nationalists in non-nation-states perceived very sharply the inherent lack of congruence in their societies between state and (hypothetical) nation. This marked disjunction resulted in a further development of the inherent tension in nationalist ideology between *statist*

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<sup>65</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p.380; Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, p. 131.

<sup>66</sup>Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 178.

<sup>67</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>68</sup>Gellner, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>69</sup>Ra'anan, *op. cit.*, p. 7.



and *popular* tendencies. *Popular* nationalists claimed that putative nations, having resisted the homogenising influence of alien states, to which they had been subordinated, should forge their own states<sup>70</sup>. *Statist* nationalists, on the contrary, claimed that populations within existing state borders in fact constituted nations, and advocated programmes of cultural homogenisation to confirm this claim.

## Russia & Nationalism

Russia is an example of a non-Western country in which Western social and political thought has had a powerful impact<sup>71</sup>. Despite this, Russia has remained, in terms of political, social and economic development, very different from the nation-states of the West. The differences can be summarised in terms of the 'eleven aspects' of the nation-state outlined above.

1. *The growth of centralised state power.* By the sixteenth century, like the proto-nation-states of Western Europe, Russia had acquired a relatively strong, centralised state with a bureaucracy and army. Orthodox Christianity, adopted from Byzantium at the end of the tenth century, allowed Russian rulers to strengthen their position and modernise their state. Yet in Russia, coercion remained a more persistent and important element in state-society relations than in the West. Hosking has identified the cause of this in that Russia was 'a state which was

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<sup>70</sup>Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3.

<sup>71</sup>See, for example, Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, pp. 250-274.

straining itself beyond what the resources of land and people would bear at the current level of technology'<sup>72</sup>.

2. *The development of contiguous territory and defined borders.* Unlike the Western powers of France and Britain, the Russian state (Muscovy) developed in a geographical situation in which territorial expansion, in particular to the south and east, was not only possible but, from the point of view of security, also necessary. Russia therefore found itself on the path to empire at an early stage in its development<sup>73</sup>. It was, moreover, an empire in which the distinction between metropolitan centre and colonies was weak<sup>74</sup>. 'At all times', writes Hosking, 'the survival of the empire and the maintenance of its territorial integrity were the paramount priorities for Russia's rulers, before which national, religious, economic and other priorities invariably yielded'<sup>75</sup>. This persisted into the Soviet period. As Richard Pipes has noted, 'underneath the façade of an amicable comity of nations the Soviet Union was really an empire'<sup>76</sup>.

3. *Relations with neighbouring states, characterised by conflict, communication and mutual recognition.* In their formative period, the nation-states of Western Europe fought with each other without any participant achieving final victory. The states' efforts to mobilise resources for warfare tended to homogenise their populations<sup>77</sup>. The

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<sup>72</sup>Hosking, *Russia: People & Empire, 1552-1917*, p. 106.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 3-8.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>76</sup>R. Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., & London, 1997, p. vii.

<sup>77</sup>Smith, 'War and Ethnicity: the role of warfare in the formation, self-images and cohesion of ethnic communities', pp. 378-9.

failure to conquer, and subdue or absorb, the neighbouring states led, often reluctantly, to mutual acceptance as equals.

The Russian state experienced wars no less than its western counterparts. Yet, crucially, Russia was successful in incorporating many of her neighbours. As a result of the empire's expansion, a sense of Russia being 'a state among equals' was weak among Russian imperial political elites.

This was compounded by the uniqueness of the Russian Orthodox Church. As Pipes has noted:

But whereas Catholicism, and, since the sixteenth century, Protestantism, were transnational faiths - that is, faiths which embraced all their adherents regardless of ethnic affiliation or state allegiance - Orthodoxy was a national religion, inseparable from the Russian people and their monarch.<sup>78</sup>

The combination of successful imperial expansion with a sense of religious uniqueness meant that, between Russia and other states, there tended to develop relations of mutual reserve and suspicion. The result was a tendency to isolation, which reached its apogee in the Soviet period, when an Iron Curtain separated the USSR from the Western world.

4. *A relatively strong civil society, as distinct from the state which has a legal monopoly on the means of coercion.* Risto Alapuro has defined civil society as 'people's capacity to act jointly and in a sustained and regulated way to influence the government'<sup>79</sup>. The growth of

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<sup>78</sup>R. Pipes, 'The Historical Evolution of Russian National Identity', in S. Gustavsson & L. Lewin (eds.), *The Future of the Nation State. Essays on Cultural Pluralism and Political Integration*, Routledge, London & New York, 1996, p. 134.

<sup>79</sup>R. Alapuro, 'Civil Society in Russia?', in J. Iivonen (ed.), *The Future of the Nation State in Europe*, Edward Elgar, Aldershot & Brookfield, Vermont, 1993, p. 198.



autocracy in Russia and the transformation of the traditional Russian nobility into a service class<sup>80</sup>, together with the prevalence of serfdom and the weakness of the commercial classes, meant that civil society, a precondition of the development of nationalism<sup>81</sup>, was less well developed than in the archetypal nation-states. The generally slow pace of economic development in Russia and the state-led 'leaps' in modernisation tended to expand the institutions of the state at the expense of civil society. Russia lacked, as Pipes has argued, a sufficiently large group within the population which felt itself to be 'a community of individuals who, in addition to speaking the same language and professing the same faith, enjoyed the same civil rights'<sup>82</sup>. The fact that, in Pipes's words, 'four-fifths of Russia's population [were] estranged from the political, economic and social elite' clearly hampered the development of a sense of nationhood<sup>83</sup>.

5. *A marked trend to cultural homogenisation of population groups within these borders, including language, religion, communications (especially the press) and economic life.* In the fifteenth century, the defeat of the Mongols seemed to promise the advent of a relatively homogeneous Russian polity. Thereafter, the increasingly bureaucratic state exercised a powerful, socially homogenising influence, waging external wars, regulating internal conflicts, defining territorial boundaries and sponsoring education. The Orthodox church was a second

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<sup>80</sup>Greenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>81</sup>Hroch, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>82</sup>Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 141.

powerful homogenising influence<sup>84</sup>. From the eighteenth century, the printed Russian language was standardised and reading publics came into being, two factors identified by Anderson as vital for the creation of 'imagined communities'<sup>85</sup>.

However, cultural homogeneity was limited as the expansion of the empire made the population increasingly heterogeneous, a development reflected in the make-up of the Russian imperial administration<sup>86</sup>. Two other factors deserve to be noted. Firstly, the maintenance of serfdom and weak economic development failed to homogenise existing Russian social classes<sup>87</sup>. Secondly, the Europeanisation of Russian elites deepened their separation from the rest of society<sup>88</sup>. This was reinforced by the desire of the elites to use Western education to 'mark off their social standing against competitors from below'<sup>89</sup>.

*6. A strong rationalist influence in all realms of social life, accompanied by a decline in religious belief.* In Russia, secularisation was generally the result of the state's search for rationalisation and efficiency, epitomised by Peter the Great. Secularisation was limited in its impact, however, and for three particular reasons. Firstly, the elites of Russian society tended to be most affected by secularisation, while the gulf between the elite and the mass of the population, which remained largely outside the rationalising influences of the state

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<sup>84</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-3.

<sup>85</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>86</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-2.

<sup>87</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>88</sup>J. Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1966, p. 209.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 219; Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

and education, deepened. Secondly, the power of an unreformed Orthodox Church remained strong, but increasingly distant from the state-sponsored culture. Thirdly, secularisation was closely linked to the spread of education and to the influence of Western culture. Secularisation and cultural Europeanisation, in an economically backward country, tended to alienate the educated elements in society from their social and political environment, thus reducing the impact of secularisation.

7. *The growth of material wealth in civil society, accompanied by powerful processes of economic modernisation.* In Russia economic development was slow. The empire, generally, had a low level of urbanisation<sup>90</sup>. When modernisation did make substantial progress, it tended to take a state-led, idiosyncratic form. Such modernisation 'from above', whether under Peter I or Stalin, was rapid and brutal, favouring bureaucrats rather than entrepreneurs. It tended to increase the gulf between the elite and the masses, and in the long run to reproduce the backwardness it was intended to overcome.

8. *The rise of democratic, civic ideology and politics.* In imperial Russia, rule by an autocracy, closely associated with an aristocracy and a bureaucracy, was not ameliorated or replaced by effective institutions of representative government.

Political authority remained in its traditional mould, largely unchallenged by a weak middle class. In the West,

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<sup>90</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 96.



the rise of the commercial and industrial classes was linked to the spread of democratic rationalist ideals, redefining the relationship between citizen and state. Of the Soviet period, Risto Alapuro has observed that 'socialist industrialisation may have transformed social relations [in Russia] much less than appears at first sight'<sup>91</sup>. Under the Tsars, as under the Bolsheviki, the rural, collectivistic mentality typical of the Russian peasant persisted in the new urban conditions. Democratic ideals, where adopted in Russia, therefore, tended to be confined to a radical opposition. In these conditions, 'such political activities as took place in defiance of the autocracy, therefore, had to assume illegal forms'<sup>92</sup>. Hosking attributes the maintenance of the autocracy, also, ultimately to the needs of empire:

[...] autocracy and backwardness were symptoms and not causes: both were generated by the way in which the building and maintaining of empire obstructed the formation of a nation."

The lack of a democratic politics, however, would in turn delay the 'formation of nation' since, as Hobsbawm has argued:

The very act of democratising politics, i.e. of turning subjects into citizens, tends to produce a populist consciousness which, seen in some lights, is hard to distinguish from a national, even a chauvinist, patriotism."

9) *The growth of national consciousness.* The growth of national consciousness is a process of crystallisation of a particularly strong, emotionally affective, 'imagined

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<sup>91</sup>Alapuro, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>92</sup>Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-2.

<sup>93</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. xxvii.

<sup>94</sup>Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

community', territorially defined within the political boundaries of the state, to which community members generally refer as the 'nation'. Benedict Anderson has pointed to the key role in this process played by print-languages in unifying fields of exchange, building the image of antiquity important for the nation, and developing 'languages of power'<sup>95</sup>. In the West, this 'created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation'<sup>96</sup>. Yet the increase in levels of education in Russia did provide the prerequisites for the creation of a popular nationalism based on an ethnic 'imagined community'. From the mid-nineteenth century, the size of the reading public grew rapidly<sup>97</sup>.

Nevertheless, the conditions for the creation of a national identity in imperial, authoritarian Russia were in many ways not propitious. According to Hosking, 'Russian national identity tended to be subsumed in that of the empire, whose values were in principle multi-national'<sup>98</sup>. Pipes has pointed to 'the apparent lack of patriotic feelings on the part of the Russian population'<sup>99</sup>. He has asked:

[W]hy did the Russia people fail to undergo the evolution from religious identification to ethnic identification, such as experienced by the other European peoples?<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>97</sup>Billington, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

<sup>98</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>99</sup>Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.

He has gone so far as to argue, no doubt with a degree of exaggeration, that the Russians' 'sense of identity is determined more by what they are not than by what they are: more by the awareness of being different from others than of being one with their own kind'<sup>101</sup>. Multi-ethnic imperial Russia did, however, create the necessary conditions for what Linda Colley, in her study of the development of British consciousness, has called 'multiple identities'. Colley writes:

Great Britain did not emerge by way of a 'blending' of the different regional or older national cultures contained within its boundaries as is sometimes maintained, nor is its genesis to be explained primarily in terms of an English 'core' imposing its cultural and political hegemony on a helpless and defrauded Celtic periphery. [...] The sense of a common identity here did not come into being, then, because of an integration and homogenisation of disparate cultures. Instead, Britishness was superimposed over an array of internal differences in response to contact with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other.<sup>102</sup>

In Russia, the development of 'national consciousness' was further complicated by the fact that, from the late eighteenth century onwards, the country's newly-educated elite was increasingly susceptible to foreign cultural influence. In consequence, 'in Russia high culture was to a large extent borrowed from outside'<sup>103</sup>. Indeed, Liah Greenfield has argued that the very appearance of national consciousness in Russia was a result of Western influence. Consequently, in her view, the development of Russian 'national identity', has been one based on *ressentiment*, 'a

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<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 135.

<sup>102</sup>L. Colley, *Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, Vintage, London, 1996, p. 6.

<sup>103</sup>Hosking, *loc. cit.*



psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings'<sup>104</sup>. In Greenfeld's view, Russian national consciousness 'was based on a deeply pessimistic evaluation of Russia, on the recognition of its absolute impotence in the competition with the West'<sup>105</sup>. *Ressentiment* was, nonetheless, 'a remarkably creative sentiment, capable of unending ramification, constantly generating and fermenting new sentiments and ideas, a seedbed of ideologies'<sup>106</sup>.

The Russians' appropriation from the West of 'ways of imagining' their society made national consciousness intrinsically more self-conscious, and hence more *ideological* (in the sense of a consciously-held system of views on the world), in Russia than in the West. Evidence for this can be seen in the ideological controversy between so-called Slavophiles and Westerners in the nineteenth century<sup>107</sup>. It is also to be seen in the development of a marked 'extra-literary' dimension to literature, which Hosking has called its 'mission':

[...] the very magnitude of the mission devolved upon literature put constant pressure on writers to move outside their profession and take on themselves roles to which they were by nature less well-suited: those of political commentator, public tribune, even religious prophet.<sup>108</sup>

This peculiarly Russian form of imaginative literature was to be the single most influential factor in fashioning

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<sup>104</sup>Greenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>105</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 254. Shlapentokh has also pointed to envy of the West as an important feature of the ideology of what he calls 'Russophiles' (V. Shlapentokh, *Soviet Intellectuals and Political Power*, I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London & New York, pp. 216-7).

<sup>106</sup>Greenfeld, *loc. cit.*

<sup>107</sup>See A. Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975.

<sup>108</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-294.

the Russian ethnic, popular, 'imagined community'. This was:

[a literature] to heal the ethnic rift by moving towards the common people, giving a detailed and authentic account of their life, and beginning to assimilate their language, not for ethnographic or documentary reasons but for moral ones, and to communicate the distinctive Russian national essence [...] This kind of literature, and the language in which it was couched, was to do far more during the next half-century than the output of state or church to lay the foundations for a Russian national identity which could embrace both elite and people. Russia's 'imagined community' was fashioned by literature more than by any other factor [...].<sup>109</sup>

10 *The prominent role played by the new political mythology of nationalism.* The imperial nature of the Russian state gave rise to a marked distinction between *statist* (*gosudarstvennyi*) and *popular* (*narodnyi*) tendencies within Russian nationalist ideology. Smith has described this conflict of tendencies among nationalist intellectuals:

Again, the role of the intelligentsia in furnishing the leadership and concepts of the emergent nation is well documented. [...] But, if they are to succeed politically, and if their concepts and images are to assume concrete shape, they must be taken up by movements and be turned into institutions. For this, the intelligentsia requires either the organs of state or a popular base which can create its own social order. But the state and popular community typically reshape the intelligentsia's images and narratives to accord with *political* and/or *ethnic* imperatives. Hence, the bases of the nation that ultimately emerge are to be sought [...] in the interplay between powerful political units and equally potent communal identities. In many cases, the resulting duality has not been resolved, to the profound detriment of the existing nation.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 293.

<sup>110</sup>Smith, 'The nation: Invented, Imagined, Reconstructed?', pp. 21-22.

Vladimir Shlapentokh has pointed out the characteristic style of thought of statist Russian nationalists (whom he calls 'Russophile patriots'):

For Russophile patriots, the state is the great protector of the Russian people, and readiness to make sacrifices for the state is the highest value. The cult of the Russian state led the Russophile patriots to accept the October Revolution, Lenin, and Stalin as the creators of the Soviet empire - the natural heirs of the Russian monarchy. For this reason the Russophile patriots are also referred to as the National Bolsheviks.<sup>111</sup>

The strength of the statist nationalist tendency has derived largely from the centralisation of imperial state power; the inheritance of the traditional imperial mythology of Rossiya (which developed from the seventeenth century); the weakness of civil society; and, at times, a close association with power-holders.

Armstrong has claimed that the Russian imperial myth<sup>112</sup> - the (statist) Russian imperial mythology - successfully penetrated the 'Russian core identity'<sup>113</sup>. In this view, Russian elites successfully 'invented tradition', in Hobsbawm and Ranger's phrase<sup>114</sup>, to create a powerful 'official mythology', which by the late nineteenth century, harnessed to a programme of Russification<sup>115</sup>, could be accurately termed 'official nationalism'.

The statist Russian nationalist tendency has, in sum, the following key features: 1) a need to legitimise the 'imperial' political state, whether Soviet or Russian-

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<sup>111</sup>Shlapentokh, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-211.

<sup>112</sup>Armstrong identifies five elements of the imperial Russian myth: i) the in-gathering of the Russian lands; ii) the defence of Orthodoxy; iii) imperial expansion in the frontier area; iv) the myth of the 'Third Rome' after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks; and v) the idea of the uniqueness of the Russian Christian empire (Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-151). See also Billington, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>113</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>114</sup>Hobsbawm, Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996.

<sup>115</sup>Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, pp. 6-7.



imperial, as Russian (rossiiskoe); 2) the advocacy of cultural Russification, to strengthen the 'nation', conceived as that population residing within the territorial state; 3) the need to maintain the strength of the state, often by emulating the economic (and military) achievements of the Western powers; 4) an ambivalent relationship with the outside world, exhibiting a tendency to make a merit of the isolation of the Russian state, even at the same time as seeking to imitate the developed West.

However, the weakness of Russian statist ideology is witnessed by the marked distinction, preserved in the Russian language, between the Russian state (rossiiskoe gosudarstvo) and the Russian people (russkii narod)<sup>116</sup>. Russian statist mythology has persistently failed, in Hobsbawm's words, to create 'emotionally and symbolically charged signs' sufficiently powerful for the purpose of state legitimisation<sup>117</sup>. The statist nationalist tendency had two major weaknesses: the lack of ethnic and social homogeneity within imperial borders; and the sharp breaks in state policy, associated with changes in leadership consequent upon the centralisation of state power (for example, Petrine reformism, Tsarist autocracy c. 1917; the Bolshevik Revolution; the Stalinist 'Revolution from Above', etc.), which complicated the task of portraying the continuity of Russian statehood, and thus legitimising state power.

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<sup>116</sup>See Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 277; Billington, *op. cit.*, p. 94; M. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths*, Random House, New York, 1969 [for example, see pp. 116-120]); Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, p. 50; Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. xix.

<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 11.

Russian history has, therefore, witnessed a conflict between *statist* and *popular* mythologies, the one oriented towards the state, the other towards the people. In the view of Michael Cherniavsky, who has investigated the roots of popular Russian nationalist ideology<sup>118</sup>, 'from the very beginning the epithet 'Holy Russia' was an anti-Tsarist, anti-state slogan'<sup>119</sup>. '[T]he tsar, the bureaucracy, the Church, and the ideologists of Muscovite power', he has written, '[...] never used the epithet 'Holy Russia'<sup>120</sup>; and yet 'the epithet became a commonplace among the masses, the peasants, from the early seventeenth century on'<sup>121</sup>. The strengths of the popular nationalist tendency lay in this inheritance of 'anti-imperial' myths, associated with the idea of Rus', or Svyataya Rus' (Holy Russia), a pre-imperial, ethnically homogeneous realm<sup>122</sup>; the Orthodox religion as a shared faith; the roots in the collectivist ethos of peasant culture; and the powerful traditions of 'imagining the community', rooted in the Russian literary tradition.

The characteristic features of the popular (*narodnyi*) Russian nationalist tendency may be summarised as follows:

- 1) a main goal of identifying, and imagining, the Russian people (*ruskii narod*) as a homogeneous social community;
- 2) an intrinsic preference for an ethnic Russian state, rather than an imperial one (albeit with non-Russian elements);
- 3) a tendency to reject secularisation and

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<sup>118</sup>Cherniavsky, *op. cit.*

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 116-120.

modernisation (and Communism) as non-national, alien influences deriving from the state, or the West; and to identify the people with the non-secular, and even the irrational (a tendency exacerbated at various times by exclusion from the arena of rational debate).

The tendency had four chief weaknesses: the lack of an ethnic state; the contradictory relationship with the powerful imperial state; the lack of ethnic, religious and social homogeneity within imperial borders; the weakness of civil society, combined with a tendency for civil society to be continually eroded by the activity of the state.

*11. The rise of nationalism.* The 'fundamental point' about nationalism, in Breuilly's view, is that nationalism is 'about politics and that politics is about power'<sup>123</sup>. Nationalist ideology appears in Russian history in three chief guises: 1) as the ideology of small movements of political opposition with little chance of gaining power; 2) as an object of manipulation for elite groups; 3) as a potential, wide-spread ideology of opposition, whose adherents included highly-placed collaborators with the regime.

1) *An Ideology of Small Opposition Movements* The 'official nationalism' of the Tsarist regime in the mid-nineteenth century can be seen as a partial concession to a nascent nationalist opposition, one of the earliest indications of which was the Decembrist movement at the beginning of the nineteenth century<sup>124</sup>. At the time of the

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<sup>123</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>124</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-182.



Revolution in 1917 there was a wide variety of nationalist organisations<sup>125</sup>. In the 1960s Russian nationalism also enjoyed some influence among radicals, as the history of the All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of the People [Vserossiiskii Sotsial-Khristianskii Soyuz Osvobozhdeniya Naroda, or VSKhSON] of the 1960s has shown<sup>126</sup>. However, in the Soviet period, these were all small, highly marginal groups.

2) Manipulation by Elites Anderson has described official nationalism as 'an anticipatory strategy adopted by dominant groups who are threatened with marginalisation or exclusion from an emerging nationally-minded community'<sup>127</sup>. The Bolsheviki, despite their reconstruction of the empire, abruptly broke off the Tsarist experiment with 'official nationalism', jettisoning the old myths and adopting new ones, namely those of Communist ideology. According to Communist mythology, all ethnic groups lived in equality and harmony in the Soviet Union, as they moved towards the Communist future. The end result would be a state of Soviet citizens, Sovietised but not, in theory, Russified. Indeed, by adopting Communist ideology, the regime ostensibly denied itself that legitimacy among the ethnic Russian majority of the population which Russian nationalist ideology could provide. The official ideology nonetheless defined the Soviet people as a community with a faith, which provided essential common ground for compromise with nationalism.

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<sup>125</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-28.

<sup>126</sup>See J. Dunlop, *The New Russian Revolutionaries*, Nordland, Woodside, New York, 1976.

<sup>127</sup>Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 95. See also p. 145.

In practice, Soviet leaders soon sought to 'co-opt' elements of Russian nationalist ideology into the official mythology - 'inventing tradition', to use Hobsbawm and Ranger's phrase. During the 1920s there were early indications of a revival of Russian nationalist ideology, a tendency strengthened by the official adoption of the policy of 'socialism in one country'<sup>128</sup>. A more far-reaching modification of Bolshevik mythology was evident in the 'Great Retreat' of the 1930s<sup>129</sup>. Stalin personally played a major role in the reintroduction of Russian political myths into Soviet political culture, including, during the Second World War, their wholesale, if temporary, co-option<sup>130</sup>. Following a decline in official sponsorship of Russian nationalism in the immediate post-Stalin period, from the mid-1960s Brezhnev built on Stalin's nationalities policy, using ethnic Russians and Russian myths and symbols to underpin the Soviet regime<sup>131</sup>. In the words of Peter Duncan, Brezhnev 'increasingly relied on Russian cadres and sought support particularly from the Russian people'<sup>132</sup>. In the final years of Brezhnev's rule, therefore, 'Russian nationalism was becoming an important part of the ruling ideology in some official circles'<sup>133</sup>.

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<sup>128</sup>M. Agurskii (Agursky), *The Third Rome: National Bolshevism in the USSR*, Westview Press, Boulder & London, 1987.

<sup>129</sup>Agurskii, *op. cit.*; F. Barghoorn, *Soviet Russian Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1956; N. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat*, Dutton, New York, 1946.

<sup>130</sup>V. Ivanov, "'Vo vremya krizisa rozhdaetsya budushchee'", *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 37, September 11th, 1996, p. 3.

<sup>131</sup>D. Jacobs & T. Hill, 'Soviet Ethnic Policy in the 1980s: Theoretical Consistency and Political Reality', in J. Noguee, *Soviet Politics: Russia after Brezhnev*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1985, pp. 159-165; P. Duncan, 'Ideology & the National Question: Marxism-Leninism & the Nationality Policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union', in S. White & A. Pravda (eds.), *Ideology & Soviet Politics*, Macmillan, London, 1988, p. 198.

<sup>132</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*



Indeed, by the 1970s, RSFSR obkom (regional party committee) first secretaries, according to Rigby, were 'the most important group of officials in the Central Committee excepting the top leadership'<sup>134</sup>, and, in Rigby's judgement, 'an RSFSR obkom first secretaryship [was] the most crucial career position for promotion to top jobs at the centre'<sup>135</sup>. An informal leader of top ethnic Russian officials seems for many years to have been Andrei Kirilenko, senior Central Committee Secretary and Politburo member who had been Khrushchev's deputy in the RSFSR Bureau of the Party. Kirilenko, who made his early career in the Sverdlovsk region, developed a reputation as a political leader who supported Russian nationalist views and their advocates<sup>136</sup>. From the mid-seventies, Kirilenko oversaw the work of the powerful Central Committee Department of Administrative Organs, responsible for the work of the KGB, the army, the Procuracy, the courts, the Ministry of Justice and the MVD<sup>137</sup>. During Kirilenko's overlordship, the Department promoted Russian nationalist personnel, including Sergei Semanov (who became chief editor of *Chelovek i zakon* in 1976), and was believed to sympathise with Russian nationalist positions<sup>138</sup>. An example of Kirilenko's 'RSFSR patriotism' is one of his 1980 speeches:

I would like to especially underline the outstanding contribution of the workers of Russia [Rossii] in the creation of the material and technological basis of communism. The present and

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<sup>134</sup>T. Rigby, 'The Soviet Regional Leadership: The Brezhnev Generation', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1, March 1978, p. 24.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>136</sup>N. Bikkenin, interview 16/8/93; F. Bobkov, interview 10/4/95; V. Ganichev, interview 3/10/94; A. Gavrilov, interview 17/6/94; M. Lobanov, interview 8/8/94. See also G. Baklanov, 'Vkhodite uzкими vratami', *Znamya*, No. 9, 1992, p. 30.

<sup>137</sup>S. Semanov, interview 21/9/94.

<sup>138</sup>According to V. Solodin, the Department of Administrative Organs supported the general position of *Nash sovremennik* (V. Solodin, interview 30/7/93).



future of the country depends to a decisive degree on the development of the Russian Federation, spread out from the shores of the Baltic to the Kurile Islands, from the Arctic Ocean to the subtropics. Her economy is the basis of the single complex of the national economy.<sup>139</sup>

However, Russian nationalist ideology had certain negative features in the eyes of Soviet power-holders. Firstly, it threatened to antagonise national minorities<sup>140</sup>. Secondly, it could prove, in particular, unpalatable to the ethnically heterogeneous Soviet elites. Thirdly, it also tended to legitimise 'undesirable' traditions such as Russian Orthodoxy<sup>141</sup>. Fourthly, it hindered the ability of the Soviet Union 'to retain credibility and legitimacy as the leading Communist state'<sup>142</sup>. Fifthly, it could not legitimise the Soviet Union in the eyes of the international community, since an attempt to cast the Soviet Union on the international arena as a Russian state would increase perceptions of the Soviet Union as an empire.

For these reasons, there was a grouping within the Soviet elite opposed to the further employment of Russian nationalist ideology and committed to an internationalist Marxist-Leninist position. The leader who identified himself most strongly with this tendency, in the late Brezhnev period, was the then head of the KGB, Yurii Andropov<sup>143</sup>. According to contemporary observers, Mikhail Suslov, 'Second Secretary' in charge of ideology policy,

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<sup>139</sup>A. Kirilenko, *Politika sozidaniya i mira. Izbrannye rechi i stat'i*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1980, p. 680.

<sup>140</sup>Duncan, *loc. cit.*

<sup>141</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup>Jacobs & Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

<sup>143</sup>Zh. Medvedev, *Andropov: His Life and Death*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1984, p. 118; Y. Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroika', *Soviet Economy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, April-June, 1989, p. 168.

took a centrist position between 'Russian nationalists' and 'Marxist internationalists', having as his main credo the maxim 'Don't rock the boat' (*ne raskachivat' lodku*)<sup>144</sup>. In the words of Gorbachev, Suslov 'played a stabilising role among the leadership, to a certain extent he neutralised the conflict of various forces and characters'<sup>145</sup>. However, this 'stabilising role' entailed a degree of patronage of Russian nationalist ideology, and, by the late Brezhnev period, Suslov was perceived by some as an adherent of Russian nationalist positions<sup>146</sup>.

3) A Wider Political Role Breuilly has pointed out that an apparent distinction, between what he calls 'collaboration' and 'opposition' in political life, is not as clear cut as it might seem. He writes:

Political opposition develops within the political community, not from outside it. The groups which find themselves in opposition are not permanently opposed to government, because that would render them powerless and would lead to their exclusion from the political community.<sup>147</sup>

The need to be 'included' in the political community means that, at certain stages, effective opposition can be conducted ~~not only~~ by means of collaboration:

[...] collaboration is as much a means of realising certain interests as resistance, and [...] we must not see politics as one or the other.<sup>148</sup>

By the 1960s there were signs that Russian nationalist ideology was not limited to its twin roles of instrument for elite manipulation and inspiration for small, radical opposition movements. An impression of this spread of

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<sup>144</sup>A. Belyaev, interview 1/4/92; V. Kozhinov, interview 17/12/92.

<sup>145</sup>M. Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Kniga 1, Novosti, Moscow, 1995, p. 201.

<sup>146</sup>See M. Agurskii, 'Suslov i russkii natsionalizm', *Posev*, No. 6, June 1982, pp. 30-33.

<sup>147</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

<sup>148</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 384.



nationalist influence can be given by the following ten factors:

1) Considerable support for Russian nationalist sentiments and ideas among the ethnic Russian population, particularly in intellectual circles.<sup>149</sup>

2) The *Molodaya gvardiya* journal of the 1960s.<sup>150</sup>

3) The so-called 'Russian Club' of young Russian nationalist literary critics, including Petr Palievskii, Vadim Kozhinov, Stanislav Kunyaev, Anatolii Lanshchikov and Sergei Semanov, of the 1960s.<sup>151</sup>

4) Public support for VOOPIK (Vserossiiskoe obshchestvo okhraneniya pamyatnikov istorii i kul'tury - the All-Russian Society for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture), founded by decree of the RSFSR Council of Ministers in 1965, which had seven million members (albeit many purely formal) by 1972.<sup>152</sup>

5) The *Veche samizdat* journal of the early 1970s.<sup>153</sup>

6) The persistence of Russian Orthodox belief, despite official persecution and disapproval, with an estimated 50 million adherents at the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>154</sup>

7) The influence and popularity of the *derevenshchiki*, the writers of 'village prose', dedicated to an imaginative identification, description and investigation of Russian national roots.<sup>155</sup>

8) The high positions attained by representatives of statist Russian nationalist ideology, in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>156</sup>

9) The wide spread of popular Russian nationalist ideology in the dissident movement from the 1960s.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>149</sup>J. Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1983, pp. 109-132.

<sup>150</sup>A. Yanov, *The Russian Challenge and the Year 2000*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1987, pp. 105-127.

<sup>151</sup>V. Kozhinov, interview 15/3/92; S. Kunyaev, interview 31/8/93; A. Lanshchikov, interview 19/6/93; P. Palievskii, interview 7/9/94; S. Semanov, interview 21/9/94. See Yanov, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

<sup>152</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>153</sup>Yanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-154; P. Duncan, 'The Fate of Russian Nationalism: The *Samizdat* Journal *Veche* Revisited', *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Spring 1988, pp. 36-53.

<sup>154</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>155</sup>K. Mehnert, *Russians and their Favourite Books*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford (California), 1983.

<sup>156</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-265.

<sup>157</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 242-254; P. Duncan, 'The Fate of Russian Nationalism: The *Samizdat* Journal *Veche* Revisited'.



10) A crisis of belief in the imperial mythology, shown by increasing migration of ethnic Russians from the non-Russian republics to the RSFSR. By 1975 the traditional net outflows of population from the RSFSR to the non-Russian republics had been reversed<sup>158</sup>. During 1976-1980 the net inflow to the RSFSR was 725,000.<sup>159</sup>

Commentators have differed in their estimates of the strength of Russian nationalist ideology in the last decades of the Soviet Union. Vladimir Shlapentokh has called 'Russophilism' 'the dominant ideology of Russian intellectuals in the 1970s, and early 1980s'<sup>160</sup>. Brudny has suggested the existence of a 'political contract' between the Soviet political leadership and the Russian nationalists:

[The 'political contract'] 'transformed the Russian nationalists from being one among many groups within the Russian intellectual elite at the beginning of the Brezhnev era to being the most influential group (at least by perception) at its close'.<sup>161</sup>

John Dunlop went so far, in the 1980s, as to predict that Russian nationalism 'could become the ruling ideology of state once the various stages of the Brezhnev succession have come to an end'<sup>162</sup>. Aleksandr Yanov, who argued that the formation of a 'Russian New Right' was 'as important as the formation of the Bolsheviki in 1903'<sup>163</sup>, predicted that these exponents of an 'ideology for a modern counter-reform', would come to power in the foreseeable future<sup>164</sup>. Valerii Solovei, however, has argued that Russian

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<sup>158</sup>J. Dunlop, 'Russia: Confronting a Loss of Empire', in I. Bremner & R. Taras (eds.), *Nation and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 46-7.

<sup>159</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup>Shlapentokh, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

<sup>161</sup>Brudny, *loc. cit.*

<sup>162</sup>Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, p. ix.

<sup>163</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>164</sup>Yanov, *op. cit.*, p. xii.

nationalism 'right up to the beginning of the 1990s was a weak political tendency of little influence'<sup>165</sup>.

## Nash sovremennik (1981-1991) & Russian nationalism

### The Soviet 'Thick' Journal<sup>166</sup>

Following from the above, the Soviet 'thick' journal is an appropriate site for the study of Russian nationalist ideology. Russian literature, as has been noted, played a pre-eminent role in fashioning the 'imagined community'. 'Thick' journals in the Soviet era inherited a nineteenth-century tradition which has been described by Hosking:

Throughout the century, and especially in periods of tight censorship, the protection afforded by 'thickness', together with that usually accorded to 'artistic literature', meant that such journals could risk comment, veiled perhaps in circumlocutions but still unmistakable, on a range of issues closed to other publications. They became in themselves centres of intellectual life, each with its coterie of writers, critics, reviewers and publicists, and each with its political tendency, whether Slavophile, official nationalist, liberal or radical. The monthly salvos fired in the 'thick journals' were the nearest thing Russia had to a political life for the most part of the nineteenth century.<sup>167</sup>

After 1917, the 'thick' journal remained a vital part of cultural life and, in the highly controlled cultural system of the Soviet Union, was well placed to act as a mediator of political and social ideas between political and intellectual elites<sup>168</sup>. In particular, this was because

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<sup>165</sup>V. Solovet, 'Russkii natsionalizm i vlast' v epokhu Gorbacheva', in P. Goble & G. Bordyugov (eds.), *Mezhnatsional'nye otnosheniya v Rossii i SNG, ITS "AIRO-XX"*, Moscow, 1994, pp. 45-72.

<sup>166</sup>For a summary description of the workings of a 'thick' journal in the Soviet period, see *Appendix*.

<sup>167</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

<sup>168</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, 1989, pp. 163-4; D. Spechler, *Permitted Dissent in the USSR: Novyi mir and the Soviet Regime*, Praeger, New York, 1982, p. 248.

the Soviet authorities embraced that part of the Russian cultural tradition which accorded the artist of the word a special function as the purveyor of cognitive, moral and spiritual truth<sup>169</sup>. As Katerina Clark has noted, 'modern Russian literature and the functions of the forum have traditionally been close, and the political powers have actively promoted an intensification of this relationship'<sup>170</sup>. At the same time, as Frankel has observed in her case study of *Novyi mir*, literature remained a realm of relative freedom of expression in the Soviet Union<sup>171</sup>.

### Novyi mir: A Soviet 'Thick' Journal

Of all Soviet 'thick' journals, *Novyi mir* has attracted most scholarly attention<sup>172</sup>. This is particularly true of the period of the journal's history under Khrushchev, when Aleksandr Tvardovskii was chief editor. In both Russia and the West, there has also been considerable publication of memoir material by leading participants in the life of *Novyi mir* at that time, such as Solzhenitsyn and Lakshin<sup>173</sup>.

*Novyi mir* of the Khrushchev period was intimately linked with the period of liberalism, the 'thaw', in Soviet cultural politics. In Dina Spechler's account, *Novyi mir*

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<sup>169</sup>G. Hosking, 'Homo Sovieticus or Homo sapiens? Perspectives from the Past', School of Slavonic & East European Studies, London, 1987, p. 7.

<sup>170</sup>K. Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1981, p. 8.

<sup>171</sup>See E. Frankel, *Novy mir: A Case Study in the Politics of Literature, 1952-1958*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p. 18. See also R. Hingley, *Russian Writers and Soviet Society, 1917-1978*, Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1979, p. 15; G. Hosking, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

<sup>172</sup>Frankel, op. cit.; Spechler, op. cit.; L. Aldwinckle, 'The Politics of Novyi Mir, 1950-1970', Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1978.

<sup>173</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, *The Oak and the Calf*, Collins & Harvill Press, London, 1980; V. Lakshin: *Solzhenitsyn, Tvardovskii and Novy mir*, MIT, Cambridge, Mass., 1980; *Novyi mir vo vremena Khrushcheva (1953-1964)*, Knizhnaya palata, Moscow, 1991.



'contributed to both the liberalisation and the democratisation of Soviet political life'<sup>174</sup>. She writes:

[*Novyi mir* made] a significant contribution to the pluralization of Soviet politics, that is, to the aggregation, organisation, and representation of interests and opinions different from and, to a considerable degree, opposed to those of the regime and the bureaucracies that dominated the political and cultural establishments.<sup>175</sup>

Spechler argues that a majority of the top Soviet leadership 'apparently held the view that *Novyi mir* served a useful purpose in defusing tension among the intelligentsia and that its suppression would only enrage and radicalise them, thus creating further difficult problems of discipline and control'<sup>176</sup>. In Edith Frankel's account, the authorities 'chose to use [*Novyi mir* as] the device of a valve, which could be opened from time to time to let off some of the dangerous pressure'<sup>177</sup>.

The studies by Frankel and Spechler have shown the intimate connection which could exist between publication policy and the policies of the Soviet political leadership. They also revealed the key role of the chief editor. Frankel writes of Tvardovskii: 'His basic publishing policy - within the guidelines of the Party - was dominant. He chose his colleagues'<sup>178</sup>. According to Spechler, the editors, especially the chief editor, played 'a crucial role in encouraging and aggregating dissent'<sup>179</sup>. Tvardovskii, as chief editor, gathered around the journal 'a large cluster of liberal authors who shared many of his

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<sup>174</sup>Spechler, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>175</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>176</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>177</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 117. The same view is to be found in Spechler, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

<sup>178</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>179</sup>Spechler, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

substantive concerns and regarded him as their spokesman and protector' and constituted 'a distinct political interest and opinion group'<sup>180</sup>. Indeed, Spechler writes, 'The *Novyi mir* collective and its dedicated leaders were regarded by many tens of thousands as their chief advocate and most effective spokesman'<sup>181</sup>.

### Nash sovremennik: An Ethnic Russian Journal

There has also been considerable scholarly interest in *Nash sovremennik*. A pioneer in writing on the journal, John Dunlop, claimed in 1976:

Since the forced resignation of Aleksandr Tvardovskii as editor-in-chief of *Novy Mir* in 1970, the journal [...] has emerged as perhaps the most significant officially permitted literary journal in the Soviet Union.<sup>182</sup>

*Nash sovremennik* was initially created as a quarterly almanac with a rural orientation in 1956<sup>183</sup>. The appearance of the new journal, therefore, reflected both the new post-Stalin cultural ferment<sup>184</sup> and the agricultural concerns of the Khrushchev leadership. By the mid-1960s, *Nash sovremennik* had become a monthly 'thick' journal, attracting attention as the favoured place of publication of the *derevenshchiki*, or writers of 'village prose'<sup>185</sup>. By the end of the 1970s, the journal had established itself as a leading literary 'thick' journal on this basis. Seven of

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<sup>180</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>181</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>182</sup>J. Dunlop, 'Reclaiming the Russian Past', *The Times Literary Supplement*, No. 3,897, November 19th, 1976, p. 1447. For similar comments, see M. Dewhurst, 'Soviet Russian Literature and Literary Policy', in A. Brown & M. Kaser (eds.), *The Soviet Union Since the Fall of Khrushchev*, second edition, Macmillan, Basingstoke & London, 1978, p. 183; K. Mehnert, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>183</sup>C. Nepomnyashchy, 'Our Contemporary and the Development of the Rural Prose Tradition', *Ulbands Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Spring 1978, pp. 58-73; *TsKhSD, fond 5, opis' 36, delo 1, rolik 5823, listy 134-5*.

<sup>184</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>185</sup>Mehnert, *op. cit.*, p. 35; Nepomnyashchy, *op. cit.*

the twenty-four most popular Soviet writers listed by Klaus Mehnert in 1983, for example, either were, or had been, closely associated with *Nash sovremennik*<sup>186</sup>. Five of these seven authors - Astaf'ev, Belov, Rasputin, Shukshin, Soloukhin - were representatives of the 'village prose' school<sup>187</sup>.

To Western observers, the political importance of the *derevenshchiki* was seen to lie in 'their role as a "mouthpiece" for the ethnic awareness growing among larger segments of the Russian population of the Soviet Union'<sup>188</sup>. Commentators referred to a 'Russian ethnic movement'<sup>189</sup>. Moreover, the high profile of village prose in Soviet conditions suggested that it enjoyed highly-placed political support - and that this support was directly related to the nationalist ideology inherent in the texts<sup>190</sup>. Thanks to this support, in the 1970s *Nash sovremennik* became 'the major Russian nationalist publication'<sup>191</sup>.

### Nash sovremennik: A 'Conservative' Journal

*Nash sovremennik*, a 'mouthpiece' for ethnic Russian interests, was also closely associated with the conservative RSFSR Writers' Union. In 1957, the journal had been taken over by the organising committee of the RSFSR

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<sup>186</sup>Mehnert, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33 (see Table Two).

<sup>187</sup>See also Nepomnyashchy, *op. cit.*

<sup>188</sup>C. Nepomnyashchy, 'The search for Russian Identity in Contemporary Soviet Russian Literature', in E. Allworth (ed.), *Ethnic Russia in the USSR: The Dilemma of Dominance*, Pergamon Press, New York, 1980, p. 95. See also G. Hosking, 'The Russian Peasant Rediscovered: Village Prose of the 1960s', *Slavic Review*, Vol. 32, No. 4, December 1973, pp. 705-24.

<sup>189</sup>J. Dunlop, 'Ruralist Prose Writers in the Russian Ethnic Movement', in E. Allworth, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>190</sup>Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>191</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 166.



Writers' Union. As Dunlop has noted, the creation of this latter body was 'a setback for Party reformers'<sup>192</sup>, and was intended to 'bolster the orthodox tendency in Soviet Russian literature' and 'dilute the influence of the large urban writers' organisations in the Russian Republic, especially of the liberal Moscow Writers' Organisation'<sup>193</sup>.

The regime's patronage of *Nash sovremennik* as a conservative force was particularly evident at the time of the 'Tvardovskii affair'. In June 1968, during the Czechoslovak crisis, the authorities - in the person of Suslov - decided to remove Tvardovskii from *Novyi mir*<sup>194</sup>. In a parallel move, Suslov conceded to the wish of the RSFSR Writers' Union, against opposition from the Department of Propaganda, to substantially upgrade *Nash sovremennik*<sup>195</sup>. Subsequently, the new chief editor, Sergei Vikulov, was one of eleven conservative writers to sign, the following year, an open letter in *Ogonek* criticising an article in *Novyi mir* by Andrei Dement'ev<sup>196</sup>. This letter showed conservative, anti-Western Russian nationalists aligned with party authorities against liberalising influences. Spechler has written:

[The Letter declared] there was a direct connection between the ideas published by *Novyi mir* under Tvardovskii's stewardship and both the treason committed by Sinyavsky and Daniel and the general posture of dissidence taken by the illegal opposition.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>192</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

<sup>193</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup>I. Brainin, 'Tvardovskii v dokladnykh KGB. Po materialam arkhiva TsK KPSS', *Izvestiya*, No. 111, June 20th 1995, p. 7; *TsKhSD, fond 4, opis' 20, delo 381, list 11*. See also Yu. Burtin, 'Pis'mo v redaktsiyu "Kontinenta"', *Kontinent*, No. 75, 1993, p. 328.

<sup>195</sup>*TsKhSD, fond 5, opis' 60, delo 33, rolík 9697*. Aleksandr Yakovlev was then deputy head in the Department of Propaganda, responsible for the press.

<sup>196</sup>See A. Dement'ev, 'O traditsiyakh i narodnosti', *Novyi mir*, No. 4, 1969, pp. 215-235;

'Protiv chego vystupaet *Novyi mir*?', *Ogonek*, No. 30, July 1969, pp. 26-29.

<sup>197</sup>Spechler, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-9.

Yanov has called the *Letter* 'the first action in the post-Stalinist era by a *unified* Establishment Right - a kind of historical experiment which demonstrated its extraordinary political potential'<sup>198</sup>. Walter Laqueur has argued that, at that time, 'the foundation was laid for a nationalist-Communist alliance, which twenty years later emerged as a political reality'<sup>199</sup>. Vikulov's reward was the strong political backing for *Nash sovremennik*, which by December 1969 brought the journal's print-run to 130,000, for the first time in its history higher than that of *Novyi mir* (127,250).

This event showed the regime patronising Russian nationalism at a time of uncertainty in foreign policy. Taking print-run levels as a very rough measure of regime patronage, this pattern was repeated on two further occasions: in 1976, following the signing of the Helsinki Final Act<sup>200</sup>; and in 1980, following the invasion of Afghanistan<sup>201</sup>. Brudny has suggested that *Nash sovremennik* played an important role in the development of a 'political contract' between the Soviet political leadership and the Russian nationalists<sup>202</sup>. He has written:

The growth in circulation and official recognition bestowed upon its authors reflected the important role *Nash sovremennik* and its contributors were to play in Brezhnev's and Suslov's efforts to co-opt into the system those Russian nationalist intellectuals previously excluded from it.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>198</sup>Yanov, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>199</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>200</sup>The journal's print-run was raised by two thirds from 136,000 to over 200,000 (for the first time since the aftermath of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, higher [205,000] than that of *Novyi mir* [185,000]).

<sup>201</sup>The print-run of *Nash sovremennik* was increased by 50% to 330,000 (and, for a third time in its history, exceeded that of *Novyi mir* [320,000]).

<sup>202</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

<sup>203</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 167.



I would suggest that the Soviet leadership perceived this co-option as particularly necessary in periods of uncertainty in foreign policy.

Despite *Nash sovremennik's* general success in becoming established as a leading 'thick' journal, the journal continued to encounter opposition from various official sources in connection with the publication of particular works, for example Viktor Astaf'ev's *King Fish*<sup>204</sup>, Valentin Rasputin's *Live and Remember*<sup>205</sup> and *Farewell to Matera*<sup>206</sup>, and Valentin Pikul's *At the Final Boundary*<sup>207</sup>.

### Studies of Nash sovremennik

Unlike *Novyi mir*, *Nash sovremennik* has not been the subject of full-length studies. There have, however, been important contributions to understanding the place of the journal in Soviet political and cultural life. John Dunlop, in particular, in his path-breaking studies, has considered *Nash sovremennik* as one of the main exponents of Russian nationalism<sup>208</sup>. Vladimir Shlapentokh considered the journal and its writers as exponents of 'Russophile ideology' in his study of the relations between the Soviet intelligentsia and political authority<sup>209</sup>. Yitzhak Brudny highlighted the role of *Nash sovremennik* in opposing Gorbachev's reforms, and considered the journal's

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<sup>204</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Tsar' Ryba', *NS*, No. 4, pp. 3-81; No. 5, pp. 22-91; No. 6, pp. 6-78, 1976. See *TsKhSD*, fond 5, opis' 73, delo 422, listy 1-11.

<sup>205</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Zhivi i pomni', *NS*, No. 10, pp. 2-88; No. 11, pp. 58-91, 1974. See S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 9, 1996, pp. 10-11.

<sup>206</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Proshchanie s Materoi', *NS*, No. 10, pp. 3-71; No. 11, pp. 17-64, 1976 (V. Solodin, interview 30/7/93). See Vikulov, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12; N. Shundik, *Olen' u poroga*, *Sovremennik*, Moscow, 1989, pp. 312-315; *TsKhSD*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>207</sup>V. Pikul', 'U poslednei cherty', *NS*, No. 4, pp. 19-125; No. 5, pp. 62-145; No. 6, pp. 79-120; No. 7, pp. 34-127, 1979. See S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 10, 1996, pp. 14-30; *TsKhSD*, fond 5, opis' 76, delo 282, listy 1-3, 14.

<sup>208</sup>Dunlop: *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, pp. 291-2; *The New Russian Nationalism*, chapter two.

<sup>209</sup>Shlapentokh, *op. cit.*, pp. 188, 232, 233, 271-2, 278.



relationship with the 'neo-Stalinist' *Molodaya gvardiya*<sup>210</sup>. Aleksandr Arkhangel'skii examined *Nash sovremennik* as a defender of socialism<sup>211</sup>. Walter Laqueur and Alexander Yanov have considered *Nash sovremennik* in their studies of the Russian Far Right<sup>212</sup>. Some memoir material has also been published in the 1990s, notably by Sergei Vikulov (chief editor 1968-1989), Aleksandr Kazintsev (deputy chief editor from 1987) and Yurii Nagibin (member of the editorial board 1965-1981)<sup>213</sup>. The present study is an attempt to redress the balance of scholarly attention away from *Novyi mir* and towards other examples of the Soviet 'thick' journal, in the form of *Nash sovremennik*. A case study in the politics of Soviet literature, then, the current work makes special reference to the relationship between *Nash sovremennik* and Russian nationalist ideology.

## Method

Related to the five hypotheses of the study<sup>214</sup>, there are three distinct areas of analysis:

- 1) the content of the journal in terms of trends and tendencies within Russian nationalist ideology;
- 2) the decision-making process of the journal, including a) the roles of the chief editor, the deputy chief editors and other key individuals; and b) the relationship between the journal and Soviet political institutions;

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<sup>210</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-195.

<sup>211</sup>A. Arkhangel'skii, 'Mezhdu svobodoi i ravenstvom', *Novyi mir*, No. 2, 1991, pp. 225-241 (for example, p. 239).

<sup>212</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.* (e.g., pp. 9, 68, 77, 93, 95, 98, 144, 212); Yanov, *op. cit.* (e.g. p. 9).

<sup>213</sup>S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 9, pp. 3-27; No. 10, pp. 12-34; No. 11, pp. 11-39; No. 12, pp. 8-21, 1996; A. Kazintsev, 'A za nami idut marodery', *NS*, No. 2, 1992, pp. 174-185; Yu. Nagibin, *T'ma v kontse tunnelya*, Nezavisimoe izdatel'stvo PIK, Moscow, 1996, pp. 137-143.

<sup>214</sup>See p. 5.

3) the role of Russian nationalist ideology published in the journal in relation to Soviet politics.

### Selected Individuals

Twenty-four individuals have been identified and selected for special study. They are:

1) The two chief editors - Sergei Vikulov and Stanislav Kunyaev.

2) The eleven deputy chief editors - Yurii Seleznev, Valentin Ustinov, Vladimir Krivtsov, Vladimir Vasil'ev, Vladimir Korobov, Vladimir Mussalitin, Valentin Svininnikov, Aleksandr Kazintsev, Dmitrii Il'in, Aleksandr Pozdnyakov and Yurii Maksimov<sup>215</sup>.

3) Eleven leading contributors [defined as those who contributed at least seven publications during 1981-1991]. These include: five prose writers - Vasilii Belov, Valentin Pikul', Valentin Rasputin, Georgii Semenov and Vladimir Soloukhin; two literary critics - Vadim Kozhinov, Anatolii Lashchikov; and four publitsisty (writers on social and political themes) - Mikhail Antonov, Apollon Kuz'min, Ivan Sinitsyn, Ivan Vasil'ev. It should be noted that four other 'leading contributors' figure among the chief editors and deputy chief editors - namely chief editors Stanislav Kunyaev (poet and literary critic) and Sergei Vikulov (poet, critic and publitsist); and deputy chief editors Aleksandr Kazintsev (critic) and Vladimir Vasil'ev (critic).

Frankel and Spechler have demonstrated the importance of the chief editor of a Soviet 'thick' journal in the publication process. However, in general, these authors made little attempt to identify the role of other post-holders in the publication process. In this study of *Nash sovremennik*, the chief editors, the deputy chief editors and selected leading contributors have been chosen as special foci of attention. In particular, the role of the

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<sup>215</sup>Deputy chief editors Yurii Maksimov and Aleksandr Pozdnyakov worked as 'third' deputy chief editors' on what seems to have been an experimental basis (see Chapter Seven).

deputy chief editor has been subjected to detailed examination. An indication of the importance of this position at *Nash sovremennik* is provided by a simple chronological survey (1981 - 1991):

### Editorial 'Teams' at *Nash sovremennik* 1981-1991

*Dates (of Journal Issues): Political Period*  
Chief editor: First/Second Deputy Chief Editors

1 February 1981 - April 1982: Late Brezhnev Period  
S. Vikulov: Yu. Seleznev/V. Ustinov

2 May 1982 - February 1984: Andropov as 'Second' and General Secretary  
S. Vikulov: V. Krivtsov/V. Vasil'ev

3 February 1984 - April 1986: Chernenko in Power/Gorbachev's 1st Year  
S. Vikulov: V. Korobov/V. Mussalitin

4 July 1986 - May 1987: Yakovlev & the 'Cultural Offensive'  
S. Vikulov: V. Svininnikov/V. Mussalitin

5 June 1987 - September 1989: Ligachev & the Conservative Reaction  
S. Vikulov: V. Svininnikov/A. Kazintsev

6 January 1990 - November 1991: From Gorbachev to El'tsin  
S. Kunyaev: D. Il'in/A. Kazintsev

This survey seems to show that, given the time-lag between appointing a deputy chief editor and the appearance of the first issue on which the appointee worked (which could be up to three months), the changes in editorial 'teams' (of chief editor, plus two deputy chief editors) seem to correspond to basic features of the periodisation of Soviet political history. This observation prompted me to base my periodisation of this study of the journal (1981-1991) on these identified 'teams', and to make two hypotheses: 1) that changes in Soviet politics influenced the appointments of deputy chief editors; and 2) that the deputy chief editor had an appreciable impact on publication policy.

Little attention in the literature has been paid to the individual relationships between journal and major



contributors<sup>216</sup>. Yet, as the case of Solzhenitsyn and *Novyi mir* has shown, relations between selected leading contributors and a Soviet 'thick' journal can offer valuable insights into the publication process.

Interviews have been conducted with twenty-one of the selected individuals: the exceptions are Valentin Pikul', Georgii Semenov and Yurii Seleznev, all of whom died before the study was undertaken<sup>217</sup>.

### Sources

This study is based primarily on a reading of the journal *Nash sovremennik*, 1981-1991. A second source has been, as noted, interviews with the selected individuals. Interviews were also conducted with other participants in the publication process, including other editors, members of the editorial board, contributors, writers and critics, literary officials and politicians (see *Interviews*). These were made possible both by the generosity of the individuals concerned and by the new openness of the Russian Federation.

Where material from interviews has been used in the text, this fact is noted. Often, information from interviews has been corroborated from other sources. At times, however, this has not been possible, and material is presented which is derived from only one interviewee. While I have sought to exclude mis- or disinformation, uncorroborated evidence from the interviews, which may be

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<sup>216</sup>See Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*; V. Lakshin, *Solzhenitsyn, Tvardovskii and Novyi mir*; Spechler, *op. cit.*

<sup>217</sup>I am grateful to the widow of Georgii Semenov, Elena Vladimirovna Semanova, for the opportunity to conduct an interview with her (31/5/94).

subject to doubt, is at times used. On these occasions I have considered the information of value as *the expressed point of view of the individual in question*.

In this study of *Nash sovremennik*, other Soviet 'thick' journals have received relatively scant attention. This, of course, does not mean that their role in the intellectual and political life of the Soviet Union (1981-1991) was, necessarily, any less significant than that of *Nash sovremennik*. However, the focus on one journal has permitted an analysis of detail, which may not have been possible in a more general, balanced, and possibly superficial, account of a selected group of Soviet 'thick' journals.

Despite this caveat, frequent reference has been made throughout this study to other leading publications. Among the central literary journals, these are *Druzhba narodov*, *Molodaya gvardiya*, *Moskva*, *Novyi mir*, *Ogonek*, *Oktyabr'*, *Znamya*, and *Yunost'*; and among the newspapers, *Literaturnaya gazeta*, *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, *Sovetskaya kul'tura* and *Sovetskaya Rossiya*.

## Chapter Divisions of the Study

The text is divided into eight chapters. *Chapter One*, the present chapter, puts forward the theses of the study, outlines an approach to the analysis of Russian nationalism, and presents an introductory discussion of *Nash sovremennik* as a Soviet 'thick' journal.

Chapters *Two* to *Seven* present an analysis of the journal's publication policy in a chronological narrative

1981-91. Each of these six chapters spans the period of work of one of the 'teams' of chief editor and deputy chief editors (identified above). Each chapter contains two parts. The first part analyses the themes of the journal's publication policy in the given period in terms of nationalist ideology (with sub-sections devoted to 'Identifying the Nation' and 'Legitimising the State'). A second part presents an analysis of publication policy in terms of Soviet politics, seeking to relate ideology to political action.

*Chapter Eight* presents the conclusions of the study.

An *Appendix* provides a brief outline of the operation of *Nash sovremennik* as a Soviet 'thick' journal.



## 2. The Brezhnev Succession Crisis & the Russian Challenge

(Editorial team: chief editor Vikulov, deputy chief editors Seleznev & Ustinov.

Journal issues: February 1981-April 1982)<sup>1</sup>

### Part One: Thematic Analysis

This period of the journal's history was effectively the last year of Suslov's reign as 'ideological secretary', and saw a fierce struggle for the Brezhnev succession between leading Soviet politicians. The imaginative fiction and most publitsistika (social and political journalism) published by *Nash sovremennik* (works by Mikhail Alekseev, Vasilii Belov and Ivan Vasil'ev) were written from a popular nationalist position. These writers' works explored the life and character of the Russian people - in nationalist terms the *nation* - and have little to say about the *state*. The chief concern of other writers, representatives of the statist nationalist tendency (in

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<sup>1</sup>In this, and subsequent, chapter headings and sub-headings, dates refer to journal issues, unless otherwise indicated.

particular, Vadim Kozhinov and Apollon Kuz'min), was to legitimise the existing, territorial 'Soviet' state. A middle ground, between popular and statist tendencies, was exemplified by Mikhail Antonov and Vladimir Shubkin.

### Imagining the Nation

The Russian nation, for *Nash sovremennik's* popular nationalist writers, had four chief characteristics: it was rural, communal, Orthodox, and its national peculiarity was expressed in works of art, from literature to architecture. Works published generally contrasted the Russian spirit with Communist ideology, with the important exception of Mikhail Antonov.

1) **A Rural Community** The focus of the writings of Vasilii Belov, Mikhail Alekseev, Vladimir Krupin and Ivan Vasil'ev was not the Soviet countryside in general, but the ethnically Russian (*ruskii*), peasant communities of the rural RSFSR, and particularly of the non-black-earth regions of north European Russia.

In *Harmony*, Vasilii Belov described in detail the rural traditions and customs of north-west Russia, where he grew up<sup>2</sup>. Belov implied that this peasant way of life, distinguished by its quality of wholeness, the depth of human relations and the closeness of the human community to the natural world, was superior to contemporary urban civilisation. *Harmony* was permeated with a distaste for modern technology and contemporary life, and a sense of nostalgia for the past. In many cases, the traditions Belov

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<sup>2</sup>V. Belov, 'Lad', *NS*, No. 5, pp. 145-171; No. 6, pp. 143-153; No. 7, 1981, pp. 125-164. Earlier instalments had been published in *NS*, No. 10, pp. 117-158; No. 12, pp. 85-96, 1979; No. 3, 1980, pp. 60-84; No. 1, 1981, pp. 160-174.

described were dying out, or had already disappeared. Ivan Vasil'ev, *Nash sovremennik's* chief contributor of publitsistika on rural life, wrote that Belov's *Harmony* showed the importance of Russian traditions in providing a moral basis for life<sup>3</sup>. Each village, Vasil'ev insisted, had played a part in the thousand-year-old culture of the area, as in the 'history of the Russian [rossiiskoe] state, in the history of a great people'. Mikhail Antonov, in *The Morality of Economics*, saw in the traditional, pre-Revolutionary forms of social organisation (the obshchina, the artel'), and in the concept of sobornost', models for the improvement of contemporary society<sup>4</sup>.

Mikhail Alekseev, in his latest novel, *The Brawlers*, took as his theme the collectivisation of the peasantry in the Volga region<sup>5</sup>. *The Brawlers* told the story of the impact of collectivisation on rural life, and the famine it brought on in 1933. Like Belov's *Harmony*, *The Brawlers* was also a work of nostalgia in that it depicted a peasant world which no longer existed. For Alekseev, collectivisation marked the divide between an idealised peasant past and the mundane, less than satisfactory present. *The Brawlers* broke new ground in its descriptions of the horrors of the 1933 famine<sup>6</sup>. Alekseev believed the famine was caused by collectivisation: 'The harvest in 1932 was, if not the very best, in any case not a bad one'<sup>7</sup>. By the time the publication of Stalin's article, *Dizzy with*

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<sup>3</sup>I. Vasil'ev (interview), "I ne nado nichego vydumyvat'...", *NS*, No. 4, 1981, pp. 154-156.

<sup>4</sup>M. Antonov, 'Nravstvennost' ekonomiki', *NS*, No. 8, 1981, pp. 111-132.

<sup>5</sup>M. Alekseev, 'Drachuny', *NS*, No. 6, pp. 3-98; No. 7, pp. 7-61; No. 9, pp. 27-75, 1981.

<sup>6</sup>Alekseev, 'Drachuny', *NS*, No. 9, 1981.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 41.



Success, halted the collectivisation campaign and the drive against the kulaks, 'a third of the village, numbering more than six hundred households, had simply disappeared'<sup>8</sup>. A negative view of collectivisation also figured in Vladimir Krupin's *The Fortieth Day*, a novella telling the story of a Moscow journalist's return visit to his native village. In one passage, the journalist's father angrily declared to his son: 'Serfdom we never had here, but we had *collectivisation!*'<sup>9</sup>.

For Ivan Vasil'ev, the Russian nation consisted primarily of peasants, farm managers, agricultural experts and school teachers. In *The Russian Land*, Vasil'ev directly criticised party policy under Brezhnev for giving insufficient resources to the non-black-earth region and failing to come to grips with the region's post-war problems<sup>10</sup>. In *At the Upper Reaches of the Lovat' and Velikaya*, Ivan Vasil'ev drew attention to the poor nature of rural facilities<sup>11</sup>. He criticised the multiplication of 'interdepartmental' and other service organisations, which burgeoned during the 1970s. The interests of the farms themselves, he complained, were often forgotten and the land had no 'khozyain' - a worker on the land with the sense of someone enjoying the rights, benefits and responsibilities of ownership (though not actually owning the land as property). Vasil'ev suggested the most appropriate form of agricultural organisation was the family 'work-team', where 'father and son' worked together.

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<sup>8</sup>Alekseev, 'Drachuny', NS, No. 7, 1981, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup>V. Krupin, 'Sorokovoi den'', NS, No. 11, 1981, p. 98.

<sup>10</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Russkaya zemlya', NS, No. 12, 1981, pp. 18-73 (the first part appeared in NS, No. 1, 1981, pp. 7-81).

<sup>11</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'V verkhov'yakh Lovati i Velikoi', NS, No 4, 1981, pp. 95-153.

In *Praise Your Own Home*, Vasil'ev insisted that workers should sense the benefit and purpose of their own work<sup>12</sup>. He criticised large farms, where workers lacked a sense of responsibility, lived in dull, urban-style blocks of flats, drank and made money 'on the side'. The abandonment of small-scale family cottages in preference for urban-style flats contributed to the moral decline, he believed, by depriving people of the sense that they were 'khozyaevy'. It also offended national traditions.

2) A Religious Community *Nash sovremennik's* writers tended to view the Russian nation as intrinsically Russian Orthodox, despite the years of atheistic Communist rule. Vladimir Soloukhin was the most outspoken. In the series *Pebbles in the Palm*, he argued on one occasion directly for the existence of God:

In the twentieth century no right-thinking person can have any doubt but that in the world, in the Universe, in the rich variety of life, there exists a higher principle of intelligence [vyssee razumnoe nachalo]. [...] The question is not whether a higher intelligence exists but whether it knows about me and whether it wishes to have anything to do with me?<sup>13</sup>

On a second occasion, Soloukhin wrote:

If we consider any of the mechanisms of nature [...] we cannot but come to one very simple conclusion: it has been thought out in advance [produmano].<sup>14</sup>

In *The Continuation of Time* Soloukhin stressed, with examples ranging from the works of the religious painter Pavel Korin to the village church, the importance of Christianity for the development of Russian culture<sup>15</sup>. He

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<sup>12</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Khvala domu svoemu', *NS*, No. 2, 1982, pp. 3-28.

<sup>13</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Rasskazy. Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 3, 1981, p. 39.

<sup>14</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Rasskazy. Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 3, 1982, p. 79.

<sup>15</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Prodolzhenie vremeni', *NS*, No. 1, 1982, pp. 18-126.



commented: 'The church is, perhaps, the only thing in a village which embodies the continuity of time'<sup>16</sup>. In a similar vein, Vikulov, in an article on Nikolai Rubtsov, wrote:

All the spiritual and moral culture of the people [naroda] is embodied in the customs of working days and holidays, and in songs, and in tales, and in the architecture of temples and churches.<sup>17</sup>

A more sociological approach was adopted by Vasilii Belov in *Harmony*<sup>18</sup>. Belov emphasised the role of religion in the annual round of ceremonies and customs associated with birth, baptism, marriage, labour and death. Ivan Vasil'ev, in *At the Upper Reaches of the Lovat' and Velikaya*, observed, possibly tongue-in-cheek, that the level of ideological and cultural work by state and party organisations in the villages was so low that the Church threatened to be more successful in catering for the spiritual needs of the elderly<sup>19</sup>. Sergei Semanov criticised the ousted Afghan leader Amin for his hostility to Islam, the dominant religion in that country<sup>20</sup>, from which <sup>it</sup> might be deduced that Semanov was really criticising Bolshevik policy towards Russian Orthodoxy. What was needed, a reader could conclude, was a reconciliation between party and Church.

3) A Cultural Community For many of the journal's writers, the nation's identity was embodied in art. A theme of Soloukhin's *The Continuation of Time* was that Moscow's

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<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>17</sup>S. Vikulov, 'Ego podsnezhniki', *NS*, No. 12, 1981, p. 155.

<sup>18</sup>Belov, *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'V verkhovnykh Lovati i Velikoi', *NS*, No 4, 1981, pp. 95-153.

<sup>20</sup>S. Semanov, 'Sovremennoe oblich'e starogo vruga', *NS*, No. 7, 1981, pp. 187-189 (book review: M. Basmanov, *V oboze reaktsii: Trotskizm 30-70-kh godov*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1979).



architectural monuments, many of which had been destroyed, symbolised Russian identity<sup>21</sup>. Soloukhin argued that innovation in the production of the classics of ballet and opera threatened Russia's cultural identity. Elsewhere, Soloukhin described the second half of the nineteenth century as a 'bright and powerful explosion of Russian national consciousness [russkogo natsional'nogo samosoznaniya], of the rebirth of national [natsional'nogo] art'<sup>22</sup>. Sergei Semanov, in a review of Mark Elenin's novel depicting the impact of the Civil War on the Crimea, *Seven Deadly Sins*, defended the pre-Revolutionary intelligentsia and Slavophilism<sup>23</sup>.

*Nash sovremennik's* writers claimed a special significance for the works of Dostoevskii in the centenary of that writer's death, as an expression of the Russian national spirit. In *The Burning Bush*, the critic Vladimir Shubkin drew a parallel between the 'deep moral tradition of our literature', which embodied the national consciousness of the people, and the 'mythical burning bush which burns with a miraculous heat, without, however, being consumed'<sup>24</sup>. Shubkin meant that, despite the tragedies of the Soviet era, the Russian moral tradition had persisted. He claimed Dostoevskii's work was the highest expression of this tradition, and that its contemporary exemplars were the *derevenshchiki* (writers of 'village prose') - Vasili

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<sup>21</sup>Soloukhin, 'Prodolzhenie vremeni'.

<sup>22</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Rodnaya Tret'yakovka', *NS*, No. 5, 1981, p. 184.

<sup>23</sup>S. Semanov, 'Istoriya i spletnya', *NS*, No. 11, pp. 186-190 (book review: M. Elenin, 'Sem' smertnykh grekhov', *Neva*, No. 1, pp. 6-91; No. 2, pp. 42-93; No. 3, pp. 19-79, 1981).

<sup>24</sup>V. Shubkin, 'Neopalimaya kupina', *NS*, No. 12, 1981, pp. 175-188. Shubkin's title refers, in addition to the Bible, to the work of one of Russia's great religious thinkers of the twentieth century, S. Bulgakov (*S. Bulgakov, Kupina neopalimaya*, YMCA Press, Paris, 1927).

Belov, Sergei Zalygin, Fedor Abramov, Valentin Rasputin and Viktor Astaf'ev. The critic Vadim Kozhinov, in *"And Every Tongue Will Name Me..."*, argued that Dostoevskii had expressed the distinctive essence of the Russian nation - 'the idea of "universality" [vsechelovechnost']' - in his 1880 speech at the opening ceremony of the Moscow Pushkin monument<sup>25</sup>.

Chief editor Sergei Vikulov, for his part, argued for a place of honour in the Russian national literary tradition for the Vologdan poet, Nikolai Rubtsov (1936-1971), whose lyrical and patriotic verse had been much praised by Kozhinov but largely shunned by the official literary establishment<sup>26</sup>. Rubtsov, Vikulov wrote, 'understood that the poet must be able to listen not only to his own soul, but to the soul of the people as well'<sup>27</sup>.

4) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' *Nash sovremennik's* writers also offered 'negative' definitions of the nation, that is, in relation to 'the Other'. The 'other peoples' with whom the Russians were contrasted were fellow inhabitants of the USSR, namely Jews and Tatars, and, rather more amorphously, those of the 'West'.

Semanov argued that Mark Elenin, in *Seven Deadly Sins*, passed over the important and negative role played by Masons and Jews in the Civil War period<sup>28</sup>. Elenin's motives for this omission, Semanov hinted, lay in his Jewish ethnicity. Mikhail Antonov, in a review of Yurii Loshchits's

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<sup>25</sup>V. Kozhinov, "I nazovet menya vsyak sushchii v nei yazyk...", *NS*, No. 11, 1981, pp. 159-161. The title of Kozhinov's article is a quotation from Pushkin engraved on the monument to the poet in Pushkin Square, Moscow.

<sup>26</sup>S. Vikulov, 'Ego podsnezhniki', *NS*, No. 12, 1981, pp. 145-157.

<sup>27</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>28</sup>Semanov, 'Istoriya i spletnya'.

*Dmitri Donskoi*, contrasted the high morality of the Russian people with what he considered to be the cruelty and corruption of the Tatars<sup>29</sup>. On the north Russian collective farm, Vladimir Krupin found an 'artel' of energetic, suspicious-looking non-Russians [temnye khloptsy]', accompanied by a certain 'Ibrahim', all of whom had travelled from the south to find work<sup>30</sup>. Krupin also took the high-risk course of implying 'the Other' could be found in powerful Moscow offices (presumably staffed by ethnic Russians). His hero describes the state broadcasting system thus: 'out of its enormous Ostankino syringe it pours banalities and second-rate ballet onto the airwaves - and more often just information no one needs'<sup>31</sup>.

Kozhinov developed the most complex view of 'the Other'. In his article on Kulikovo he argued that the forces opposed to Dmitrii Donskoi's Russians were not so much Mongols as 'an aggressive, cosmopolitan armada' acting, under its commander Mamai, in the interests of slave traders - 'international speculators' - based in Genoa and its Crimean colony of Theodosia<sup>32</sup>. Kozhinov's subtext was that the 'dark forces' which controlled the horde were, in fact, Genoese Jews. Kozhinov also argued that the Old Testament is 'nationally limited', expressing 'one people's' (the Jews') idea that it is chosen by God<sup>33</sup>. In Kozhinov's view, it was upon the Jewish Old Testament that

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<sup>29</sup>M. Antonov, 'My budem!', *NS*, No. 5, 1981, pp. 190-191 (book review: Yu. Loshchits, *Dmitrii Donskoi, Zhizn' zamechatel'nykh lyudei (ZhZL)*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1980.

<sup>30</sup>Krupin, 'Sorokovoi den', p. 79.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>32</sup>Kozhinov, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 159.



Western civilisation, with its aggressive, exploitative attitude to the rest of the world, was based<sup>34</sup>.

Antonov, Soloukhin and Shundik all contrasted Russia with the West. Antonov, in *The Morality of Economics*, described the West as imbued with a spirit of 'cash and individualism', and hence both morally and spiritually bankrupt<sup>35</sup>. Antonov also argued that Russia should not follow the path of Japan, in adopting Western ways, since the cost of success was too high. Soloukhin, in *The Continuation of Time*, argued that Russian culture was threatened by the importation of Western mass culture<sup>36</sup>. Shundik, in his novel *The Ancient Sign*, set in some unspecified northern Scandinavian islands, contrasted the simplicity and beauty of the way of life of these islanders with the corruption of contemporary Western society<sup>37</sup>.

### Legitimising the State

*Nash sovremennik's* writers on the state took issue with the legitimising ideology of Marxism-Leninism. There were two approaches to finding a substitute. One, which can be denoted as 'White', ignored Marxism-Leninism altogether, and proposed a version of the 'Russian idea' based on Dostoevskii. A second, which can be denoted as 'Red', sought to merge Marxism-Leninism with a version of this 'Russian idea'. Both approaches drew on sources of popular nationalism in their opposition to Marxism-Leninism.

1) A 'White' Legitimation of the Russian State Vadim Kozhinov, Anatolii Lanshchikov and Vladimir Shubkin expound

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<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 162-3.

<sup>35</sup>Antonov, 'Nravstvennost' ekonomiki'.

<sup>36</sup>Soloukhin, 'Prodolzhenie vremeni'.

<sup>37</sup>N. Shundik, 'Drevnii znak', NS, No. 4,

pp. 3-85; No. 5, pp. 11-88, 1982.

the former, 'White', tendency. In *The Burning Bush*, Vladimir Shubkin, in effect, claimed that Marxism-Leninism should be rejected in favour of a Russian nationalism embodied in the Russian literary tradition<sup>38</sup>. Anatolii Lanshchikov, defending Dostoevskii against the charge, common in the Soviet period, of being a 'reactionary', argued Dostoevskii did not reject Chernyshevskii's socialist ideals, but only the purely economic means by which he proposed to realise them<sup>39</sup>. This assertion of the 'spirit' over economic factors challenged an axiom of Soviet Marxism.

Vadim Kozhinov launched the strongest and most explicit attack on the Marxist-Leninist legitimacy of the state<sup>40</sup>. The critic argued that the Russians, because of their quality of "universality" (*vsechelovechnost'*), which Dostoevskii identified as the distinguishing feature of the Russian national consciousness, were able to treat other nationalities and their representatives as truly equal and, when necessary, recognise their own inferiority. The corollary of this, he implied, was that such qualities justified the political hegemony of the Russians over other ethnic groups. Kozhinov's central thesis, therefore, was that what he called the 'multinational Russian state' (*mnogonatsional'noe russkoe gosudarstvo*), 'continental' in scope and nature, could be legitimised on the basis of the character of the Russian nation<sup>41</sup>. The Russian state, the

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<sup>38</sup>Shubkin, *op. cit.*

<sup>39</sup>A. Lanshchikov, 'Velikie Sovremenniki: Dostoevskii i Chernyshevskii', *NS*, No. 11, 1981, pp. 177-184.

<sup>40</sup>Kozhinov, *op. cit.*

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 173.

reader would understand, therefore had no need of Communist internationalist rhetoric to justify its existence.

2) A 'Red' Legitimation of the Russian State An alternative, 'Red' approach was formulated by Apollon Kuz'min and Mikhail Antonov. The historian Kuz'min, in *The Writer and History*, argued that Russian patriotism and Soviet socialism were compatible<sup>42</sup>. He rejected the view of official Communist ideology that social class, and not the nation, was the primary historical unit of social organisation. However, class (Soviet socialism) and nation (Russian patriotism), Kuz'min held, had become identical at the current stage of national history. There was thus no possibility of conflict between the two: anti-communism - anti-Sovietism - was today the same thing as anti-Russian feeling, what Kuz'min called 'russophobia' (rusofobiya). 'Internationalist' writers (such as Valentin Oskotskii), in Kuz'min's view guilty of russophobia, could therefore be accused of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism.

Antonov praised the 'single stream' view of history, the conception that the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 did not mark the beginning of a new, non-national era of Communism, but rather an important moment in the continuous development of Russian state and society<sup>43</sup>. A similar view can be seen in Sergei Semanov's denunciation of Elenin's *Seven Deadly Sins* for portraying the leaders of the White movement in the Civil War 'in the vilest and darkest colours'<sup>44</sup>. The journal also published a review of Sergei

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<sup>42</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'Pisatel' i istoriya', NS, No. 4, 1982, pp. 148-65.

<sup>43</sup>Antonov, 'My budem!'

<sup>44</sup>Semanov, 'Istoriya i spletnya'.



Semanov's laudatory biography of the Tsarist general Brusilov, a leading military figure who reconciled himself with the Bolshevik regime<sup>45</sup>.

3) A 'Red' Statist Reformism Mikhail Antonov, in *The Morality of Economics*, severely criticised the bureaucratic malaise of the Soviet economic system, in particular the economic plan which, he wrote, worked in favour of bureaucratic departmental interests, and against those of the national economy<sup>46</sup>. As a result, morality and family life had declined; a selfish consumer mentality, crime and alcoholism had flourished.

Antonov's article attempted to synthesise nationalist and Communist ideologies. The Russian rejection of capitalism, he argued, was in the name of the higher ideals of a distinctive Russian spirituality, which accorded material wealth a relatively low place in its hierarchy of values. Antonov praised the introduction of *khozraschet* as a mechanism for improving the economy, but placed greater faith in the revival of pre-Revolutionary forms of social organisation. Antonov's moral concerns were also clear in his review of a work by Aleksandr Tsipko, which praised the philosopher for expressing concern over the decline in contemporary Russian morals and for describing traditional peasant life as 'an ideal union of work and life'<sup>47</sup>.

4) A State Defined by 'the Other' *Nash sovremennik's* writers also defined the state 'negatively', in relation to

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<sup>45</sup>A. Znamenskii, 'Na sluzhbe otechestva', *NS*, No. 7, 1981, pp. 187-189 (book review: S. Semanov, *Brusilov*, ZhZL, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1980).

<sup>46</sup>Antonov, 'Nravstvennost' ekonomiki'.

<sup>47</sup>M. Antonov & A. Persianov, 'Chtob ne issyakla zhizn' lyudskaya', *NS*, No. 10, 1981, pp. 182-3 (book review: A. Tsipko, *Sotsializm: zhizn' obshchestva i cheloveka*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1980).

'the Other'. The other states with which the Russian state was contrasted were those of the 'West', and, more specifically, the USA. Kozhinov, in "And Every Tongue Will Name Me...", wrote that, for Western civilisation, 'Byzantium and the states of the Aztecs, India and China, and, of course, Russia, were only objects for the application of force by the West and had no world-historical role'<sup>48</sup>. In *The Ancient Sign*, Nikolai Shundik propounded a propagandistic message against nuclear war, attacking the US for what he portrayed as its aggressive military stance and its nuclear arsenal, but making no mention of Soviet nuclear bombs and rockets<sup>49</sup>.

### Conclusions on Themes

The writing in *Nash sovremennik* in this period exhibits that sense of 'mission' which Hosking has identified<sup>50</sup>. *Nash sovremennik's* contributors tackled the large questions of nation and state, essential to nationalist thought. The writing has a dual focus, corresponding to popular and statist nationalist tendencies. The works of the popular nationalists were related to that nostalgic vision of a Golden Age, at once ethnic and rural, vital to the nationalist world-view<sup>51</sup>.

The journal's popular nationalists created an 'imagined community' which was a highly selective portrait of Soviet life, concentrating almost exclusively on the past and present of the ethnic Russians (russkie) of the rural areas

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<sup>48</sup>Kozhinov, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>49</sup>Shundik, 'Drevnii znak'.

<sup>50</sup>Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*, pp. 293-294.

<sup>51</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 191-200.

of the north-west European part of the country, and giving Orthodoxy an especially high profile. These works generally show the popular nationalists defining the nation positively, without reference to instances of 'the Other', or external enemies.

The journal's statist nationalist contributors sought to legitimise the Soviet state, imperial in nature, in terms of the special characteristics and history of the ethnic Russians. These works displayed an ambivalent *attitude* to Communist ideology. Some writers ('Whites' such as Kozhinov, Shubkin) would seem to have rejected Communism altogether; others sought to adapt it to ethnic Russian history and traditions ('Reds', such as Antonov, Kuz'min). The statist nationalists constituted a majority of those writers who provided 'negative' definitions of the nation (Antonov, Kozhinov and Semanov).

John Dunlop, in his work on this period, made a distinction between two kinds of Russian nationalist - the 'vozrozhdenets' (a word implying advocacy of a Russian cultural renaissance) and the National Bolshevik - which bears a strong resemblance to that drawn here between the popular and statist nationalist tendencies. In Dunlop's view, the *vozrozhdenetsy* and the National Bolsheviks had in common a desire to preserve what was inherited from the past, a dissatisfaction with demographic and social trends, an acceptance of the existence of other states, and a keen interest in the conservative and patriotic thought of the past<sup>52</sup>. In a range of policy demands, however, they differed

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<sup>52</sup>Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, pp. 253-63.



strongly. The *vozhrozhdentsy* advocated: a central social position for the Orthodox Church; the elimination of Marxism-Leninism as a ruling ideology; an anti-urban world-view, valuing peasant traditions; isolationism in foreign affairs; moral and aesthetic dislike of the West; an emphasis on institutional and moral checks on government; a 'third way' in economics; and accommodation of the legitimate strivings of ethnic minorities<sup>53</sup>. The characteristic views of the National Bolsheviki included: a general indifference to the Orthodox religion; a willingness to adopt key aspects of Marxism-Leninism; an acceptance of urban life, with little interest in rural affairs; a militant and aggressive stance towards perceived internal and external enemies; an anti-Western orientation; adoption of 'Jewish-Masonic Conspiracy' theory; a cult of strength and invincibility of the Russian people; advocacy of racial purity; 'Single Stream' views of Russian history; and a cult of discipline and heroic vitalism<sup>54</sup>.

On the evidence of this chapter, the tendency defined here as popular nationalist has much in common with the views of Dunlop's *vozhrozhdentsy*, with three important differences: *Nash sovremennik's* popular nationalists seem to have little interest in: 1) 'institutional checks' on state power; 2) 'accommodating the interests of ethnic minorities'; or 3) economic policy, except in so far as it concerns rural life. *Nash sovremennik's* popular nationalists are therefore less 'liberal', 'democratic' or 'Westernising' than Dunlop's *vozhrozhdentsy*. Similarly, the

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<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 253-4.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 263.

statist nationalists seem to have much in common with Dunlop's National Bolsheviks, with three exceptions, namely that, unlike the National Bolsheviks, the statist nationalists 1) did not advocate racial purity, 2) stressed the importance of the Orthodox religion; and 3) did not advocate a 'cult of discipline and heroic vitalism'. They are therefore less racist, or 'fascistic', and more religious, than Dunlop's National Bolsheviks.

Statist nationalists are much closer to the popular nationalists than, in Dunlop's model, the National Bolsheviks are to the *vozrozhdentsy*. However, within statist nationalism there is a divergence between 'Red' and 'White' trends. In this context, the 'Red' statist nationalists are closer to National Bolsheviks than are the representatives of the 'White' trend. Dunlop's description of National Bolshevism as 'a statist form of Bolshevism largely shorn of its international or Marxist elements, one for which Fedor Dostoevskii and Vladimir Ilich Lenin, Aleksandr Suvorov and Georgii Zhukov can all serve equally as church fathers' seems particularly close to the position of the 'Red' statist nationalist<sup>55</sup>. If this general argument holds good, I would suggest that the decisive difference between the *vozrozhdentsy*/popular nationalists, on the one hand, and the National Bolsheviks/statist nationalists, on the other, is the question of what motivates their nationalist theory: 'imagining' the nation, as in the case of the *vozrozhdentsy*/popular nationalists; or legitimising

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<sup>55</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 10.

the state, as in the case of the National Bolsheviks/statist nationalists.

## Part 2: Political Analysis

### The New Deputy Editors: Yurii Seleznev & Valentin Ustinov.

From the February 1981 issue, a new team of deputy chief editors - Yurii Seleznev and Valentin Ustinov - was appointed<sup>56</sup>. Of the two appointees, Seleznev (b. 1939) was the key figure<sup>57</sup>. The young critic and Dostoevskii specialist<sup>58</sup> had links with statist nationalists Sergei Semanov, historian and editor of *Chelovek i zakon* (whom Seleznev had succeeded in 1976 as editor of the *Zhizn' zamechatel'nykh lyudei* [ZhZL] series within the Molodaya gvardiya publishing house, then headed by Valerii Ganichev), and with the critic Vadim Kozhinov (who had supervised Seleznev as a graduate student). Through Kozhinov, Seleznev had links with a group of influential radical nationalist critics, associates since the early 1960s, which included Petr Palievskii and Anatolii Lanshchikov<sup>59</sup>.

It was no doubt Seleznev's associations with the radical nationalist critics, and his own reputation as a Dostoevskii scholar, which provided the rationale for Bondarev, deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, to

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<sup>56</sup>Given the three-month publication process, the new deputy chief editors were appointed in November-December, 1980 (V. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', NS, No. 11, 1996, p. 18). Seleznev and Ustinov replaced first deputy chief editor Leonid Frolov, who became deputy head of the Sovremennik publishing house, and deputy chief editor Vladimir Krivtsov.

<sup>57</sup>On Seleznev, see *Pamyat' sozidayushchaya. Vospominaniya o Yu. I. Selezneve*, Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, Krasnodar, 1987; V. Ganichev, *Russkie versty, Russkii dukhovnyi tsentr. Roman-gazeta*, Moscow, 1994, pp. 136-144.

<sup>58</sup>The year Seleznev was appointed, his second major work on Dostoevskii was published (Yu. Seleznev, *Dostoevskii, ZhZL, Molodaya gvardiya*, Moscow, 1981).

<sup>59</sup>'Armiya i Otechestvo v poezii russkikh klassikov', NS, No. 5, 1991, p. 120.



secure his appointment as the new first deputy editor<sup>60</sup>. Sergei Vikulov seems to have accepted Bondarev's advice on this matter<sup>61</sup>. Given Bondarev's reputedly close links with senior Central Committee secretary and Politburo member Andrei Kirilenko<sup>62</sup>, it may be hypothesised that the chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union agreed the appointment either with Kirilenko personally or with the latter's aides. Seleznev may also have enjoyed a degree of patronage from foreign minister and Politburo member Andrei Gromyko<sup>63</sup>. The appointment of the poet Ustinov (b. 1938) as the second deputy chief editor was made on the advice of Vikulov's colleague, the poet and 'working' secretary of the RSFSR Writers' Union, responsible for the Russian regions, Sergei Orlov<sup>64</sup>.

#### Nash sovremennik on the Offensive: February - October 1981.

The new appointments came at a time when the struggle over the Brezhnev succession was increasing within the leadership. In the autumn of 1980, Konstantin Chernenko, full member of the Politburo, senior secretary of the Central Committee and head of that body's General Department, began a campaign to take control of the Administrative Organs portfolio from the ailing Kirilenko<sup>65</sup>. Soon afterwards, in December 1980, Valerii Ganichev, chief

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<sup>60</sup>V. Kozhinov, interview 17/12/92; S. Semanov, interview 21/9/94; B. Sporov, interview 9/7/93; S. Vikulov, interview 8/4/92.

<sup>61</sup>A. Kazintsev, interview 16/12/92; Sporov, interview; Vikulov, interview.

<sup>62</sup>According to Nail' Bikkenin, Bondarev had direct access to Kirilenko (N. Bikkenin, interview 16/8/93). On Kirilenko, see *Chapter One*.

<sup>63</sup>P. Palievskii, interview 7/9/94.

<sup>64</sup>V. Ustinov, interview 19/8/93. Orlov had helped Ustinov earlier in his career.

<sup>65</sup>A. Knight, *The KGB - Police and Politics in the Soviet Union*, Unwin Hyman, Boston, 1988, p. 90; A. Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 61.

editor of *Komsomol'skaya pravda* since 1978, and probably a Kirilenko client, was removed from his post.

Vikulov himself was given warning of possible trouble when, in February 1981, the month the new appointments at *Nash sovremennik* took effect, the journal was severely criticised by the chief censor Petr Romanov in a report to the Central Committee Propaganda Department. Vikulov, the censor indicted, 'crudely broke the demands of the decree of the Central Committee of 7th January 1969' by informing an author (the writer on rural affairs, Yurii Chernichenko) that 'observations on their writings come from Glavlit of the USSR', an action which led to 'undesirable relations between Glavlit and the creative intelligentsia'<sup>66</sup>. Romanov asked the Central Committee to examine the 'incorrect actions' of chief editor Vikulov. However, unlike Ganichev (and somewhat later Sergei Semanov), Vikulov kept his post<sup>67</sup>.

The first issue of *Nash sovremennik* on which Seleznev worked came out in February, the month of the centenary of the death of Dostoevskii, that 'most "dangerous" pre-revolutionary Russian author'<sup>68</sup>. In an article in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* the same month, Seleznev described Dostoevskii as 'a great unifying, centripetal force, bringing people, nationalities, nations together'<sup>69</sup>. Dostoevskii, according to Seleznev, was 'an uncompromising antagonist of the bourgeois world', who promised a far-reaching social

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<sup>66</sup>*TsKhSD, fond 5, opis' 84, delo 112, listy 25-29.* The 1969 decree had effectively placed more responsibility on chief editors (V. Solodin, interview 30/7/93).

<sup>67</sup>Nevertheless, in May Vikulov was duly summoned to the Propaganda department where he was informed of 'the necessity for the leadership of the journal to rigorously implement the [1969] decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU' (*TsKhSD, op. cit.*).

<sup>68</sup>M. Dewhirst, 'Soviet Russian Literature and Literary Policy', p. 186.

<sup>69</sup>Yu. Seleznev, 'Velikaya nadezhda Dostoevskogo', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 31, February 8th, 1981, p. 4.



transformation by providing a 'higher, unifying, elevating idea'. This interpretation of Dostoevskii, whose views Seleznev pretended to find compatible with those of Marx, was to be a focal point of the journal's publications over the months which followed. Despite Vikulov's recent conflicts with the authorities, *Nash sovremennik* now became a progressively more radical and statist nationalist publication. This resulted in a polarisation among editorial board members and, as a consequence, the non-nationalist Yurii Nagibin and the popular nationalist Viktor Astaf'ev left the journal<sup>70</sup>.

The publication in March of Soloukhin's popular nationalist justification for the existence of God was an extraordinary event and Seleznev's first 'achievement' at *Nash sovremennik*<sup>71</sup>. Outside the journal, support may have come from Filipp Bobkov, head of the KGB's 5th Directorate, which dealt with the intelligentsia. Bobkov has claimed he raised the matter of religion, with Andropov's support, in a speech at an all-Union conference of KGB leaders in 1981, saying:

We must very seriously raise the question of working out a political line, and mechanism for its realisation, with regard to religion and believers before the party Central Committee and the leadership of the country. In this matter our country is going by old, out-lived canons. We must no longer relate to believers as second-class citizens. There are many millions of believers in the country [...] and they deserve special respect.

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<sup>70</sup>Nagibin was the only surviving member of the pre-Vikulov editorial board (a member since June 1965). His substantial disagreements with Vikulov's editorial policy dated back to the publication of Pikul's *At the Final Boundary* in 1979 (Yu. Nagibin, interview 16/8/93). For Nagibin's brief memoir of his time at the journal, see *T'ma v kontse tunnelya*, *Nezavisimoe izdatel'stvo PIK*, Moscow, 1996, pp. 137-143. Viktor Astaf'ev had been a member of the original team brought by Vikulov to the journal in 1968.

<sup>71</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 3, 1981, p. 39.



[...] We must fundamentally change our attitude towards the Church and believers.<sup>72</sup>

Soloukhin seems to have been confident he would suffer few ill consequences<sup>73</sup>, but in April he came under fire for his religious views (on the Orthodox tradition of 'elders'), expressed not in *Nash sovremennik*, but in the journal *Moskva*, whose chief editor was the author of *The Brawlers*, Mikhail Alekseev<sup>74</sup>. Alekseev was summoned to meet the junior Central Committee ideology secretary, Mikhail Zimyanin<sup>75</sup>. That same month, Sergei Semanov, a probable Kirilenko client, was sacked as chief editor of *Chelovek i zakon*. This could indicate a weakening in Kirilenko's position, which may also explain the difficulties experienced at this time by Soloukhin.

As this was happening, *Nash sovremennik* was basking in official approval from another direction. At the 26th Party Congress, the trend in agricultural policy to devote more resources to the development of the Russian non-black-earth zone had been confirmed<sup>76</sup>. Ivan Vasil'ev reaped the benefits. The official mouthpiece *Literator*, published in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, described the writer as 'one of the outstanding representatives of the Ovechkin line in contemporary publitsistika'<sup>77</sup>. The official voice not only

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<sup>72</sup>F. Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'*, Veteran MP, Moscow, 1995.

<sup>73</sup>Soloukhin noted in a new concluding paragraph to a book edition of *Kameshki na ladoni* which went to press in December 1981, 'After the periodical publication I was told that some of my judgements were not incontrovertible. But I am not obliged to utter incontrovertible truths' (V. Soloukhin, *Kameshki na ladoni*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1982).

<sup>74</sup>In April, an article in the journal *Nauka i religiya* attacked Soloukhin for religious views he had expressed in the journal *Moskva* (see V. Soloukhin, 'Vremya sobirat' kamni', *Moskva*, No. 2, 1981; Z. Tazhurizina [assistant professor in the Department of Atheism at Moscow State University] & K. Nikonov, 'Chto takoe starchestvo?', *Nauka i religiya*, Nos. 4, 5 & 6, 1981; 'Napadki na Vl. Soloukhina', *Posev*, No. 4, 1982, pp. 3-4).

<sup>75</sup>According to Soloukhin, Zimyanin told Alekseev, 'It's 110 years after the birth of Lenin and you publish something like this'; but Alekseev 'just shrugged it off' (V. Soloukhin, interview 4/9/93).

<sup>76</sup>For a decree to this effect, see 'O dal'neishem razvitii i povyshenii effektivnosti zemlekhozyaistva v nechernozem'e RSFSR v 1981-1985 gg', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 88, April 15th, 1981, pp. 1-2.

<sup>77</sup>*Literator*, 'Deistvennoe slovo', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 20, April 13th, 1981, p. 2.

praised Vasil'ev's latest article in *Nash sovremennik* but lauded the journal for its 'discussion of the Russian non-black-earth zone'<sup>78</sup>. Unfortunately for the Soviet economy, however, such praise could not forestall the disastrous harvest of that year, for which, in a breach of common practice, no figures were published. In stark contrast with reality, then, *Nash sovremennik's* October edition carried on its inside front cover the picture of a happy young farmer in a field at harvest time. The slogan beneath, 'master of the land' (*khozyain zemli*), was Vasil'ev's, though it reflected hopes for the future rather than current realities.

In June *Nash sovremennik* displayed for the first time on its inside front cover what was to become the journal's motto, 'Russia is my motherland' (*Rossiia - rodina moyia*). This motto, the words of a popular song, was a concise evocation of the ambiguities of Russian nationalist sentiment. As a journal of the RSFSR Writers' Union, *Nash sovremennik* was entitled to use the word *Rossiia* to mean precisely the RSFSR - a formally federal, administrative sub-unit of the USSR. The emotional resonance of the term for many Russian readers, however, implied, in popular nationalist terms, the ethnic Russian *nation*, as opposed to the USSR *state*. Yet again, for Russian statist nationalists, the term implied the historical Russian *empire-state* of which the USSR was the contemporary embodiment. For each issue, the slogan was accompanied by a

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<sup>78</sup>V. Svininnikov took the opportunity to pile Vasil'ev with praise (V. Svininnikov, 'Chuzhaya radost' kak svoia'). Vasil'ev himself became a major contributor to *Sovetskaya Rossiia* at this time (see *Sovetskaya Rossiia* Nos. 26, 28, 29, 30, 34, 57, 97, 98, 166, 168, 206, 208, 210, 270, 286 and 287 for 1981; Nos. 7, 49, 62, 73, 78, 84 and 96 for 1982).



photograph evoking Russian patriotic feeling, popular or statist, such as birch trees, an izba, the Kremlin or the Moscow Pushkin monument.

Sergei Semanov, meanwhile, was 'down but not out'. In the July number of the journal he not only took up the gauntlet on the theme of religion, but issued a covert criticism of the war in Afghanistan<sup>79</sup>. He argued that, in the 1920s, Trotskyites had developed a wrong-headed plan to launch an invasion of India in the name of Communist internationalism. 'The Leninist party', Semanov wrote, 'of course repudiated this adventure'<sup>80</sup>.

Semanov seems to have used the derogative term 'Trotskyite', as a codeword for 'Andropovite', to attack the Andropov leadership faction and its policies<sup>81</sup>:

For him [Semanov] the Andropovites constitute an amalgam of Jews and denationalised Russians who advocate a path that is suicidal for Russia, a country that has already paid a terrible price for the fanaticism of the 1920s and 1930s. The invasion of Afghanistan is seen as the first step in a process of Russian national self-destruction.<sup>82</sup>

In criticising the policy of the former Afghan leader Amin towards religion in Afghanistan<sup>83</sup>, Semanov also seems to have been developing arguments on religion put forward by Kirilenko in the Politburo debates on Afghanistan in 1979<sup>84</sup>. Kirilenko had then warned against the use of 'unlawful methods' against believers<sup>85</sup>. The article is further evidence, therefore, that support for the religious

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<sup>79</sup>Semanov, 'Sovremennoe oblich'e starogo vruga'.

<sup>80</sup>Semanov has denied this interpretation, stating he supported the invasion of Afghanistan (S. Semanov, interview 21/9/94). Walter Laqueur has interpreted Semanov's article as a criticism of the invasion of Afghanistan (Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 94).

<sup>81</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 23. Semanov has said that by the term 'Trotskyism', he had in mind the Westernising dissident movement (Semanov, interview).

<sup>82</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>83</sup>Semanov, *op. cit.*

<sup>84</sup>B. Gromov, *Ogranichennyi kontingent*, Progress, Moscow, 1994, pp. 26, 30 & 43-44.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.



publications in the journal came from Kirilenko and his aides.

Spring, summer and early autumn saw the publication of two important popular nationalist works: Vasilii Belov's *Harmony* and Mikhail Alekseev's *The Brawlers*. According to Ivan Zhukov, from 1982 the 'overseer' of *Nash sovremennik* in the Central Committee Department of Culture, *Harmony* encountered serious difficulties in getting past the censor<sup>86</sup>. However, the work received a generally favourable critical reception and extracts were widely republished<sup>87</sup>. Official permission to print Alekseev's *The Brawlers*, with its description of the devastating results of collectivisation, was a yet stronger indication of a new popular nationalist direction in official Soviet literary policy<sup>88</sup>. It was rumoured that Alekseev, chief editor of the journal *Moskva* and a pillar of the literary establishment, had personally agreed publication of the novel (first announced as 'forthcoming' in 1978) with the 'ideological secretary', Mikhail Suslov<sup>89</sup>. Despite this, publication of the work did not go altogether smoothly<sup>90</sup>. At the very last moment there was a month's delay in the appearance of the final instalment, which included details of the 1933 famine. Alekseev was called back to Moscow from holiday in

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<sup>86</sup>Ivan Zhukov had formerly been deputy chief editor to Ganichev at *Komsomol'skaya pravda*. From 1981 he worked in the Central Committee Department of Culture (I. Zhukov, interview 22/6/94).

<sup>87</sup>See V. Turbin, 'Russkii lad', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 136, June 14th, 1981, p. 6. For an extract, see V. Belov, 'Ne slovom ediny'm', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 47, June 12th, 1981, p. 6.

<sup>88</sup>Extracts had been published the previous year (M. Alekseev: 'Zima', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 48, November 26th, 1980; 'Posle draki', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 42, October 17th, 1980). The novel was subsequently published in abridged form in *Ogonek* (M. Alekseev, 'Drachuny', *Ogonek*, Nos. 31-41, 1981).

<sup>89</sup>Sporov, interview. Alekseev at that time was editor-in-chief of the journal *Moskva*, secretary of the board of the USSR Writers' Union, deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, Hero of Socialist Labour and laureate of both USSR and RSFSR state prizes for literature.

<sup>90</sup>Vikulov, interview; Solodin, interview; S. Yurenen, *Radio Svoboda: materialy issledovatel'skogo otdela*, RS113/84.

his native village in Saratov oblast to iron out the final disagreements at a meeting with chief censor Romanov and deputy chief censor Vladimir Solodin, in the company of deputy chief editor Seleznev. As a result, some more passages, including one listing areas affected by the famine and another with descriptions of cannibalism, were cut<sup>91</sup>.

Alekseev, and *Nash sovremennik*, evidently took a calculated risk in publishing *The Brawlers*. Sergei Yurenen was later to remark:

Of course, in talking about this theme, which is a painful one for the party, [Alekseev] took a certain risk. But this risk, for one experienced in the necessary games and used to the prior calculation of his moves, was undoubtedly justified by the general evaluation of the situation. For then, at the beginning of the 1980s, in the final years of the Brezhnev epoch, M. Alekseev was far from alone in living and acting in the hope that the situation would soon change in favour of the 'Russian fellowship', and perhaps not just in the realm of literature.<sup>92</sup>

The journal took care to alleviate the impact of the criticism of collectivisation in *The Brawlers* by printing a version of what was to be the 'official' line towards the novel. Oleg Mikhailov, former head of the department of criticism at the journal, cited the author's own words to argue that:

[...] we know and are ready to repeat as often as necessary that without the *kolkhozy* we would not have built up our industry and would not have been able to withstand the difficult experiences which fell to the lot of our people in the years of the Great Patriotic War'.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>M. Alekseev, interview 11/6/93; M. Alekseev, *Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh. Toma sed'moi - vos'moi*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1990, pp. 565-568; S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, pp. 12-3.

<sup>92</sup>Yurenen, *op. cit.*

<sup>93</sup>O. Mikhailov, 'Vystradannoe slovo', *NS*, No. 7, 1981, p. 75. See also *Literator*, 'S tochki zreniya istiny', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 38, September 16th, 1981, p. 2; 'Obsuzhdenie romana Mikhaila Alekseeva "Drachuny" v Moskovskoi pisatel'skoi organizatsii - Krasota truda i podviga', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 10, March 15th, 1982, p. 5.



When the censor insisted on delaying the third instalment of Alekseev's *The Brawlers*, the need for all parties (the journal, the censors, the Central Committee) to bring out the issue on time resulted in a compromise agreement to delay publication of the third part of *The Brawlers* and to print Antonov's *The Morality of Economics* in the August issue in its place<sup>94</sup>.

With this first full-length article, Antonov, former political prisoner and contributor to the samizdat journal *Veche*<sup>95</sup>, began his career as a leading theorist and writer on economics in *Nash sovremennik*. Antonov had brought the original version of the article (then called 'Economics and Morality' ['*Ekonomika i nravstvennost*']) to *Nash sovremennik* in 1978 on the advice of his friend Boris Sporov, a *sotrudnik* in the department of *publitsistika*, but only now did the article appear, with extensive cuts and numerous quotations from Brezhnev added<sup>96</sup>. Despite the cuts, the article retained its quality as an unusually forthright attack on bureaucratic mismanagement and an innovative synthesis of Communist ideology and pre-Revolutionary Russian tradition.

### The November 1981 Issue

The November 1981 issue of *Nash sovremennik* coincided both with the celebration of the 64th anniversary of the Great October Revolution and the 160th anniversary of the birth of Dostoevskii. For *Nash sovremennik*, the latter

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<sup>94</sup>Antonov, '*Nravstvennost' ekonomiki*'.

<sup>95</sup>See, for example, P. Duncan, 'The Fate of Russian Nationalism: The Samizdat Journal *Veche* Revisited', pp. 39-44.

<sup>96</sup>M. Antonov, interview 11/8/93; Sporov, interview; Ustinov, interview.



anniversary had the greater significance. Seleznev threw caution to the wind and, breaking an important convention of Soviet editors<sup>97</sup>, published not one daring contribution, but four in a single issue. These were Vladimir Krupin's *The Fortieth Day*, Vadim Kozhinov's "And Every Tongue Will Name Me...", Anatolii Lanshchikov's *Great Contemporaries: Dostoevskii and Chernyshevskii* and Sergei Semanov's *History and Slander*<sup>98</sup>. The deputy chief censor Vladimir Solodin has recalled that he personally summoned Seleznev and, in a three-hour conversation, warned him not to go ahead with the publications planned for the November issue, but Seleznev refused to comply<sup>99</sup>.

In the issue, *Nash sovremennik* effectively advocated a statist nationalist ideology as an alternative to Communist 'internationalist' ideology. The most important of the articles was undoubtedly Kozhinov's powerful peroration on the 'Russian idea'. Like Semanov's earlier remarks, but now in a more sophisticated and elaborate form, 'Kozhinov's barbs were not directed at the Tatar Mongols but at the Andropovites, who were beginning to make a serious bid for power'<sup>100</sup>.

At the end of July, Vikulov, recently honoured by appointment to the board of the USSR Writers' Union<sup>101</sup>, departed on his annual month-long holiday, extended on this occasion by a further month's 'creative leave'. Seleznev, from that month first deputy <sup>chief</sup> editor of the journal, was

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<sup>97</sup>Kazintsev, interview 10/6/93; Semanov, interview 27/9/94.

<sup>98</sup>Krupin, 'Sorokovoi den'; Kozhinov, "I nazovet menya vsyak sushchii v nei yazyk..."; Lanshchikov, 'Velikie sovremenniki: Dostoevskii i Chernyshevskii'; Semanov, 'Istoriya i spletnya'.

<sup>99</sup>Solodin, interview.

<sup>100</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>101</sup>*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 27, July 1st, 1981.

left in charge. It is virtually inconceivable that chief editor Vikulov did not know of Seleznev's plans. Some evidence that Vikulov did know is provided by Krupin's novella, *The Fortieth Day*. On his departure, Vikulov had left Seleznev to complete the editing of Krupin's new work<sup>102</sup>. Urged on by Belov and Rasputin, Seleznev decided to publish the story uncut<sup>103</sup>. It would seem unlikely that Belov, Rasputin and Seleznev would all have gone against Vikulov's wishes in this matter. Probably, as an experienced chief editor, Vikulov intended his absence to serve as an alibi if the November issue ran into trouble. He could in that case place full responsibility on his new, inexperienced, first deputy chief editor. This, in the event, he did.

#### The Issues of December 1981 & January 1982

Two more issues of the journal were prepared before the impact of the November issue was felt. The December issue, also prepared in Vikulov's absence<sup>104</sup>, was directly overseen, as an 'even-numbered' issue<sup>105</sup>, by Ustinov, which may explain the predominance of publitsistika in the issue. However, the number also contained important works of literary criticism, which show Seleznev's influence, in particular Vladimir Shubkin's powerful diatribe against Communist ideology, *The Burning Bush*<sup>106</sup>. Sergei Vikulov's *His Snowdrops*, an introduction to a selection of the poetry and letters of the nationalist poet from Vologda, Nikolai

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<sup>102</sup>Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', NS, No. 11. 1996, pp. 18-19.

<sup>103</sup>V. Belov, interview 30/9/94.

<sup>104</sup>The December issue went to the typesetters on 11/9/81.

<sup>105</sup>See Appendix.

<sup>106</sup>Shubkin, 'Neopalimaya kupina'.



Rubtsov, also conveyed a degree of support by the chief editor for Seleznev's publication policy<sup>107</sup>.

The January issue, prepared after Vikulov's return from holiday, went to press after the official negative reaction to the November issue was known<sup>108</sup>. Nonetheless, this also contained a bold treatment of important nationalist themes in Soloukhin's *The Continuation of Time*<sup>109</sup>. The issue carried, on its inside cover beneath the motto 'Russia is my motherland', a picture of the Pushkin monument and, in a quotation from Pushkin, a defiant summary of the journal's position: 'Respect for the past is the feature that distinguishes the educated person from the savage'. The back cover announced the journal's own prize winners for the year 1981, which included Alekseev's *The Brawlers*, Belov's *Harmony*, I. Vasil'ev's *The Russian Land* and Antonov's *The Morality of Economics*. No doubt Vikulov was, by this time, aware that prizes to such as Kozhinov, Krupin or Lanshchikov would have been out of the question.

A new tack in publication policy was Ivan Sinitsyn's argument in favour of reform in secondary education, based on the ideas of 'education with labour' developed by Makarenko in the 1930s<sup>110</sup>. Sinitsyn went so far as to criticise the Ministry of Education for failing to support these ideas. If Soloukhin's patron had recently shown signs of being less able to defend his protégé, Sinitsyn

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<sup>107</sup>'Shiroko po Rusi... (Stranitsy zhizni i tvorchestva Nikolaya Rubtsova)', NS, No. 12, 1981, pp. 145-174.

<sup>108</sup>The issue went to the typesetters on 12/10/81 and was passed for printing on 5/1/82.

<sup>109</sup>Soloukhin, 'Prodolzhenie vremeni'.

<sup>110</sup>I. Sinitsyn, 'Uchen'e i trud', NS, No. 1, 1982, pp. 140-156 (for the continuation, see NS, No. 2, 1982, pp. 130-145).



evidently continued to enjoy powerful patronage, which at this point the journal may have seen fit to make use of.

Sinitsyn's views were strongly opposed both by the Central Committee Department of Science and Higher Educational Establishments, headed by Brezhnev's close associate Sergei Trapeznikov, and by Minister of Education, Mikhail Prokof'ev<sup>111</sup>. As a writer on agriculture, Sinitsyn had earlier enjoyed the patronage of Central Committee secretary and Politburo member, Fedor Kulakov<sup>112</sup>. Kulakov had patronised the young Gorbachev and, it may be hypothesised, Gorbachev, through intermediaries, had assumed the patronage of Sinitsyn<sup>113</sup>. Certainly Gorbachev and his close aide, Anatolii Chernyaev, both expressed a dislike for Trapeznikov in their memoirs<sup>114</sup>.

Other evidence that *Nash sovremennik* continued to enjoy highly placed support, specifically in the Department of Propaganda headed by Evgenii Tyazhel'nikov, came in January when it became clear that *Nash sovremennik's* print-run remained high at above 330,000 copies per month (approximately equal to that of *Novyi mir*).

### Nash sovremennik Struck Down

Chernenko succeeded Kirilenko as the official responsible for supervision of the Administrative Organs Department towards the end of 1981<sup>115</sup>. It was this, it may be hypothesised, which determined the fate of *Nash*

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<sup>111</sup>Zhukov, interview; I. Sinitsyn, interview 14/9/93.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup>M. Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Novosti, Moscow, 1995, p. 325; A. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, Progress, Moscow, 1993; Roy Medvedev, 'Lichnost' i epokha [Kniga 1]', Novosti, Moscow, 1991, p. 145.

<sup>115</sup>Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

*sovremennik*. November had begun well for the nationalists, when Belov received the USSR state prize for literature, but a hostile official reaction to the November issue of *Nash sovremennik* came swiftly<sup>116</sup>. On December 18th *Literaturnaya Rossiya* quoted Brezhnev, ostensibly in connection with the leader's receipt of the Lenin prize for literature on his 75th birthday, to officially condemn nationalist ideology:

Every national culture, enclosed within itself, inevitably suffers, loses the features of universality [...] The most important questions about national traditions and distinctiveness [samobytnosti] must not be simplified, turned into ethnography and obsession with a particular way of life [bytovism].<sup>117</sup>

It was 'ideological secretary' Suslov's responsibility to initiate punitive action in the literary world, and Chernenko's assumption of Kirilenko's duties seems to have brought additional pressure to bear for Suslov to do so. At the end of December, the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union was called into session to discuss and condemn the November issue of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>118</sup>. The meeting of the secretariat, chaired by the first deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Yurii Bondarev, was also attended by writers and editors from *Nash sovremennik* and representatives from the Central Committee Department of Culture, namely the deputy head of the Department, Al'bert Belyaev, and the new acting head of the Department's literature section, Sergei Potemkin<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>116</sup>*Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 256, November 6th, 1981, p. 1.

<sup>117</sup>L. Brezhnev, 'Utverzhdai pravdu zhizni', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 51, December 18th, 1981, p. 3.

<sup>118</sup>'Obsuzhdenie zhurnala *Nash sovremennik*', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 52, December 25th, 1981, p. 4.

<sup>119</sup>Potemkin's predecessor, K. Dolgov, had been dismissed, presumably as a result of *Nash sovremennik*'s November 1981 publications.

At the meeting, Seleznev defended his actions and refused to recant. Vikulov, on the other hand, denied responsibility for the publications, citing his absence on holiday. The secretariat solidly backed Vikulov against his young lieutenant. According to Aleksandr Kazintsev, then a young *sotrudnik* at the journal, only the writer Petr Proskurin spoke in defence of the first deputy chief editor<sup>120</sup>. Belov had previously supported Seleznev and threatened to leave the journal if the latter was removed<sup>121</sup>, but now he, along with Rasputin, seems to have kept silent. Both writers remained on the editorial board.

In the upshot, the secretariat accused the journal of 'insufficient editorial work with the authors' and condemned the four specific publications by Kozhinov, Krupin, Lanshchikov and Semanov<sup>122</sup>. Krupin was accused of 'a grumbling tone' and of lacking 'an active authorial position and deep penetration into the essence of the phenomena described'. Kozhinov was accused of a 'pseudoscientific approach to the study of the history of Russian literature'. In Lanshchikov's article on Dostoevskii, 'uncharacteristic details and contradictions were given disproportionate prominence'. Semanov was criticised for having shown 'a certain scornfulness [...] for the ethical norms of literary polemic'. All these authors, together with Seleznev, were to be virtually denied publication for the next three years. Although

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<sup>120</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'A za nami idut maroděry', *NS*, No. 2, 1992, pp. 174-185. According to Belyaev, only Aleksandr Mikhailov spoke up for Seleznev at the meeting (A. Belyaev, interview 1/4/92). In Sporov's account, all the secretaries defended Vikulov and spoke against Seleznev (Sporov, interview). All accounts agree that Seleznev defended himself.

<sup>121</sup>Belov, interview.

<sup>122</sup>'Obsuzhdenie zhurnala *Nash sovremennik*'.



Vladimir Shubkin's article, *The Burning Bush*, was not mentioned in the official account of the meeting, Shubkin was apparently called in to be read a lecture by a secretary of the USSR Writers' Union, Yurii Surovtsev (possibly one of the anti-national 'extremists' of contemporary life to whom Shubkin had made reference in his article)<sup>123</sup>.

In response, Vikulov 'recognised the criticism of these materials of the eleventh issue as being well-founded, thanked [the secretariat] for the timely, benevolent and principled discussion, and gave his assurances that the editorial collective would, with great attention and responsibility, take into account the reproofs and wishes [expressed]'<sup>124</sup>. The final recommendation of the secretariat was that the editor 'strengthen the literary personnel of the editorial board', a code which meant the sacking of the two deputy chief editors. The last edition on which Seleznev and Ustinov worked was that of April 1982 (sent to the typesetters on January 12th).

Mutual recriminations followed. Vikulov, as soon as the official reaction became known, tended to see events as a replay of the Pikul' affair of 1979: 'enemies' who had failed to remove him then had once again tried to do so, this time using Seleznev against him<sup>125</sup>. A secretary of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Shundik, also considered the whole affair was set up to remove Vikulov<sup>126</sup>. Seleznev and his supporters, on the contrary, interpreted events as a plot

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<sup>123</sup>M. Nazarov, 'Dostignet li tseli "literaturnoe" postanovlenie TsK?', *Posev*, No. 12, 1981, p. 51.

<sup>124</sup>'Obsuzhdenie zhurnala *Nash sovremennik*'.

<sup>125</sup>Vikulov, interview.

<sup>126</sup>N. Shundik, interview 24/8/93.

to get rid of him<sup>127</sup>. These antagonisms were part of a wider breach which now developed between the nationalist writers, critics and editors - popular and statist - who felt themselves betrayed, and the literary bureaucrats who, until the secretariat meeting, had supported them.

On January 20th, in a coda to the recent events, *Literator* in *Literaturnaya gazeta* called on writers to emulate the 'glories' of socialist realism - the writers Fadeev, Tikhonov, Furmanov, Serafimovich, Vishnevskii, Sholokhov and Tvardovskii - and 'observe the social and class criteria and principles of historicism'<sup>128</sup>.

### Death of Suslov

The dismissal of two newly appointed deputy chief editors was, in itself, not a 'decisive attack against the representatives of national and "village" literature', as some observers at that time claimed<sup>129</sup>. Indeed, had Suslov remained alive, the decisions of the December plenum of the RSFSR Writers' Union might have been the end of the matter. However, on January 20th, 1982, Suslov suffered a severe stroke and five days later, on the 25th, he died. His death brought a sudden and intense struggle between the Chernenko and Andropov camps for the vacant post of 'Second Secretary' (a struggle which was only resolved in Andropov's favour in May). An immediate result of the death of the 'main theorist of the party', as his *Pravda* obituary

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<sup>127</sup>A. Kuz'min, interview 24/6/93; Sporov, interview. According to Ustinov, Seleznev believed that, in the event of Vikulov's removal, he would become the new chief editor (Ustinov, interview).

<sup>128</sup>*Literator*, 'Uroki sovetskoi klassiki', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 3, January 20th, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>129</sup>*Posev*, No. 4, 1982, p. 4.

described him, was the appearance of a fierce attack on religious popular nationalist sentiment in the press<sup>130</sup>.

In the issue of *Kommunist* signed for printing on the day of Suslov's death, its chief editor, Richard Kosolapov, a Chernenko associate, published a fierce attack on Soloukhin's *Pebbles in the Palm*, which had appeared in *Nash sovremennik* almost a year before, in March 1981<sup>131</sup>. The attack on Soloukhin consisted of two 'readers' letters' and an editorial comment focusing on Soloukhin's reference to 'a higher principle of intelligence' (*vysshee razumnoe nachalo*). The first letter, by M. Rutkevich, a writer of orthodox Marxist-Leninist views, denounced the appearance of 'religious and mystical ideas and sentiments deeply alien to the world-view of materialism', and what it called Soloukhin's 'flirting with godikins' (*zaigryvanie s bozhenkoi*) on the pages of a Soviet journal<sup>132</sup>. The second correspondent expressed amazement that 'a Soviet journal and a member of the CPSU' could further the ends of the clergy by propagandising religion<sup>133</sup>. The accompanying editorial supported these criticisms, observing, 'It is not the first time that god-building motifs and mystical subjects have made their appearance in the work of V. Soloukhin and it is obvious that this does not happen by

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<sup>130</sup>See Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 14.

<sup>131</sup>'Pochta zhurnala', *Kommunist*, No. 2, January, 1982, pp. 127-128 (sent for typesetting by January 19th, 1982; sent for printing on January 25th, 1982). See Soloukhin, 'Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 3, 1981, p. 39. Soloukhin has attributed the attacks on him to the personal hostility of Mikhail Zimyanin, the junior Central Committee ideological secretary (Soloukhin, interview). In that case, it could be hypothesised that Suslov had hitherto prevented Zimyanin criticising Soloukhin. According to some reports, Soloukhin was summoned to talk with the KGB (Nazarov, *op. cit.*, p. 52). This has been denied by Soloukhin (Soloukhin, interview).

<sup>132</sup>'Pochta zhurnala', p. 127. For examples of Rutkevich's orthodox Marxism, see M. Rutkevich, 'Sovremennyi rabochii klass: osobennosti, tendentsii razvitiya', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 8, January 10th, 1981, pp. 2-3; 'Starye prorochestva na novyi lad', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 224, September 27th, 1981, p. 3. Three additional 'correspondents', named as having written to *Kommunist* to express these reservations about Soloukhin's recent publications, included Z. Tazhurizina, who had earlier attacked Soloukhin's religious views in *Nauka i religiya*. See 'Pochta zhurnala', p. 128.

<sup>133</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 127; M. Nazarov, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-55.



chance'<sup>134</sup>. The editors also cited an earlier publication of a selection of *Pebbles in the Palm* in which Soloukhin had argued that the 'Designer' (Konstruktor) gave humans a potential ability without giving them the means to use it<sup>135</sup>. The editorial criticised the work of the party organisation of *Nash sovremennik* for tolerating the publication of such views.

That month Soloukhin also came under attack from *Literator* in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, this time for comments in his January 1982 *Nash sovremennik* article, *The Continuation of Time*<sup>136</sup>. *Literator* admitted to 'a feeling of genuine disappointment' and accused Soloukhin of not knowing what he was talking about when he 'takes it upon himself to judge, for example, contemporary operatic art'. *Nash sovremennik's* editorial board was accused of being lax in its assessment of the opinions it published. The following month a major attack on Soloukhin, first published the previous spring in *Nauka i religiya*, was reprinted as a pamphlet by the *Znanie* society<sup>137</sup>.

### The Attack Broadens

Five days after Suslov's death, a new phase in the campaign against *Nash sovremennik* began. On February 1st 1982, an article in *Pravda* by V. Kuleshov, head of the Russian literature department at Moscow State University, revived the discussion of the November 1981 issue by

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<sup>134</sup>'Pochta zhurnala', p. 128.

<sup>135</sup>See V. Soloukhin, *Kameshki na ladoni*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1977, p. 23.

<sup>136</sup>*Literator*, 'Publitsistika: glubina i meli', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, February 17th, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>137</sup>K. Nikonov & Z. Tazhurizina, *Kritika ideologicheskikh osnov pravoslavnogo monashestva*, *Znanie* (Nauchnyi ateizm, No. 3, 1982), Moscow, 1982.

accusing Kozhinov, in "And Every Tongue Will Name Me...", of 'deviations from the traditions of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics'<sup>138</sup>. The article was accompanied by an editorial referring portentously to 'blemishes of a very serious kind' in contemporary literary criticism. Kuleshov denounced what he considered to be Kozhinov's misinterpretations of Dostoevskii, Kulikovo and Lenin's writings on Asia. The article also attacked Seleznev's *Sovetskaya Rossiya* article of the previous February, which had advocated a statist Russian nationalism<sup>139</sup>.

Brudny has singled out this publication as one which 'signalled the end of the "political contract"' between the political leadership and the Russian nationalists<sup>140</sup>. The decision to end the 'contract' he attributes to Andropov<sup>141</sup>. Indeed, in the period which followed, Andropov seemed to steal a march on Chernenko in the struggle for power. When Brezhnev fell ill during a March visit to Uzbekistan, Andropov deputised for the General Secretary in Moscow. Andropov also made the important speech on the anniversary of Lenin's birth (made the previous year by Chernenko), and used the opportunity to criticise corruption, and thus show his discontent with the Brezhnev regime. Kirilenko's final eclipse was indicated by his failure to appear on the podium for this speech<sup>142</sup>.

Andropov's rise to prominence, it may be hypothesised, was the result of the growing strength of an anti-Chernenko

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<sup>138</sup>V. Kuleshov, 'Tochnost' kriteriev', *Pravda*, No. 32, February 1st, 1982, p. 7.

<sup>139</sup>Seleznev, 'Velikaya nadezhda Dostoevskogo'.

<sup>140</sup>Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroyka', p. 168.

<sup>141</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup>V. Solov'ev & E. Klepikova, *Zagovorshchiki v Kremle*, AO Moskovskii tsentr iskusstv, Moscow, 1991, p. 130.



coalition. Kirilenko's former allies and clients may have begun to transfer their allegiance to the head of the KGB<sup>143</sup>. Indeed, this same month, RSFSR representatives, traditional associates of Kirilenko, demonstratively pressed their interests. Solomentsev, chair of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, was one of two Politburo members who attended the unveiling of a statue to General Suvorov in a Moscow square named in his honour. In the legal journal *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, an article attracted wide notice for arguing that the RSFSR was not doing well out of the USSR<sup>144</sup>.

### Nash sovremennik February-April 1982

The February issue had been sent to the typesetters before the December meeting of the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union, but went to press only after the death of Suslov. All but bare of nationalist interest, on the inside of the front cover a picture of a border guard was published in which it is tempting to read a symbolic gesture towards Andropov's KGB (the border guards were a part of the KGB).

The March issue, which went to press after the attacks in *Kommunist* and *Pravda* had appeared, was stripped of the motto, 'Russia is my homeland'<sup>145</sup>. It was, however, perhaps significant that the picture, dedicated to Women's Day, showed a woman smiling beneath a gloved hand. Indeed, the journal itself in this issue could be seen surreptitiously

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<sup>143</sup>J. Hough, 'Andropov's First Year', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 32, No. 6, November-December, 1983, pp. 49-64; Knight, *The KGB - Police and Politics in the Soviet Union*.

<sup>144</sup>G. Litvinova & B. Uralis, 'Demograficheskaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuza', *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 3, 1982, pp. 38-46.

<sup>145</sup>NS, No. 3, 1982. This issue was sent to the typesetters on 11/12/81 and went to press on 18/2/82.



smiling at its opponents. Extraordinarily, *Nash sovremennik* openly defied both *Kommunist* and *Pravda*, publishing a further selection of Soloukhin's *Pebbles in the Palm*, which included another argument to the effect that the nature of the universe implied the existence of God<sup>146</sup>. John Dunlop has commented: 'One wonders whether *Kommunist* had ever been previously so challenged'<sup>147</sup>.

With the April issue, however, *Nash sovremennik* finally submitted to the pressure and turned to two authors, the historian Apollon Kuz'min and the novelist and literary official Nikolai Shundik (both of whom, the following month, joined the editorial board). In their respective contributions, the two writers suggested lines of compromise between *Nash sovremennik* and the authorities. Kuz'min, in *The Writer and History*, attacked Kozhinov's 'White' statist variant of nationalism, while promoting an alternative 'Red' brand<sup>148</sup>. Shundik, a secretary of the RSFSR Writers' Union, former chief editor of *Volga* and, along with Vikulov, one of the signatories of the 1969 *Ogonek* 'Letter of the Eleven' against *Novyi mir*, in his novel, *The Ancient Sign*, similarly offered a blend of the nationalist with the politically acceptable: praising the simplicity of the way of life of rural islanders, while attacking US foreign policy<sup>149</sup>. Literator's approval of Shundik's novel symbolised the authorities' satisfaction with the latest changes at the journal. *The Ancient Sign*, wrote Literator, is a 'serious and large-scale discussion

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<sup>146</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Rasskazy. Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 3, 1982, p. 79.

<sup>147</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 24; *Posev*, No. 4, 1982, p. 4.

<sup>148</sup>Kuz'min, 'Pisatel' i istoriya'.

<sup>149</sup>Shundik, 'Drevnii znak'.

of the fates not only of the small nationalities of the capitalist North, but also of all humanity, defending its holy right to live under peaceful skies'<sup>150</sup>.

## Conclusions

The background to the leadership struggle in 1981-1982 was formed by the expectation of Brezhnev's imminent death, the crisis enveloping Soviet economic performance, the paralysis of policy-making and the ever-diminishing appeal of a moribund official ideology. As the political contest reached a climax, two new deputy chief editors - Yurii Seleznev and Valentin Ustinov - were appointed at *Nash sovremennik* in order to expand the range of Russian nationalist publications<sup>151</sup>. Those who took this decision were chief editor Sergei Vikulov and deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Yurii Bondarev, probably supported, through the medium of their aides, by leaders in the party hierarchy - Andrei Kirilenko, Mikhail Suslov and Evgenii Tyazhel'nikov. At lower levels in the Central Committee it may be possible to identify this support in the head of the Department of Culture, Vasilii Shauro, the head of that Department's Literature Sector, Konstantin Dolgov, and the respective 'overseers' of *Nash sovremennik* in the departments of Culture (Nina Zhil'tsova<sup>152</sup>) and Propaganda (Aleksandr Gavrilov<sup>153</sup>).

As Mikhail Agursky noted at the time, 'Russian nationalist writings are a manifestation of the internal

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<sup>150</sup>*Literator*, 'Aktual'noe slovo', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 28, July 14th, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>151</sup>'*Armiya i Otechestvo v poezii russkikh klassikov*'.

<sup>152</sup>According to Vikulov, Zhil'tsova sympathised with the journal (Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 9, 1996, p. 9).

<sup>153</sup>A. Gavrilov, interviews 17/6/94 & 8/8/94.



struggle within the Soviet leadership'<sup>154</sup>. John Dunlop, who has denoted the period considered in this chapter as the '*Nash sovremennik* affair', has argued that 'the last years of Brezhnev's reign witnessed a marked rise in the power and influence of the so-called Russian party'<sup>155</sup>. This period, he has argued, 'represented perhaps the high-water mark of the Russian party's attempts to affect and alter the present and future direction taken by the USSR'<sup>156</sup>. However, as has been seen, it was also the period of the 'Russian party's' defeat.

Dunlop defined the 'Russian party' as:

[...] not an organisation and not, strictly speaking, a movement. Rather it consists of a great number of individuals whose beliefs range from a Christian variety in the Solzhenitsyn mould to a version of neofascism, but all of whom contend that the Soviet Union must pay more heed to the vital needs and concerns of the most numerous ethnic group, ethnic Russians.<sup>157</sup>

The evidence of this chapter suggests that what may be called the 'Russian party' did indeed have some organisational strength. In particular, in this period the journal *Nash sovremennik* can be described as an organisation for the articulation of Russian nationalist ideology, around which adherents of these views could coalesce. The journal had backers in various parts of the Soviet bureaucracy, and allies in the political leadership. The journal was a part of the bureaucratic machine mediating between high-level power-holders and writers and intellectuals. *Nash sovremennik* can therefore be described

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<sup>154</sup>M. Agursky, 'Contemporary Russian Nationalism - History Revised', *Research Paper No. 45*, The Soviet and East European Research Centre, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, January, 1982, p. 68.

<sup>155</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>156</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup>*Ibid.*



as the site of an 'alliance' between nationalists of different hues, sympathetic literary bureaucrats and political leaders.

Dunlop has observed with regard to what he defines as National Bolshevism:

The higher one ascends the ladder of the political hierarchy, the more one tends to encounter the so-called National Bolshevik strand of Russian nationalism, a statist form of Bolshevism largely shorn of its international or Marxist elements [...]. Further away from the political empyrean, one encounters the Christian, Slavophile variant, which has little sympathy for 1917 and its consequences.<sup>158</sup>

However, it would seem more appropriate to describe the attitude, with regard to Russian nationalism, of highly placed officials as, in the words of Valerii Solovei, 'manipulation' or 'functional utilisation' (funktsional'noe ispol'zovanie) rather than a particular form of Russian nationalism as such<sup>159</sup>. Indeed, the struggle to which Dunlop referred was less a contest between ideas, than a political struggle between factions in which nationalist ideas - popular and statist - were used as an instrument. Moreover, as this chapter has seen, a wide range of nationalist viewpoints were represented among 'rank-and-file' nationalists, divided as they were into popular and statist nationalist tendencies, as well as 'White' and 'Red' trends.

*Nash sovremennik's* publication policy in this period had two crucial phases. Before November 1981, it was dominated by popular nationalist works, such as those by Alekseev and Belov, for which support came, it may be

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<sup>158</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup>Solovei, 'Russkii natsionalizm i vlast' v epokhu Gorbacheva', pp. 50, 52, 55.

hypothesised, from Suslov and Kirilenko. In November the journal opened its pages to a 'White' statist nationalist ideology, drawing strongly on popular nationalist sources, which proposed a radical reorientation in official ideology away from Marxism-Leninism, exemplified by Vadim Kozhinov and Vladimir Shubkin.

John Dunlop has explained the appearance of what is, in my terms, 'White' statist nationalism, as a reaction to 'the ominous [...] rise to power of elements that would eventually be able to unseat Brezhnev's chosen successor, Chernenko, and place Yurii Andropov at the party helm'<sup>160</sup>. Dunlop writes, 'Sensing the ascendancy of these elements, nationalist spokesmen such as Vladimir Soloukhin, Vadim Kozhinov, and Sergei Semanov issued warning salvos on the pages of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>161</sup>. However, I would suggest that what prompted the 'White' statist nationalism of the November issue was the defeat of the Kirilenko grouping, rather than a fear of Chernenko's defeat by Andropov. Indeed, it was Chernenko, not Andropov, who took over Kirilenko's position as Central Committee secretary overseeing the powerful Administrative Organs department and initiated action against the nationalists.

With the final fall of Kirilenko, and as some of that leader's former leading clients gave evidence of their readiness to support Andropov, the tables were turned on *Nash sovremennik*. The December meeting of the RSFSR Writers' Union secretariat destroyed the 'alliance', which had been nurtured by Yurii Bondarev and Sergei Vikulov at

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<sup>160</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>161</sup>*Ibid.*

the journal between literary bureaucrats and Russian nationalists. Pressure from the official organs of control made the 'bureaucrats' hasten to appease their angered masters. The radicals were left to face the consequences. As a result, the alliance collapsed amid rancour and recrimination.

John Dunlop has commented, 'This oppression has understandably served to bring the two strands [the *vozhdentsy* and the National Bolsheviks] closer together'<sup>162</sup>. However, the effect of the clamp-down was more divisive than Dunlop portrays. Some of those he calls 'National Bolsheviks' increased their influence at *Nash sovremennik* as a result of the events - those denoted as 'Red' statist nationalists, such as Kuz'min. Other National Bolsheviks, notably Kozhinov (denoted here as 'White' statist) lost out. Similarly, some of those *vozhdentsy* (whom I call popular nationalists), such as Belov and Alekseev, were largely unaffected by events. Others, such as Krupin and Shubkin, suffered badly. The impact of the new party policy line was therefore highly disruptive of any alliances which might have been building among Russian nationalists. In his ability to divide and rule, Andropov showed his political mastery.

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<sup>162</sup>Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, p. 294.



# 3. Yurii Andropov: Russian Nationalist Ideology Suppressed

(Editorial team: chief editor Vikulov, deputy chief editors Krivtsov & Vasil'ev.

Journal issues: May 1982 - February 1984)

## Part One: Thematic Analysis

Between Andropov's appointment as 'Second Secretary' in May 1982 and his death in February 1984, *Nash sovremennik's* publications differed sharply from those considered in *Chapter Two*. *Statist* nationalist writing was severely reduced in quantity and scope, while *popular* nationalist publications were largely channelled into writing on rural reform.

### Imagining the Nation

1) *A Rural Community* Rural life continued to be *Nash sovremennik's* main theme, but few works were now devoted to a nationalist exploration of the nation. Exceptions were

the short stories contributed by Rasputin and Semenov, also set, predominantly, in the village<sup>1</sup>.

The journal's leading publitsist, Ivan Vasil'ev, who virtually became the journal's chief contributor at this time (also presenting his ideas in fictional form<sup>2</sup>), criticised the state of the rural economy in two important articles. In *Return to the Land*, Vasil'ev argued that the introduction of guaranteed money payment to farm workers, and the creation of specialised organisations outside the control of the kolkhozes, had prevented what he called the 'private-property' psychology of the peasant from being harnessed to the social good<sup>3</sup>. It was this peasant 'private property' instinct which the new 'agro-industrial complexes', if they were to be successful in breaking down departmentalism and bureaucracy, would need to harness. Each complex, he insisted, should consist of a number of co-operative associations (arteli), while work in the fields should be organised into 'independent economic teams' (beznaryadnye khozyaistvennye zven'ya).

In *Village Letters*, Vasil'ev argued that these 'teams', now called 'self-accounting work-teams, or brigades' (khozraschetnye zven'ya, brigady), were effective because they were closest to traditional forms of work organisation in Russia<sup>4</sup>. He argued that the pre-collectivisation village (sel'skii mir) was an independent form of social

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<sup>1</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Vek zhivi - vek lyubi. Chto peredat' vorone?', NS, No. 7, 1982, pp. 15-55; G. Semenov: 'Igra v kolechko. Rasskaz', NS, No 7, 1982, pp. 103-123; 'Rasskazy. Val's. Sled sobaki', NS, No. 11, 1982, pp. 10-31.

<sup>2</sup>See I. Vasil'ev: 'Krest'yanskiy syn', NS, No. 7, 1983, pp. 3-116; 'Taktika predsedatelya Maskova', NS, No. 2, 1984, pp. 3-53.

<sup>3</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Vozvrashchenie k zemle. Zametki publitsista', NS, No. 6, 1982, pp. 7-25.

<sup>4</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Pis'ma iz derevni', NS, No 11, 1982, pp. 89-142. The same point was made by Antonov (M. Antonov, 'Kakaya intensivifikatsiya ekonomiki nam nuzhna?', NS, No. 1, 1984, pp. 139-147).

organisation (samodeyatel'nyi institut). The decision-making village assemblies (skhody) and work units (arteli) had been, in his view, essentially democratic, giving the peasant a sense of responsibility. Vasil'ev made a strong defence of the traditional peasant farmstead, for which he claimed the support of Gorbachev's recent May 1982 agricultural Food Programme, as a means to link the villager to the land, make him a khozyain, and stop him drifting to town:

No matter what natural or national disaster takes place - drought, war, epidemic [...] - the peasant farmstead suffers less than the city, it is more stable. It is this feeling of self-preservation, confidence that the land will not let one down, originating in the depth of the past, that lives latently in the peasant.<sup>5</sup>

Vasil'ev also praised the traditional peasant songs, stories, legends, customs and morals which served, he believed, profound educational and work-related purposes. Contemporary schooling, he objected, did nothing but harm, teaching that the village is 'dark and uncultured'<sup>6</sup>.

Vasilii Belov used his account of a recent trip to Italy to criticise technology and write aesopically of the need to re-establish a 'vanished class of small landowners'<sup>7</sup>. Mikhail Antonov, in *Serving the Land*, argued that the future of the Soviet economy depended on the work of devoted individuals (podvizhniki)<sup>8</sup>. Antonov related the story of one rural podvizhnitsa, a modest and selfless collective farm agronomist (and personal acquaintance of

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>V. Belov, 'Dvazhdy v godu - vesna. Ital'yanskie vpechatleniya', NS, No. 9, 1982, pp. 161-174.

<sup>8</sup>M. Antonov, 'Sluzhenie zemle', NS, No. 1, 1983, pp. 125-138.



the author<sup>9</sup>), who overcame numerous obstacles to introduce new methods of land reclamation to areas denuded by peat removal. Antonov argued that the future of the Soviet economy depended upon such people, in whom he saw evidence of a growth of conscious citizenship, of spiritual and moral searchings, and concern for national economic problems.

2) A Religious Community A further selection of Soloukhin's *Pebbles in the Palm* included a passage reminiscent of his bold religious remarks of the previous period:

But really this is a sketch, albeit an invisible one, of every person: to be attached by all one's roots, by all existence, to the earth, but with the soul [dushoi] continually striving somewhere or other to the heavens [v nebo].<sup>10</sup>

This religious sense was a motif of the best fiction published by the journal at this time. Rasputin's short stories were explorations of the intense private experience of individuals. Such experience, the stories implied, gives rise to perplexity about life, as often as it enables understanding. In *Love as long as you live*, a boy experiences the natural world with an intensity akin to a mystical religiosity<sup>11</sup>. He is shocked by the crude behaviour of adults. At the start of the story the boy's grandmother had told him, when he had begun to explain to her about the origins of Man:

'He didn't come from monkeys, but from the devil', grandmother severely said. [...] 'If he was from the monkeys, he would hold his tongue and not disgrace

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<sup>9</sup>Antonov, interview.

<sup>10</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 1, 1984, pp. 105-114.

<sup>11</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Vek zhivi - vek lyubi', *NS*, No. 7, 1982, pp. 15-34.

himself. But you see, for him, the worse the better. It's all from that one, the unclean one'.<sup>12</sup>

In *What should I tell the Raven?* Rasputin related his perplexed attempt to understand the spiritual world of his young daughter<sup>13</sup>. In "I ca-a-n't", he described a Russian man degraded by alcohol, yet unable to stop himself drinking<sup>14</sup>. *Natasha* is a treatment of love as something mystical and fatalistic<sup>15</sup>. While these stories often imply that his characters have a religious faith, nowhere did Rasputin make this explicit.

In *The Ring Game*, a story of rural life in the main tradition of *Nash sovremennik's* prose, Georgii Semenov did just that<sup>16</sup>. The story related the events of the last day in the life of a poor, elderly, rural, Russian woman, who lost her husband in the war and whose son was sent to prison (for stealing a bag of rye) and never returned. The old woman travelled by bus from her village to the local centre to discover the store was closed; she had no choice but to sleep the night on the shop doorstep, and died before morning. As she died, the old woman dreamt of a staircase with shining steps, up which she climbed. As she mounted the steps, she saw smiling people, and one chief person among them. She knew that she could only stay there if he smiled at her:

She so much wanted to stay here, so she looked at him entreatingly, in amazement, so that he took pity on her suddenly and, still shyly and severely smiling, raised his eyes [ochi] to her...<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Chto peredat' vorone?', *NS*, No. 7, 1982, pp. 34-44.

<sup>14</sup>V. Rasputin, "'Ne mogu-u'", *NS*, No. 7, 1982, pp. 44-49.

<sup>15</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Natasha', *NS*, No. 7, 1982, pp. 50-55.

<sup>16</sup>G. Semenov, 'Igra v kolechko. Rasskaz'.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 115.

3) A Cultural Community The most important contribution defining the nation in cultural terms was Dmitrii Likhachev's *Serving Memory*, a discussion of the nation's collective historical memory<sup>18</sup>. Likhachev denigrated 'nationalism' as 'the desire to cut oneself off from other peoples and their cultural experience', but stressed the importance of historical memory (*pamyat'*), both for the individual and society: '*The historical memory of a people [naroda]*', he wrote, '*forms the moral climate in which a people [narod] lives*'<sup>19</sup>. Likhachev argued that a rebirth of historical memory was taking place in Russian society and advocated the rehabilitation of pre-Revolutionary cultural values. In a telling, if ambiguous, passage Likhachev argued for reform:

Arrested development is primarily [a result of] an attachment to the recent past, a past which is vanishing before our eyes [*ukhodit iz-pod nog*].<sup>20</sup>

From the text it was unclear if Likhachev was criticising conservative 'fellow' nationalists, or the 'stagnation' of the Brezhnev era.

*Nash sovremennik's* narrowed range in this period was evident in the limited scope of other contributions on the nation as a community of culture, which in the main affirmed traditions in a rather cautious manner. Vasilii Belov dwelt on his love of his native language<sup>21</sup>. Anatolii Lanshchikov defended 'village prose' from its detractors<sup>22</sup>. Nationalist patriarch, and veteran of the Solovetskii

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<sup>18</sup>D. Likhachev, '*Sluzhenie pamyati*', *NS*, No. 3, 1983, pp. 171-174.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 172 (emphasis in the original).

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>V. Belov, '*Yazyk moi, drug moi*', *NS*, No. 7, 1983, pp. 181-187.

<sup>22</sup>A. Lanshchikov, '*Chuvstvo puti*', *NS*, No. 10, 1983, pp. 150-158.



concentration camp, Oleg Volkov, wrote on Ivan Turgenev<sup>23</sup>. The journal's deputy chief editor, Vladimir Vasil'ev, devoted articles to the novelist Nikolai Shundik<sup>24</sup>; and to the provincial writer and chronicler of rural life, Ivan Nikulin<sup>25</sup>.

4) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' There was little writing on the differences between Russians and other ethnic groups within the USSR. However, the journal's writers identified 'the Other' in their 'liberal' opponents within the literary community. Oleg Volkov, for example, authored a hostile review of Evtushenko's recent novel, *Berry Places*<sup>26</sup>. Given Rasputin's approving introduction to the first edition of the novel, Volkov's review revealed a division among popular nationalists between those of more, and less, liberal views.

### Legitimising the State

Writing on the legitimacy of the state was all but absent from the journal's pages. The only examples to pass the Andropovite censorship took a 'Red' stance.

1) A 'Red' Legitimation of the Russian State Valentin Svininnikov's *United Forever* ('Splotila naveki') indicated its loyalty to the Communist state by taking its title from the Soviet national anthem<sup>27</sup>. Svininnikov argued that the legitimacy of the Soviet state derived, not from Communist

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<sup>23</sup>O. Volkov, 'Quercus Robur', NS, No. 10, 1983, pp. 167-172.

<sup>24</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Severnoe Siyanie', NS, No. 4, 1983, pp. 168-174. Shundik had been Vasil'ev's former boss at the journal *Volga*. The article included a favourable review of Shundik's latest novel *The Ancient Sign*.

<sup>25</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Energiya chelovechnosti. Zametki o proze Ivana Nikulina', NS, No. 1, 1984, pp. 181-184.

<sup>26</sup>O. Volkov, 'Yagodnye mesta: vokrug da okolo', NS, No. 12, 1983, pp. 170-3 (book review: E. Evtushenko, *Yagodnye mesta, Sovetskii pisatel'*, Moscow, 1982).

<sup>27</sup>V. Svininnikov, "'Splotila naveki'", NS, No. 1, 1983, pp. 190-191 (book review: N. Mikhailov, *Kniga o Rossii, Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Moscow, 1982).

ideology, but from the manner in which the Russians had gathered around themselves other peoples to form the present multi-national state. Svininnikov wrote:

[...] the roots of the current 'union of equals' went deep into history, when around the Russian people there was formed a huge multinational state.<sup>28</sup>

2) A 'Red' Statist Reformism In *What kind of [economic] intensification do we need?*, Mikhail Antonov presented his own understanding of the Andropovite term *intensification*<sup>29</sup>. He argued that the bureaucratic nature of the economy meant that 'intensification' in one economic area tended to result in an increasing dysfunction in the economy as a whole. Antonov criticised Soviet planning for aggravating imbalances, creating distortions, inhibiting innovation and creating a bad moral attitude among workforce and management. The plan, he insisted, should, on the contrary, provide the means for reconciling conflicting bureaucratic interests. He approved the widening of the rights of enterprises in line with the Central Committee decree of 1983 and recommended a programme of moral education to inculcate Soviet citizens with a concern for national interests.

### Conclusions on Themes

The sharply reduced profile of nationalist writing, of both popular and statist tendencies, indicates a new publication policy at *Nash sovremennik*. This new policy, implemented by a new team of deputy chief editors, was

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<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>M. Antonov, 'Kakaya intensifikatsiya ekonomiki nam nuzhna?'. Antonov has remarked that, at that time, 'no one knew what intensification was' (Antonov, interview).



evidence of the possibilities of censorship in the Soviet period, and of the lack of political support for the journal's line of the previous period.

However, three aspects of the journal's publications at this period deserve particular note. Firstly, a nationalist ideology channelled into reform seems to have had official sanction, whether this was the *popular* nationalist Ivan Vasil'ev writing on the countryside or *statist* nationalist Mikhail Antonov on the economic bureaucracy. Secondly, ethnically-based writing on 'the Other', whether anti-Semitic or against other ethnic groups such as the Tatars, seems to have come under a strict prohibition. Thirdly, the publication of Dmitrii Likhachev's article, *Serving Memory*, seems to mark the appearance of a form of nationalist ideology acceptable to Andropov. This had three key explicit features: it claimed that the expression of ethnic Russian interests had exclusively cultural, and no political, relevance; it stressed the importance of developing mutually enriching relations between ethnic groups; and it rejected the use of 'negative' interpretations of ethnic 'boundary mechanisms' to define the Russian ethnic group. Likhachev was a writer hitherto more closely associated with *Novyi mir*, and he had expressed similar views on nationalism in an article published in that journal in 1980<sup>30</sup>.

This type of 'cultural' - I would suggest 'self-denying' as an appropriate term - nationalist ideology was perceived as acceptable by the Andropovite leadership,

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<sup>30</sup>D. Likhachev, 'Zametki o russkom', *Novyi mir*, No. 3, 1980, pp. 10-38.



since it challenged neither Marxist-Leninist nationalities dogma nor the integrity of the Soviet state.

## Part Two: Political Analysis

### The New Deputy Editors: Krivtsov & Vasil'ev.

The appointment of Vladimir Krivtsov (b. 1928) and Vladimir Vasil'ev (b. 1944) as deputy chief editors, to replace Seleznev and Ustinov, was the 'strengthening' of the editorial board that the December 1981 RSFSR Writers' Union meeting had called for. However, the new appointments in the spring of 1982 did not constitute, contrary to what Aleksandr Kazintsev was later to suggest, a 'rout' (razgrom) of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>31</sup>. Vikulov did not have outsiders forced upon him as new deputy chief editors. Instead he turned to two long-standing members of the editorial board and staff<sup>32</sup>.

Nonetheless, Seleznev's removal cut the informal links between the journal and the radical nationalist critics (Kozhinov, Lanshchikov, Shubkin) and, in general ideological terms, meant a retreat from the nationalist positions of 1981. The new appointments also indicated a shift in influence at the journal in favour of the chief editor, since neither Krivtsov nor Vasil'ev possessed the connections outside the journal which had made Seleznev a relatively independent figure.

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<sup>31</sup>See A. Kazintsev, 'Pridvornye dissidenty i 'Pogibshee Pokolenie'', *NS*, No. 3, 1991, p. 173.

<sup>32</sup>Krivtsov had been deputy chief editor from May 1978 until January 1981; Vasil'ev had been responsible secretary from February 1981 until April 1982.

## Andropov as Second Secretary: May-December 1982.

Andropov's assumption of the duties of Second Secretary at the May 1982 party plenum was a major setback for Chernenko. In particular, it placed Andropov in the best position to win the support of Kirilenko's former clients - or neutralise them. A related question was that of how to treat Russian nationalist currents which Kirilenko had patronised. Andropov chose to simultaneously co-opt former Kirilenko cadres, while suppressing Russian nationalism.

Following Andropov's appointment as Second Secretary, Kirilenko's public appearances were renewed<sup>33</sup>. In July Andropov recalled Vitalii Vorotnikov, a Kirilenko client, from Cuba and appointed him First Secretary of Krasnodar krai<sup>34</sup>. Andropov's successor at the KGB, Vitalii Fedorchuk, formerly head of the Ukrainian KGB and a Brezhnev client<sup>35</sup>, presumably on Andropov's orders, launched an offensive against dissident Russian nationalists. Shortly after his appointment, Fedorchuk was reported as saying: 'The main thing is Russian nationalism, the dissidents we'll deal with afterwards. We can take them in a single night'<sup>36</sup>.

On May 13th, before the plenum which formally appointed Andropov as Suslov's successor, the dissident nationalist Leonid Borodin, a former member of VSKhSON, was arrested and a number of his acquaintances were summoned to the KGB

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<sup>33</sup>B. Meissner, 'Transition in the Kremlin', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 32, No. 1, January-February, 1983, p. 10.

<sup>34</sup>Vorotnikov replaced Sergei Medunov, who was now removed as part of the KGB's anti-corruption drive. Until 1979, Vorotnikov had been a deputy chairperson of the RSFSR Council of Ministers.

<sup>35</sup>M. Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Novosti, Moscow, 1995, p. 229; Semanov, interview.

<sup>36</sup>G. Vladimov, 'Chto spoukhodit v strane', *Rosy*, No. 7, July 1983, p. 27. According to Solovei, these were Andropov's words, not Fedorchuk's (V. Solovei, 'Russkii natsionalizm i vlast' v epokhu Gorbacheva', p. 58). According to Filipp Bobkov, then deputy head of the KGB, these were not Andropov's words (F. Bobkov, interview, 10/4/95).

for questioning. Other well-known nationalist dissidents were arrested and 'establishment' nationalists, whom it was deemed inappropriate to arrest, were threatened<sup>37</sup>.

Andropov's appointment as Central Committee secretary for ideology was also shortly preceded by the appearance in *Kommunist* of a public apology by chief editor Sergei Vikulov for religious popular nationalist sentiment expressed in *Nash sovremennik*<sup>38</sup>. The apology ran:

The Communists of the editorial board have drawn serious conclusions as a result of the publication by V. Soloukhin [...] and are determined in the future not to give grounds to readers for responses such as the letters of Cdes. Rutkevich and Filippova.<sup>39</sup>

The apology was a humiliation for *Nash sovremennik* and for Vikulov, despite its limited terms of reference. In an accompanying letter, Viktor Kochetov, the secretary of the party committee of the Moscow Writers' Organisation (also a poet and *Nash sovremennik* contributor), reported on a meeting of the party bureau of the Moscow poets' collective at which Soloukhin's views were condemned. According to this report:

[Soloukhin] assured the members of the bureau that he has been and remains a convinced atheist, that he has never been involved in any kind of god-building and regrets that a careless phrase has given grounds for a justifiable reproof from a reader.<sup>40</sup>

Some factors served to ameliorate the force of these apologies, however. In the first place they appeared *four months* after *Kommunist* had published letters of complaint

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<sup>37</sup>See *Vesti iz SSSR*, *Novaya gazeta*, December 18th-24th, 1982, p. 9; Yu. Voznesenskaya, 'Soobshchenie iz kluba 'Maria'', *Russkaya mysl*, No. 3,416, June 10th, 1982, p. 6; 'Delo o religioznom samizdate', *Posev*, No. 6, 1982, pp. 6-7.

<sup>38</sup>'Pochta zhurnala: iyul' - dekabr' 1981 goda', *Kommunist*, No. 8, May, 1982, p. 128 (sent for typesetting between 29th April and 13th May; passed for printing on 19th May 1982).

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.* The apology was signed by chief editor Vikulov and, 'for the secretary of the party organisation', Aleksei Shitikov.

<sup>40</sup>*Kommunist*, *ibid.*



against the journal. Secondly, as Dunlop has commented, they were 'not precisely grovelling apologies'<sup>41</sup>. Thirdly, they certainly were not an apology for the publication policy of *Nash sovremennik* as it had been pursued under Seleznev's deputy-chief-editorship. Reference was made only to a single work by Soloukhin: there was no mention of the works of Kozhinov, Lanshchikov and Krupin, writers who had been effectively banned from publication as a result of the 1981 '*Nash sovremennik* affair'<sup>42</sup>.

Nonetheless, the apology was a significant contribution to the on-going, many-sided campaign against *Nash sovremennik*. The May issue announced the new deputy chief editors. It also saw a heavy input from literary officials - secretaries of the RSFSR Writers' Union Bondarev and Shundik, and chief editor Vikulov - intended to reduce the risk of further unpleasantness<sup>43</sup>.

Literary officials, no doubt at Andropov's behest, now acted to lessen the impact of the measures taken, in the wake of the '*Nash sovremennik* affair', against one of the few popular nationalist writers to have suffered. In May, Vladimir Krupin was called to the Central Committee to talk with the junior ideological secretary, Mikhail Zimyanin, who was 'very mild and gentle' and suggested the writer visit some 'good farms'<sup>44</sup>. That same month, the young writer publicly 'recanted' in a round table in *Literaturnaya*

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<sup>41</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 25; Nazarov, *op. cit.*

<sup>42</sup>Kozhinov, interview 1/9/94; V. Krupin, interview 5/7/94; A. Lanshchikov, interview 19/6/93.

<sup>43</sup>N. Shundik, '*Drevnii znak*', *NS*, No. 5, 1982, pp. 3-85; Yu. Bondarev, '*Mgnoveniya*', *NS*, No. 5, 1982, pp. 126-148; S. Vikulov, '*U nas v gostyakh chekhoslovatskii pisatel*', *NS*, No. 5, 1982, pp. 149-152.

<sup>44</sup>Krupin, interview.

gazeta<sup>45</sup>. The round table included Sergei Zalygin and Anatolii Lanshchikov, figures sympathetic to Krupin (Zalygin had written a preface to Krupin's first major publication in *Novyi mir*). However, according to Lanshchikov, the round table had actually taken place on December 7th 1981, in other words before the December meeting of the RSFSR Writers' Union secretariat<sup>46</sup>. The 'recantation' had been added later - in Lanshchikov's words, 'a blatant falsification'.

### Pressure, Manipulation and Resistance

Vikulov seems to have felt at this time that his position at the journal was under threat, and contemplated resignation<sup>47</sup>. Shundik, master of ceremonies at an evening celebration of Vikulov's sixtieth birthday at the end of June, was warned by the authorities to praise Vikulov only as a poet, and not as the editor of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>48</sup>. Many prominent figures boycotted the celebration<sup>49</sup>. According to some contemporary editors on the journal, Stepanov, the new head of the Literature Sector in the Department of Culture, wanted Vikulov to move to the Union of Writers, to be replaced as chief editor, possibly by Krivtsov<sup>50</sup>. However, Vikulov decided not to resign, by his own account, as a

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<sup>45</sup>'Za zhivoi vodi. Tvorchestvo Vladimira Krupina. S raznykh toчек zreniya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 21, May 26th, 1982, p. 5.

<sup>46</sup>Lanshchikov, interview.

<sup>47</sup>Vikulov, interview.

<sup>48</sup>Shundik, interview. For tributes to Vikulov on his sixtieth birthday, see B. Shal'nev, 'K 60-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya Sergeya Vikulova. "...Vse po pravde napisal"', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 26, June 25th, 1982, p. 9; 'S. V. Vikulovu - 60 let', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 26, June 30th, 1982, p. 5.

<sup>49</sup>Apart from Shundik, the only one of Vikulov's friends to attend was the working secretary of the RSFSR Writers' Union for literary criticism, Valerii Derent'ev (Shundik, interview).

<sup>50</sup>Vikulov, interview; V. Krivtsov, interview 12/8/93; V. Pal'chikov, interview 27/8/93. Krivtsov became first deputy chief editor in September 1982. Although reputedly a former aide to Suslov and close to the Chernenko group (Krivtsov, interview; Pal'chikov, interview), Stepanov would here seem to have been an executor of Andropovite policy.

result of persuasion by Bondarev<sup>51</sup>. Presumably Bondarev also succeeded in persuading officials at the Department of Culture, including Stepanov, to let Vikulov stay. It can only be assumed that this concession was obtained on condition of commitments on publication policy.

The subtlety of Andropov's policy towards nationalism reveals itself in the way in which Vikulov was given the opportunity to conform by printing the reformist writer on agriculture, Ivan Vasil'ev. The May plenum, which had appointed Andropov Second Secretary, had also passed the Food Production Programme, thereby raising the profile of Mikhail Gorbachev, secretary for agriculture and Andropov's protégé (Andropov's close relationship with the young Central Committee secretary was to be a feature of the period)<sup>52</sup>. A new rubric in the journal, 'The Food Production Programme is a Concern of All the People' (Prodovol'stvennaya programma - zabota obshchenarodnaya), betrayed the influence of Gorbachev's Central Committee Department of Agriculture. Ivan Vasil'ev's *Return to the Land* was published in June under this rubric<sup>53</sup>. *Literator* subsequently praised Vasil'ev's stress on the villager's plot<sup>54</sup>, and Vasil'ev was one of the few writers lauded by Georgii Markov, chairman of the USSR Writers' Union, at a high-level meeting in November, attended by the heads of

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<sup>51</sup>Vikulov, interviews 8/4/92 & 10/12/92.

<sup>52</sup>J. Waller, *Secret Empire: The KGB in Russia Today*, Westview Press, Boulder & Oxford, 1994, pp. 41-50.

<sup>53</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Vozvrashchenie k zemle. Zametki publitsista'.

<sup>54</sup>*Literator*, 'Sel'skie zaboty i slovo pisatelya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 23, 9th June, 1982, p. 2.



the Central Committee departments of Propaganda (Evgenii Tyazhel'nikov) and Culture (Vasilii Shauro)<sup>55</sup>.

Yet despite the pressure on Vikulov, in July *Nash sovremennik* published short stories by Rasputin and Semenov, the boldest publications by the journal in terms of popular nationalist sentiment since Soloukhin's *Pebbles on the Palm* of March that year<sup>56</sup>. Both Dunlop and Nazarov have pointed out that these stories were of the kind to cause further disquiet to the likes of Rutkevich and Filippova<sup>57</sup>. Literator refrained from negative comment, calling the collection of <sup>Rasputin's and Semenov's</sup> short stories 'large but uneven'<sup>58</sup>. Further evidence that *Nash sovremennik* had not lost its former spirit was the printing once again on the inside of the front cover of the slogan 'Rossiya - rodina moya'.

The same month, Rasputin made his popular nationalist views known to an international audience in an interview with a Swedish newspaper<sup>59</sup>. He dismissed the myth of national well-being in the happy Soviet family of nations, the theme Andropov and his ideologues were insisting upon, and intimated that Russians were worse off in the USSR than other nationalities. He also argued that the censorship was gradually being overcome and as a result, 'Now wonderful

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<sup>55</sup>'O zadachakh pisatel'skikh organizatsii i literaturnoi pechati v svete postanovleniya TsK KPSS "O tvorcheskikh svyazyakh literaturno-khudozhestvennykh zhurnalov s praktikoi kommunisticheskogo stroitel'stva"', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 44, November 3rd, 1982, pp. 1-3.

<sup>56</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Vek zhivi - vek lyubi. Chto peredat' vorone?'; G. Semenov, 'Igra v kolechko. Rasskaz'. Two of Rasputin's stories had been published elsewhere previously, a fact which no doubt eased their appearance in *Nash sovremennik*. See V. Rasputin, 'Natasha', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 20, March 10th, 1982, p. 8; 'Chto peredat' vorone' *Sibir'*, No. 5, 1981, pp. 3-18; & *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 5, January 29th, 1981, pp. 12-14.

<sup>57</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*; Nazarov, *op. cit.*

<sup>58</sup>Literator, 'Geroi: obreteniya i poteri', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 32, 11th August, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup>D. Hostad, (interview with V. Rasputin), 'Neokonchennye razgovory: "Zhivi I pomni, chelovek"', *Russkaya mysl'*, No. 3,417, June 17th, 1982, p. 10.

works are being published, speaking about a great deal [...]'. Perhaps he had in mind the *Nash sovremennik* publications of the previous year.

### A Central Committee Decree

At the end of July, a new Central Committee decree on literature, 'On the creative links of the literary-artistic journals with the practice of building communism', seemed aimed directly against statist nationalist publications by Kozhinov<sup>60</sup>, Lanshchikov and Semanov in *Nash sovremennik* during 1981-2<sup>61</sup>. The decree had been in preparation at least since May 1981, when Boris Stukalin, then head of Goskomizdat USSR, claimed that it would 'raise the level of responsibility for the preparation and printing of publications'<sup>62</sup>.

The language of the decree was virtually the same as that of the report of the December 1981 meeting of the RSFSR Writers' Union secretariat, and of Kuleshov's *Pravda* article of February 1982. The decree condemned 'serious deviations' in the portrayal of history and 'prejudiced and superficial judgements of the contemporary world'<sup>63</sup>. 'The editors of journals', the decree complained, 'are not always as demanding as they need to be in their work with authors'. Works of literary criticism and history 'display ideological confusion and an inability to examine social

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<sup>60</sup>Kozhinov believed the decree to be aimed directly at him. See V. Kozhinov, 'Poiski budushchego', *NS*, No. 3, 1991, pp. 125-129; Vladimov, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>61</sup>'V Tsentral'nom komitete KPSS', *Pravda*, No. 211, July 30th, 1982, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup>B. Stukalin, 'Navstrechu VII s'ezdu pisatelei SSSR', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 19, May 6th, 1981, pp. 1 & 3. According to Nail' Bikkenin, the decree was the work of the Department of Culture rather than the Department of Propaganda, and consequently had a lower status (Bikkenin, interview 26/9/93).

<sup>63</sup>'V Tsentral'nom komitete KPSS'.

phenomena historically from clear class positions'. Journals were called upon 'to promote the closest rapprochement (sblizhenie) and mutual enrichment of the cultures of the socialist nations, and the ideological and political unity (splochenie) of the Soviet multi-national society'. However, the decree did not call for the fusion (sliyanie) of the Soviet peoples.

Nationalist literary officials were compelled to praise the decree<sup>64</sup>, but it was nonetheless followed by a series of further attacks on statist nationalists, both 'Whites' such as Kozhinov, and 'Reds' such as Kuz'min. On August 17th, *Pravda* printed an article by secretary of the board of the USSR Writers' Union, and well-known antagonist of the nationalists, Yurii Surovtsev<sup>65</sup>. Soviet society, Surovtsev insisted, was 'moving towards social homogeneity', in other words, national differences were progressively being eliminated, even though he conceded that, 'No one especially pushes the artist onto the shop floor if his heart belongs to the village outskirts'. Surovtsev accused *Nash sovremennik's* department of criticism of being 'more than once' guilty of 'direct attempts to single out the "national theme" from the general process of social history', and accused Kozhinov of using 'non-social and anti-social methodology' in his article "*And Every Tongue Will Name Me...*"<sup>66</sup>. Surovtsev also accused Kuz'min of having criticised Kozhinov on merely concrete historical grounds, rather than for his mistaken methodology. Kuz'min's

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<sup>64</sup>'Istochnik vdokhnoveniya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 33, August 18th, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup>Yu. Surovtsev, 'Vospitanie slovom', *Pravda*, No. 229, August 17th, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*



disagreements with Kozhinov in many respects, he noted, were less significant than their agreement on the need for a nationalist approach.

Eight days after Surovtsev lambasted the statist nationalists, *Literator* in *Literaturnaya gazeta* also took aim at Kuz'min<sup>67</sup>. Kuz'min was now accused of 'methodological mistakes' and of having 'overdone the polemics' in his critique of Oskotskii's work, *The Novel and History*. Worse, Kuz'min had contradicted Lenin's teachings, denying the doctrine of the 'two cultures' (the idea according to which there was not a single national culture, but rather two class cultures - proletarian and bourgeois) and painting pan-Slavism as a 'progressive current of social thought' opposed to 'anti-Sovietism and rusofobiya'. To reinforce the case, *Literator* quoted Brezhnev from the 26th Party Congress:

Individual appearances of nationalism and chauvinism, of a non-class approach in the evaluation of historical events, appearances of excessive localisation of interests, and attempts to glorify the patriarchal way of life, are being eliminated.<sup>68</sup>

These attacks on *Nash sovremennik* were paralleled by attacks on Russian nationalists elsewhere. In August Anatolii Ivanov-Skuratov, a former contributor to *Veche*, was arrested<sup>69</sup>. Sergei Semanov, who had been under attack in the press since his November 1981 *Nash sovremennik* publication<sup>70</sup>, was now summoned to the KGB in connection

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<sup>67</sup>*Literator*, 'Ne razmyvat' sotsial'nye kriterii!', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 34, August 25th, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup>Vladimov, *loc. cit.*

<sup>70</sup>See 'Kogda verstalsya nomer', *Neva*, No. 2, 1982, p. 206; B. Khotimskii, 'Eshche raz oglyanut'sya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 4, January 21st, 1982, p.5; M. Kupchenko, 'Obrechennye istoriei', *Zvezda*, No. 7, 1982, pp. 187-190 (I am indebted to Sergei Semanov for this list [Semanov, interview 21/9/94]).

with the Ivanov-Skuratov case and, under threat of having his apartment searched, forced to give up forbidden literature in his possession, which included works by Borodin<sup>71</sup>. Semanov spent two days in Lefortovo prison, was expelled from the party and lost his job at the Academy of Sciences<sup>72</sup>. Vadim Kozhinov was also threatened<sup>73</sup>.

### Andropov Changes Tack: September-December, 1982

In September, the authorities seemed to offer an olive branch to popular Russian nationalists. *Literator* suddenly applied a more liberal interpretation of the July decree, acknowledging 'the striving of editorial boards and the collectives of writers grouped around them to satisfy the various requirements of the readers', and accepting that journals should develop the 'profile and traditions of the publication'<sup>74</sup>. That month, *Nash sovremennik* carried Belov's outspoken record of a recent trip to Italy<sup>75</sup>. On the occasion of that writer's fiftieth birthday the next month, Feliks Kuznetsov, first secretary of the Moscow Writers' Organisation and fellow Vologdan, praised Belov in *Literaturnaya gazeta* for representing things of 'national value'<sup>76</sup>. This was an authoritative demonstration of support

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<sup>71</sup>Semanov, interview.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup>S. Reznik, 'Kto takoi Sergei Semanov?', *Novaya gazeta*, 11-17th December, 1982. See also 'Arestovana Zoya Krakmal'nikova', *Posev*, No. 9, 1982, pp. 2-4; 'Khronika', *Posev*, No. 11, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>74</sup>*Literator*, 'Ispytanie aktual'nosti', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 36, September 8th, 1982, p. 2. It was at about this time that V. Oskotskii was summoned to the Central Committee to meet representatives of both Culture and Propaganda Departments to be warned to halt his debate with Kuz'min (V. Oskotskii, interview 7/5/95). Attending the meeting on behalf of the Department of Culture was Ivan Zhukov, newly appointed 'overseer' of *Nash sovremennik* in that department and, according to contemporary editors on the journal, an associate of Kuz'min (Krivtsov, interview; Pal'chikov, interview).

<sup>75</sup>Belov, 'Dvazhdy v godu - vesna. Ital'yanskii vpechatleniya'.

<sup>76</sup>F. Kuznetsov, 'V. I. Belovu - 50 let', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 43, October 27th, 1982, p. 4.



for the writer, and hence for his publisher *Nash sovremennik*.

The change in official tone probably reflected a tack by Andropov at a crucial moment in his manoeuvring to secure the support of Kirilenko's clients<sup>77</sup>. It may also have been a concession to Andropov's opponents, who maintained control of important positions: the nationalist sympathiser Tyazhel'nikov, for example, remained head of the Propaganda Department.

Andropov's broad anti-nationalist line was again in evidence in October, when *Nash sovremennik* was humiliated by being forced to publish the apology which had appeared in May in *Kommunist*<sup>78</sup>. However, it was also in October that the Saratov journal, *Volga*, printed a powerful popular nationalist review of Alekseev's *The Brawlers* by the critic Mikhail Lobanov, *Liberation*<sup>79</sup>. Lobanov hailed *The Brawlers* as the first accurate portrayal in literature of the famine of 1933 and dismissed the rest of Soviet literature as historically false, including, most heretically, the work of Sholokhov<sup>80</sup>. The article defined the 'historicality' (*istorichnost'*) of literature as its ability to create a literary 'equivalent' of the life experience of the people. Lobanov considered *The Brawlers* to be the first major work of fiction to provide a literary 'equivalent' of collectivisation - <sup>said to be</sup> the most important of the sufferings of

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<sup>77</sup>In October, when Kirilenko was removed from the politburo, Andropov spoke warmly of his services to party and state (J. Hough, *op. cit.*, p. 58).

<sup>78</sup>The best the journal could do was to hide the piece away on the very last page ('*Ot redaktsii*', *NS*, No. 10, 1982, p. 176).

<sup>79</sup>M. Lobanov, '*Osvobozhdenie*', *Volga*, No. 10, 1982, pp. 145-164.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 148.



the Russian people in the twentieth century because it destroyed the peasantry and their traditional way of life.

Vikulov has commented that it would have been impossible to publish an article in praise of the novel at that time in a Moscow publication<sup>81</sup>. The article's appearance in *Volga* indicated the collusion of that journal's chief editor, Nikolai Pal'kin, with Alekseev himself and possibly with the Department of Culture official Ivan Zhukov, both of whom were closely associated with Saratov<sup>82</sup>. In an interview published in *Nash sovremennik* soon after the appearance of *The Brawlers*, Alekseev had gone out of his way to praise the 'bright critical talent' of Mikhail Lobanov, a critic who 'has his own language, his own view of the world'<sup>83</sup>. Alekseev presumably already knew that Lobanov was then preparing his controversial review of the novel. A first indication that the authorities would not overlook Lobanov's article was Georgii Markov's November censure of editors and critics for continued 'artistic and ideological errors', in particular in the interpretation of history<sup>84</sup>.

#### Andropov in Power: December 1982 - February 1984.

Despite the brevity of Andropov's term as General Secretary and his ill-health, on coming to power the new leader laid down relatively clear lines of policy in

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<sup>81</sup>Vikulov, interview 8/4/92.

<sup>82</sup>Alekseev is from Saratov oblast (where the novel is set). Zhukov had attended Saratov university and made his early career in the Komsomol press in that city (Zhukov, interview).

<sup>83</sup>'Stranitsy zhizni i tvorchestva Mikhaila Alekseeva', *NS*, No. 7, 1981, pp. 62-69.

<sup>84</sup>'O zadachakh pisatel'skikh organizatsii i literaturnoi pechati v svete postanovleniya TsK KPSS "O tvorcheskikh svyazyakh literaturno-khudozhestvennykh zhurnalov s praktikoi kommunisticheskogo stroitel'stva"'.

numerous areas and established a firm hold over the selection and appointment of cadres. Archie Brown has summed up Andropov's achievements:

Andropov, in fact, altered the political agenda even within his short period of office by placing greater emphasis on discipline and fighting corruption as well as by giving his blessing to some tentative moves in the direction of economic reform. [...] Andropov did enough to demonstrate that the General Secretaryship was still the most important political office in the country, even if there were also quite clearly [...] political limits on those powers.<sup>85</sup>

In cadres policy, Andropov extended his patronage of Kirilenko's former clients<sup>86</sup>. Andropov also looked to a group of relatively young liberal reformist officials he had known during his period at the Central Committee before 1967 to serve as aides, including Georgii Arbatov, Fedor Burlatskii, Georgii Shakhnazarov and Aleksandr Bovin<sup>87</sup>. An associate of this group was Aleksandr Yakovlev, well-known for his hostility to Russian nationalist ideology. Recalled from Canada at Gorbachev's behest, Yakovlev was not given a direct role in ideological policy, but became director of IMEMO (Institut mirovoi ekonomiki i mezhdunarodnykh otnoshenii - Institute of World Economy and International Relations [of the USSR Academy of Sciences])<sup>88</sup>.

### Opposition to Andropov

The Andropov leadership accorded only perfunctory notice to Brezhnev's death. The December editions of the

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<sup>85</sup>Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, p. 4.

<sup>86</sup>Nikolai Ryzhkov became a Central Committee Secretary (November 1982); Viktor Chebrikov replaced Fedorchuk as head of the KGB (December 1982); Nikolai Slyunkov became first secretary of Belorussia (January 1983); Egor Ligachev became Central Committee Secretary overseeing the party organs department (April 1983) (Meissner, *op. cit.*, p. 12; J. Hough, 'Andropov's First Year', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 32, No. 6, November-December, 1983, p. 56. See also E. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva*, Interbuk, Novosibirsk, 1992, Chapter 1).

<sup>87</sup>Waller, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>88</sup>V. Boldin, *Krushenie p'edestala*, Respublika, Moscow, 1995, pp. 49-50.

central literary journals, with the exception of *Nash sovremennik*, followed this lead, devoting more attention to the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union, which fell in December. *Nash sovremennik*, however, showed an obdurate admiration for the late leader, publishing additional material on Brezhnev's death by leading members of the editorial board Yurii Bondarev, Aleksandr Khvatov and Nikolai Shundik, and by a Kazakh journalist, Anuar Alimanzhanov<sup>89</sup>. Instead of an article in praise of the Soviet Union, the journal published a modest reflection on Russo-Kazakh relations (Brezhnev had served as First Secretary in Kazakhstan)<sup>90</sup>. Dunlop has described the outcome as 'warm and effusive praise for the late General Secretary and only a tepid acknowledgement of the new one, Yurii Andropov'<sup>91</sup>. The warmth of the praise for the late leader is less notable, however, than the fact of publication of these articles. The absence of the journal's customary photograph and slogan ('Russia is my motherland') from the inside cover, for the first time since March, may in part be explained by the solemnity of the occasion. It would also seem an indication of Andropov's pressure on the journal.

The strongest note of dissent from Andropov's nationalities policy, however, was sounded on the pages of *Pravda* at the beginning of December 1982. In a statist Russian nationalist article, published in connection with

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<sup>89</sup>A. Alimanzhanov, 'Boets leninskoj partii', *NS*, No. 12, 1982, pp. 15-16; Yu. Bondarev, 'Primer sluzheniya narodu', *ibid.*, p. 15; A. Khvatov, 'Velichie tselei i deyanii', *ibid.*, pp. 16-17; N. Shundik, 'Nezyblemye osnovy', *ibid.*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>90</sup>G. Yakovlev, 'Pobratimy', *ibid.*, pp. 20-28.

<sup>91</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 25.



the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union, the writer Petr Proskurin argued in favour of a nationalist 'single stream' (edinyi potok) view of history<sup>92</sup>. He wrote of the 'mystery, or rather the miracle of Russia', of 'her incomprehensible force' and of 'her historical destiny'. Russia, he wrote, is the 'first among equals', the 'nucleus and buttress' of this 'single, indivisible family'. 'Single, indivisible' (edinaya, nedelimaya) was the slogan of the White army.

The appearance of Proskurin's *Pravda* article could probably not have taken place without the support of the head of the Propaganda Department, Tyazhel'nikov, possibly with the knowledge or connivance of junior ideological secretary Zimyanin, or Chernenko. Shortly afterwards, Tyazhel'nikov was replaced by Boris Stukalin, and Proskurin's article may have served as a pretext for this change<sup>93</sup>.

On his appointment, Andropov told Stukalin that 'the Russian party is a definite danger', and instructed him to keep intellectuals of the 'Russian party' under control<sup>94</sup>. Thereafter, at Andropov's request, Stukalin held a series of individual meetings with leading Russian nationalists, including A. Ivanov, P. Proskurin, V. Belov and M. Alekseev, a process Stukalin has described as one of 'polite discussion' and 'persuasion'<sup>95</sup>. Stukalin, a figure identified as a Chernenko client and an associate of

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<sup>92</sup>P. Proskurin, 'Rossiya - slovo zavetnoe', *Pravda*, No. 339, December 5th, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup>Stukalin has denied this (B. Stukalin, interview 8/9/93).

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup>Stukalin, interview.

Zimyanin, was not one to play an independent role<sup>96</sup>. Yet, as in the case with Fedorchuk, Andropov seems to have used a politician from a rival camp to execute his own will.

Two distinct currents were evident in *Celebration of Brotherhood*, the latest article by *Literaturnaya gazeta's* official mouthpiece, *Literator*<sup>97</sup>. One thrust of the article was to press home Andropov's line on nationalities policy, pointing to the 'special responsibility' of the 'thick' journals in preparing for the jubilee of the 'new historical community of people [lyudei], the Soviet people [narod]'. The rubric now being published in all the journals ('To Meet the 60th Anniversary of the USSR'), *Literator* announced, was to depict 'the present joyful life "in the family of equals"' and to stress Lenin's role in the formation of this Union. 'The rapprochement [sblizhenie] of literatures', the article remarked, 'has become an important concern of the state [obshchegosudarstvennym delom], a subject of untiring care of the Communist party'<sup>98</sup>.

The second element in the article, however, was a demonstrative complaisance with regard to the literary 'thick' journals. The mutually beneficial co-operation of the peoples of the Union was exemplified, *Literator* argued, in the multinational make-up of the editorial boards of the journals 'in which representatives of the various brotherly literatures of our country are united'. *Literator* also

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<sup>96</sup>Gorbachev, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

<sup>97</sup>*Literator*, 'Prazdnik bratstva', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 50, December 15th, 1982, p. 2. Although this was the first such article since Brezhnev's death, no reference was made to the late leader.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*

referred approvingly to 'the profile of the journal, its traditions and concrete, specific nature'. If these remarks are applied to *Nash sovremennik*, they seem remarkably benign, deliberately overlooking the lack of ethnic heterogeneity in *Nash sovremennik's* editorial board, which had just lost its only non-Russian member, the Abkhaz philosopher Arsenii Gulyga (a board member since April 1980). Moreover, the article seemed to give its approval to *Nash sovremennik's* own nationalist 'profile [...] traditions and concrete nature'. Indeed, *Nash sovremennik* was praised as one of the journals seeking 'more artistic contact with writers from other republics', especially in the field of translation. These factors could possibly suggest the offer of a compromise to *Nash sovremennik*, on the basis of a 'moderate' popular nationalism, by Andropov's authorities.

### **Andropov Stamps His Mark**

If such a compromise was possible, however, it was to be very much on Andropov's terms. In his December 22nd speech on the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the Soviet Union, Andropov unambiguously formulated his nationalities policy<sup>99</sup>. He broke from Brezhnevite practice by referring to the fusion (*sliyanie*) of all the various nationalities of the Union as the overt goal of Soviet nationalities policy. Only once, nine years before in 1973, had the former leader used this term. The same month

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<sup>99</sup>'*Shest'desyat let SSSR. Doklad General'nogo sekretarya TsK KPSS tovarishcha Yu. V. Andropova*', *Pravda*, No. 356, December 22nd, 1982, pp. 1-2.



Chernenko showed his loyalty to the new leader in an article on the same policy area in *World Marxist Review*<sup>100</sup>.

In January, the authorities decided to make an example of the provincial journal *Sever*, which had also shown a tendency to adopt nationalist positions. The work of the journal was examined and censured at a session of the secretariat of the USSR Writers' Union<sup>101</sup>. *Literator* also spoke out against *Sever*<sup>102</sup>. The journal's offences included too great an interest in 'ethnography', 'unclear, abstract and moralising formulations', an 'undifferentiated class attitude towards history' and 'extra-social' analyses of Dostoevskii. The journal was instructed to promote 'the propaganda of the peace-loving policy of the CPSU' and to attack the ideological opponents of the Soviet Union in the West.

This was an unusual case of the USSR Writers' Union 'interfering' in the work of the RSFSR Writers' Union, since the journal *Sever* properly came within the jurisdiction of the latter. Presumably the RSFSR Writers' Union had refused to take the necessary steps. Indeed, certain key Russian nationalists apparently boycotted the session, including P. Proskurin, M. Alekseev and A. Ivanov (editor-in-chief of *Molodaya gvardiya*). Such a boycott could only have taken place if the offending writers were confident of support from above.

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<sup>100</sup>K. Chernenko, '60 Years of Fraternal Friendship Among Peoples', *World Marxist Review*, No. 12, Vol. 25, December 1982, pp. 8-19.

<sup>101</sup>'Gorizonty vremeni. V sekretariate pravleniya SP SSSR. Tvorcheskii otchet zhurnala "Sever"', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 5, January 28th, 1983, p. 2. An official in the Propaganda Department asked the liberal editor and critic Natalya Ivanova, appointed in 1981 to head the prose department at *Znamya*, to review the work of *Sever* for the meeting. Ivanova reconciled herself with this task, she has recalled, by writing 'as if for Radio Liberty' (N. Ivanova, interviews 27/4/95; 4/5/95).

<sup>102</sup>*Literator*, 'Bytie kak deyanie', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 6, February 9th, 1983, p. 2.

From January, a severe reduction in the status of *Nash sovremennik* was implemented: the print-run was cut by one third (from 335,000 to 225,000)<sup>103</sup>, and the editorial board was reduced in number from 25 to 21 members. The journal's January issue displayed mixed signals. Proskurin's theme of the key role played by Russia in the creation of the Soviet Union was echoed in the 'Red' statist nationalist sentiments of Valentin Svininnikov's *United Forever*<sup>104</sup>. January also saw the return of Mikhail Antonov to the journal, although his new article, on the economics of agriculture, *Serving the Land*, was notably shorn of his former nationalist rhetoric<sup>105</sup>.

### *Liberation Again*

During January and February a furore broke out over Lobanov's review, *Liberation*, of Alekseev's novel, *The Brawlers*. Pavel Nikolaev, in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, denounced Lobanov's article as 'unqualified critical nihilism'<sup>106</sup>. Valentin Oskotskii in *Literaturnaya Rossiya* accused Lobanov of 'revising both the history of Soviet literature and contemporary ideological-artistic experience from positions of total nihilism'<sup>107</sup>. The two articles clearly betrayed a similarity of tone and vocabulary, and

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<sup>103</sup>Among journals of the RSFSR Writers' Union, the print-run of *Oktyabr'* was cut by 20%; *Moskva* was granted an increase of 23%. Among print-runs of the journals of the USSR Writers' Union, *Novyi mir's* increased by 8,6%; *Druzhba narodov's* was cut by 34%. While *Nash sovremennik's* print-run recovered somewhat (to 255,000 copies) during 1983, in January 1984 it was again cut back (to 230,000), a figure at which it remained throughout 1984).

<sup>104</sup>Svininnikov, "Splotila naveki".

<sup>105</sup>Antonov, 'Sluzhenie zemle'. After the departure of Seleznev and Ustinov, NS had ceased publishing Antonov (a review of the journal *Slavyanovedenie i balkanistika* commissioned by Seleznev and Ustinov remained unpublished after their dismissal, despite payment of the fees). Antonov attributed this, in particular, to the influence of the new deputy editor, Vladimir Vasil'ev (Antonov, interview).

<sup>106</sup>P. Nikolaev, "Osvobozhdenie" ot chego?', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 1, January 5th, 1983, p. 4.

<sup>107</sup>V. Oskotskii, "Literaturnye igrishcha" ili total'nyi nigilizm', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 4, January 21st, 1983, p. 11.



were part of an orchestrated campaign. Lobanov was also apparently called into the Central Committee to be reprimanded. *Literator* joined in the condemnation of Lobanov, supporting the articles by Nikolaev and Oskotskii<sup>108</sup>.

At the end of the month *Liberation* was condemned at a meeting of the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union. The attention of the authorities was also turned towards the original publisher of *Drachuny, Nash sovremennik*. As *Literaturnaya Rossiya* reported: 'In conclusion S. Mikhalkov [chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union], reminded [his audience] of the ideological mistakes committed in its time by *Nash sovremennik* [...]'<sup>109</sup>. Nikolai Pal'kin, chief editor of the journal *Volga*, was sacked<sup>110</sup>. Even Ivan Vasil'ev, *Nash sovremennik's* exemplary reformist popular nationalist publitsist, as recently as November lauded by Georgii Markov, was called into the Central Committee and rebuked for praising the old Russian peasant *obshchina* and accused of the sin of *patriarkhal'shchina* in his recent *Nash sovremennik* article, *Village Letters*<sup>111</sup>. Evidently, Vasil'ev had gone too far, even for Gorbachev.

### Chernenko as Ideological Secretary

Chernenko's appointment as 'Ideological Secretary' in February brought a halt to this campaign. Dunlop has interpreted the *Sever* affair as 'the last gasp in a

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<sup>108</sup>*Literator*, 'Bytie kak deyanie', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 6, February 9th, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>109</sup>'V Soyuze pisatelei RSFSR. "Printsipial'nost i strogost' otsenok", *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 9, February 25th, 1983, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup>Shundik, interview; N. Pal'kin, 'Prikhodit den'', *NS*, No. 4, 1995, pp. 89-90.

<sup>111</sup>I. Vasil'ev, interview 4/8/93. See I. Vasil'ev, 'Pis'ma iz derevni'.



campaign that ran out of gas when Andropov surrendered the ideological portfolio to Chernenko'<sup>112</sup>. Dunlop considers that other factors behind the 'loss of momentum' in Andropov's anti-nationalist campaign were 'a successful regrouping of Andropov's opponents in the Politburo and, by mid-1983, a serious deterioration in Andropov's health'<sup>113</sup>. Indeed, Chernenko's appointment may indeed have been a sign of Andropov's increasing weakness: the General Secretary began dialysis treatment for a kidney complaint at this time. Moreover, although Chernenko's appointment did not bring about a revision of the decisions of January and February, *Nash sovremennik* nevertheless saw something of a revival of nationalist themes. Yet the March publication of Dmitrii Likhachev's *In Service of Memory* set out the outlines of a 'self-denying' nationalism compatible with Andropov's views<sup>114</sup>. That Likhachev was in favour with leadership elements is clear from his publication in *Kommunist* later that year<sup>115</sup>.

Another, rather different, example of direct leadership influence on *Nash sovremennik* (though probably not emanating from Andropov) was the April publication of a reply by the Minister of Education, Mikhail Prokof'ev, to Ivan Sinitsyn's recent article *Teaching and Labour*<sup>116</sup>. Sinitsyn, Prokof'ev wrote, had distorted his position and used instances of bad practice to condemn the school system as a whole. He accused Sinitsyn of 'moving towards an a-

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<sup>112</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 18.

<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup>Likhachev, 'Sluzhenie pamyati'.

<sup>115</sup>D. Likhachev, 'Glubokie traditsii rodstva i druzhby', *Kommunist*, No. 11, July, 1983, pp. 118-121.

<sup>116</sup>'Ot redaktsii', *NS*, No. 4, 1983, pp. 175-176. See Sinitsyn, 'Uchen'e i trud'.

political position'. A selection of readers' letters in support of Sinitsyn's views, which *Nash sovremennik* had been planning to print, were not published on the insistence of the Ministry of Education<sup>117</sup>.

Chernenko began to issue contradictory signals. In May he seemed to be establishing his own line in ideological policy with the publication in *Kommunist* of a review of a three-volume issue of Suslov's selected speeches and articles<sup>118</sup>, indicating a continuity with Suslovite-Brezhnevite policy in ideology to which Andropov was hostile. At the June ideological plenum, however, Chernenko explicitly endorsed Andropov's anti-nationalist line, condemning, in particular, journals and publishing houses for nationalist 'deviations from historical truth [...] in the evaluation of collectivisation, "god-seeking" themes and the idealisation of the patriarchal way of life'<sup>119</sup>. The plenum was followed by calls in the press in similar language for ideological orthodoxy in the arts<sup>120</sup>. June gave evidence of the strength of Andropov's links with former Kirilenko clients, when Kirilenko was shown on television walking with other Soviet leaders during a Supreme Soviet session<sup>121</sup>. Kirilenko's ex-client, Vitalii Vorotnikov, was advanced to the post of chair of the RSFSR Council of Ministers. Mikhail Solomentsev, whom Vorotnikov replaced,

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<sup>117</sup>Zhukov, interview. See Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, pp. 31-2.

<sup>118</sup>'Dostovernye dokumenty epokhi - k vykhodu v svet izbrannykh rechei i statei M. A. Suslova', *Kommunist*, No. 8, 1983, pp. 117-123 (book review: M. Suslov, *Marksizm-Leninizm i sovremennaya epokha*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1982).

<sup>119</sup>K. Chernenko, 'Aktual'nye voprosy ideologicheskoi, massovo-politicheskoi raboty partii', *Kommunist*, No. 9, 1983, p. 28.

<sup>120</sup>*Literatur*, 'Sotsialisticheskii realizm - v deistvii!', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 28, July 13th, 1983, pp. 1 & 6; *Literatur*, *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 26, June 29th, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>121</sup>Hough, *op. cit.*, p. 58; Meissner, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

became chair of the Party Control Commission and full Politburo member. One important aspect of these changes was the greater status accorded the RSFSR, a traditional Kirilenko constituency. Solomentsev, as chair of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, had been a candidate member of the politburo: his successor Vorotnikov became (in December 1983) a full politburo member.

In July, in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, Sergei Vikulov stressed his readiness to comply with the authorities' demands by praising the 1982 Central Committee Decree. As a consequence of the decree, he commented, *Nash sovremennik* had 'significantly reformed its work [znachitel'no perestroil svoyu rabotu]'; he also stressed the journal's new emphasis on publitsistika following the 1982 decree (which had, of course, above all criticised the journal's literary criticism)<sup>122</sup>. *Nash sovremennik* was praised in official publications during this period for its publitsistika on the village in the non-black-earth region<sup>123</sup>. Vikulov himself, in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, lauded Vasil'ev's latest work, the novella *A Peasant Son*<sup>124</sup>.

#### ***Nash sovremennik: Alliance with Chernenko?***

Vikulov's July *Literaturnaya gazeta* statement had noted that forthcoming issues of the journal would include *The Thunderers*, the latest novel by the newly-appointed head of the Literature Sector of the Central Committee Department

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<sup>122</sup>S. Vikulov, 'Programma tvorcheskikh svershenii', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 30, July 27th, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>123</sup>*Literaturnyi obozrevatel'*, 'Zemlya i slovo', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 21, May 20th, 1983, p. 2; *Literator*, 'Mera otvetstvennosti', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 32, August 10th, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>124</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Krest'yanskiy syn'.



of Culture, Viktor Stepanov, 'on the most burning theme of contemporary life - on the struggle for peace, on the ideological confrontation of two systems'<sup>125</sup>. In response to the regime's isolation on the international arena, Andropov had launched a propagandistic 'peace offensive'. Stepanov's *The Thunderers* focused attention on the USA as 'the Other', rather than the West in general. The novel, a relatively subtle example of statist manipulation of 'negative' boundary mechanisms, depicted, as Shundik's recent *The Ancient Sign* had done, the threat posed to the USSR by American nuclear defence policy<sup>126</sup>.

There were obvious advantages for the journal to be gained from patronage by such a highly placed official as Stepanov. Indeed, given Stepanov's probable links with conservative Chernenko circles, it seems likely that the publication was simultaneously a nod in the direction of Andropov's foreign policy and a step towards closer relations with the Chernenko leadership faction. Bondarev took the initiative in bringing Stepanov to *Nash sovremennik*, no doubt with a view to improving relations between the Department of Culture and the journal<sup>127</sup>, as it in fact did<sup>128</sup>. Opposition to this rapprochement was encountered in Glavlit, which delayed publication, without, however, making any substantial changes to the text<sup>129</sup>.

In sum, the increase in Chernenko's influence, and his search for an alternative policy line to that of the

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<sup>125</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*

<sup>126</sup>V. Stepanov, 'Gromoverzhtsy', *NS*, No. 8, pp. 3-110; No. 9, pp. 16-126. See S. Cosgrove, 'The Thunderers - a Soviet novel about the threat of nuclear conflict', *Detente*, No. 1, October 1984, pp. 17-20.

<sup>127</sup>Krivtsov, interview; Pal'chikov, interview.

<sup>128</sup>Zhukov, interview.

<sup>129</sup>Krivtsov, interview; Pal'chikov, interview; Zhukov, interview.

Andropov-Gorbachev faction, provided an opportunity for *Nash sovremennik* to establish new relations with leading officials and bring fresh life to the journal's publication policy. The printing of Stepanov's *The Thunderers* in *Nash sovremennik* was one sign of Chernenko's tentative approaches towards the 'Russian party', through a conservative faction in the Department of Culture.

These approaches gained in strength when, from August, the month of *The Thunderers'* publication, the shadow of Andropov's ill-health lay heavily over Soviet political life. *Literaturnaya gazeta* soon announced the candidacy of Bondarev's anti-Western novel of 1980, *The Choice*, for the USSR state prize that year<sup>130</sup>. The same issue of the paper praised *The Thunderers* as 'an undoubted success for the author', and noted that the novel witnessed 'to the presence of many as yet unused possibilities which are hidden in this genre'<sup>131</sup>. The 'genre' in question may well have been that of an alliance between ruling circles, associated with Chernenko, and the 'Russian party', linked, in part at least, through Viktor Stepanov in the Culture Department. At the end of the year, in a symbolic act cementing the new relationship, Bondarev received the USSR prize for literature for *The Choice*<sup>132</sup>. This was part of a widespread 'campaign' raising the profile of Bondarev at this time<sup>133</sup>.

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<sup>130</sup>A. Petrenko, 'Vybor sud'by', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 35, August 31st, 1983, p. 2. See Yu. Bondarev, 'Vybor', *NS*, No. 10, pp. 14-125; No. 11, pp. 17-108, 1980.

<sup>131</sup>Yu. Idashkin, 'Na glavnom napravlenii', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 35, August 31st, 1983, p. 11.

<sup>132</sup>*Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 46, November 11th, 1983, p. 2.

<sup>133</sup>See Chapter Five.



The role of the 'peace offensive' as common ideological ground between competing political factions was shown when, in October, leading Russian nationalist writers, including some who had boycotted the Sever discussion, published a letter in support of the General Secretary's foreign policy in *Literaturnaya Rossiya*<sup>134</sup>. *Nash sovremennik* in this month exhibited a new confidence. Anatolii Lanshchikov was virtually rehabilitated, for the first time since 1981 publishing a critical article<sup>135</sup>. October also saw the introduction of a new 'nationalist' rubric, 'Our National Property [Nashe natsional'noe dostoyanie]'<sup>136</sup>. Thereafter, as 1983 ended and 1984 began, *Nash sovremennik* showed greater confidence in publishing nationalist sentiment than at any time since the beginning of the Andropov period, in particular with contributions by Mikhail Antonov, Sergei Alekseev, Vladimir Vasil'ev and Aleksandr Kazintsev (a young sotrudnik in the department of criticism brought to the journal by Yurii Seleznev, and an acquaintance of Kozhinov)<sup>137</sup>. In *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, Kazintsev praised Kozhinov for 'passionately seeking the truth' and for his 'uncompromising struggle with evil'<sup>138</sup>.

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<sup>134</sup>'Mir pobedit voynu', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 43, October 21st, 1983, p. 2. Signatories included Alekseev, Bondarev, Belov, Vikulov, Zalygin, Mikhalkov, Nosov and Proskurin.

<sup>135</sup>A. Lanshchikov, 'Chuvstvo puti'. This article, a defence of village prose, had been preceded by publication of a favourable review of Lanshchikov's controversial biography of Chernyshevskii (M. Pinaev, 'Prometei russkoi revolyutsii', *NS*, No. 8, 1983, pp. 153-159 [book review: A. Lanshchikov, *N. G. Chernyshevskii, Lyubiteli rossiiskoi slovesnosti*, *Sovremennik*, 1982]). Pinaev's article won one of the journal's annual prizes (*NS*, No. 1, 1984, inside of back cover).

<sup>136</sup>The first item under this rubric was O. Volkov, 'Quercus Robur'.

<sup>137</sup>Antonov, 'Kakaya intensifikatsiya ekonomiki nam nuzhna?'; S. Alekseev, 'Ne pole pereiti', *NS*, No. 2, 1984, pp. 55-112; A. Kazintsev, 'Nachalo puti: zhiznennyi opyt i skhemy - zametki o poezii molodykh', *NS*, No. 12, 1983, pp. 156-164; V. Vasil'ev, 'Energiya chelovechnosti. Zametki o proze Ivana P'ikulina'.

<sup>138</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Podtverzhdeno vremenem', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 52, December 23rd, 1983, p. 17 (book review: V. Kozhinov, *Stat'i o sovremennoi literature*, *Sovremennik*, 1982). Kazintsev's first contribution to *NS* had been, appropriately, a laudatory review of an anthology of poetry compiled by his mentor Kozhinov (A. Kazintsev & V. Fedorov, 'Otkrytie poeticheskogo mira', *NS*, No 7, 1981, pp. 190-191).



Andropov's supporters, however, were to take cognisance of this development, and fight it. In November a major theoretical work by the Armenian scholar Suren Kaltakhchyan, *The Marxist-Leninist Theory of the Nation and the Contemporary World*, was published<sup>139</sup>. One Western observer has described this work as 'an unsparing attack on the Russian nationalists'<sup>140</sup>. Kaltakhchyan attacked both popular and statist nationalist tendencies. He argued that Marxist-Leninist criticism must be based on social class and not nationality, insisted on the Leninist conception of 'two cultures', contended that the unity (edintsvo) of the Soviet people allowed for 'national differences', but denounced the champions of the 'single stream' approach to Russian history and culture for placing too much emphasis on 'national character' and 'national spirit'<sup>141</sup>. He deplored 'neo-pochvennik motifs' and 'peasant patriarchalism'<sup>142</sup>. Kozhinov was rebuked for developing the idea that 'renunciation' and 'humility' were features of the Russian national character in his *Nash sovremennik* article of November 1981<sup>143</sup>, and Lobanov was accused of 'antihistoricism' in *Liberation*, a term with which Aleksandr Yakovlev had attacked nationalists in 1972.

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<sup>139</sup>S. Kaltakhchyan, *Marksistko-leninskaya teoriya natsii i sovremennost'*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1983. Sent to the typesetters on August 24th, the book was sent to the printers on November 24th.

<sup>140</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalism*, p. 29.

<sup>141</sup>Kaltakhchyan, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

<sup>142</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 166-7.

<sup>143</sup>*Ibid.*

## Conclusions

Dunlop had predicted a rise in Russian nationalism in the immediate post-Brezhnev period. He wrote:

The year 1982, which witnessed the deaths of Brezhnev and Suslov and the removal of Kirilenko from the Politburo, left the Soviet Union poised on the brink of potentially major changes. [...] And if Marxism-Leninism is downgraded or simply jettisoned as the legitimising ideology of the state, it will most likely be to the benefit of a variant of Russian nationalism.<sup>144</sup>

Yet, as a 'ruling idea', Andropov would have no truck with Russian nationalist ideology, but favoured a modernising ethos based on a revival of 'internationalist' Marxism-Leninism. Far from down-grading Marxism-Leninism, therefore, Andropov sought to strengthen and adapt it to contemporary circumstances. There would seem to be two fundamental reasons for this. Firstly, Andropov's drive for limited reform to overcome Brezhnevite 'stagnation' was bound to result in an intensification of opposition among the political elite, for which Russian nationalist ideology was one natural vehicle of expression. Secondly, as a ruling idea, Russian nationalist ideology presented clear dangers in the multi-national Soviet Union. In terms of the three chief political functions performed by nationalist ideology, identified by Breuilly<sup>145</sup>, therefore, Russian nationalist ideology presented a danger to Andropov 1) as a potential co-ordinator between dissatisfied Soviet elites; 2) as an obstacle to popular mobilisation of the multi-ethnic population; and 3) as an inappropriate means to

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<sup>144</sup>Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, p. 61.

<sup>145</sup>Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, pp. 181-190.



legitimate the Soviet Union on the world arena, since it would damage the USSR's position as the leading Communist power<sup>146</sup>, while exposing it to criticism as an imperial state.

The period of Andropov's rise to power and tenure of the General Secretaryship saw a severe reduction in the range of Russian nationalist views published in *Nash sovremennik*. Statist nationalist positions were all but eradicated; the popular nationalist tendency was highly constrained.

As the history of *Nash sovremennik* in this period shows, the popular nationalist tendency was permitted almost exclusively within the limits of pro-reform writing, above all on agriculture. This shows how Andropov's authorities, and notably Central Committee Secretary Gorbachev, sought not only to suppress, but also to manipulate, Russian nationalist ideology.

The successful coalition of Chernenko's enemies which succeeded in securing Andropov's appointment first as Second Secretary and then as General Secretary, adopted Andropov's ideological preferences. Although Andropov had probably played a key role in weakening Kirilenko's position, it seems that he was able to win over Kirilenko's former clients and maintain their loyalty<sup>147</sup>. This was despite the fact that Kirilenko's former cadres were, through their patron, associated with Russian nationalist

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<sup>146</sup>D. Jacobs & T. Hill, 'Soviet Ethnic Policy in the 1980s: Theoretical Consistency and Political Reality', in J. Noguee (ed.), *Soviet Politics: Russia after Brezhnev*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1985, p. 181.

<sup>147</sup>Solov'ev & Klepikova, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130; Volkogonov, *Sem' vozhdai, Kniga 2*, p. 115.



ideological tendencies, which Andropov now sought largely to gag.

The reaction of Kirilenko's clients indicates the secondary, instrumental, role played by ideology in Soviet political in-fighting. Chernenko had been one of the leading opponents of Russian nationalist ideology in the struggle against Kirilenko and Suslov. Yet, following Andropov's rise to power, when Russian nationalism became available as an ideology of opposition, it became attractive to Chernenko and his associates.

Andropov's appointment of his chief political rival, Chernenko, to head his anti-nationalist ideological policy may, therefore, have been designed precisely to prevent the latter playing the 'Russian Card'. However, as the General Secretary's health deteriorated, the Chernenko faction, via Shauro's Department of Culture, began to strengthen their links with the 'Russian party' and, in part at least, with *Nash sovremennik*.

Traditionally in the Soviet Union, isolation in foreign policy was associated with the promotion of Russian nationalist ideology in domestic politics<sup>148</sup>. The evidence suggests that Andropov broke with this tradition, suppressing Russian nationalism despite the international isolation of the Soviet Union. To maintain a high level of hostility in relations with the international community, and simultaneously challenge domestic conservative elites by pushing ahead with (limited) reform, was a dangerous course for a Soviet leader to take. Andropov's desire to

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<sup>148</sup> See Chapter One.

push the policy process forward made it necessary for him to virtually eliminate Russian nationalism as a potential ideological vehicle for the articulation of the opposition which his policies were bound to arouse. Andropov's endeavours were cut short, however, first by ill-health, and then by death.

## 4. From Chernenko to Gorbachev: Continuity & Change in a Time of Leadership Transition

(Editorial team: chief editor Vikulov, deputy chief editors Korobov & Mussalitin.

Journal issues: February 1984 - April 1986)

### Part One: Thematic Analysis

The period of Chernenko's General-Secretaryship and Gorbachev's first year in office saw *Nash sovremennik* publish a wider range of both popular and statist nationalist views than under Andropov. In particular, with official support, a reformist popular nationalist tendency was expanded, while new themes of ecology and the official anti-alcohol campaign were taken up and developed.

#### Imagining the Nation

1) A Rural Community *Nash sovremennik's* leading writers returned to the imaginative treatment of the journal's main



theme, that of rural Russian life. *The Fire*, Rasputin's first major work of prose since *Parting from Matera*, marked a revival of the author's creativity<sup>1</sup>.

*The Fire* depicted the exhaustion of a society, a nation, having neither roots in the past nor a sense of future purpose. The hero, Ivan Egorov, resettled from a 300-year-old village flooded, like Matera, by a new reservoir, struggles to maintain the standards of traditional morality in Sosnovka, a timber enterprise settlement (lespromkhoz). Life in the new settlement is soulless and barren. The few good people fight a losing battle against the bad, among whom are numerous temporary inhabitants, including a semi-criminal element ('ruffians' [arkharovtsy]). Indeed, the lespromkhoz is itself temporary in nature; after it has destroyed the surrounding forest it will move to another area. The fire, which breaks out in the settlement's stores, exposes the moral nature of the community. Egorov overcomes his exhaustion to help save the settlement, but most inhabitants show little interest in saving any of the goods except vodka; others simply take to pillage. One of Ivan's fellow fire-fighters is murdered in the confusion.

The pessimism of *The Fire* about the state of the Russian nation was echoed in Belov's *Reflections in the Motherland* (Belov's home kolkhoz was called 'Motherland' [Rodina])<sup>2</sup>. Belov conveyed his sense of attachment to his native village (Timonikha) and his feeling of anguish that

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<sup>1</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Pozhar', *NS*, No. 7, 1985, pp. 3-38.

<sup>2</sup>V. Belov, 'Razdum'ya na rodine', *NS*, No. 6, 1985, pp. 100-160.

the rural way of life of his childhood had been destroyed. He wrote of the impact of collectivisation and the war on his native village, Timonikha, with brutal frankness:

It seems all was very simple: anyone who didn't join the kolkhoz was declared a kulak or a boss, they were dekulakised and sent into exile.<sup>3</sup>

When the kolkhoz was first set up, he noted, 'only cats remained in private hands'. Like many others, his father left the village to make a living. Of the men from Timonikha who fought in the war, including Belov's father, none returned alive. Of those who remained in the village, mostly women and children, many died of hunger (both during the war and after). Belov also described the post-war disintegration of the countryside under the impact of migration to the cities. Timonikha survived as a rump of six homes with a population of ten adults.

Belov's article made an excellent case for rural reform. In the contemporary kolkhoz, the reader learns, chairmen come and go (an average of one a year since 1930), while the quality of village services - health and education - declines. The good work habits of the past have been destroyed by the idea of 'collective responsibility'. Workers drink and misuse equipment; and bureaucrats take destructive decisions. 'Responsibility', Belov wrote, 'can only be individual'.<sup>4</sup> Curiously enough, Belov ignored the fact that 'collective' or 'mutual' responsibility was a traditional aspect of pre-Revolutionary peasant life, 'colouring [the peasants'] outlook on law, property and

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<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 224.  
<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 155.

authority', and 'embodied in the village assembly, the skhod'<sup>5</sup>.

In *The Value of Initiative* Ivan Vasil'ev implicitly treated the pre-collectivisation village as a model for rural reform<sup>6</sup>. He argued the need for greater social differentiation in the countryside, condemning what he called the ideology of social 'levelling' (uravnilovka), and observed that his opponents accused him of wanting a return to NEP and a revival of the kulaks. He argued that bureaucratic administration suppressed individual initiative and destroyed craftsmanship (masterstvo), which was not merely a particular skill, but a psychological approach to life and work characterised by individual initiative. Vasil'ev argued that the work collective should be the hirer and controller of the administration, and restated his case for the family farm<sup>7</sup>. In another article, Vasil'ev again stressed the moral nature of the relation of the craftsman (master) to work, praised 'family work-teams' and called for a revival of the family farmsteads of old (khutora)<sup>8</sup>. By these means, he believed, the qualities of the pre-collectivisation peasantry could be revived. Vasil'ev set his ideas in fictional form in *The Deputy's Inquiry*, a novella relating the conflict between a conservative rural district official and a progressive director of a local state farm, keen to put 'initiative' to work<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup>Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*, p. 201.

<sup>6</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Tsena initsiativy', *NS*, No. 12, 1985, pp. 3-49.

<sup>7</sup>Zhores Medvedev was later to note favourable remarks about the family farm by A. Nikitin some months earlier in *Novyi mir*, but not those by Vasil'ev in *Nash sovremennik* (A. Nikitin, 'Ot okolitsy do okrainy', *Novyi mir*, No 7, 1985, pp. 179-199; Zh. Medvedev, *Gorbachev*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988, p. 203).

<sup>8</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Slovo o dele i khozyaine. Zametki publitsista', *NS*, No. 1, 1985, pp. 12-53.

<sup>9</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Deputatskii zapros', *NS*, No. 8, 1985, pp. 3-62.



Mikhail Antonov's ideas for rural reform were much the same as those of Vasil'ev. In *From Byway to Highway*, Antonov stressed the importance of individual initiative in kolkhoz life<sup>10</sup>. He praised a particular kolkhoz chairman in the Vyatka region of northern Russia for bringing new, capable cadres to the farm, introducing work-related wage payments, smaller labour units (zveno), and encouraging private plots. As a result, output, work conditions and pay all improved, while drunkenness decreased. Corruption at the local administrative level in the countryside was the theme of Mikhail Shchukin's novel *A Name for a Son*<sup>11</sup>. As in Antonov's work, the novel seemed to say that change at the lowest levels of the administration always depended on the personal qualities of individuals.

A new direction in publitsistika was a focus on the environmental problems of the southern black-earth zone of the RSFSR, Gorbachev's home region. An article by Fatei Shipunov, written in an impassioned, almost apocalyptic, tone, criticised the failure to prevent soil erosion in this area<sup>12</sup>. In a selection of 'readers' letters' sent to the journal in response, a number of forestry officials called for an ecological agency to be established, with the power to insist on improvements at local level and resolve conflicts between competing institutions in the interests of the environment<sup>13</sup>. This proposal was aimed directly against the Ministry of Soil Improvement and Water

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<sup>10</sup>M. Antonov, 'S tropki - na bol'shak', NS, No. 6, 1984, pp. 139-144.

<sup>11</sup>M. Shchukin, 'Imya dlya syna', NS, No. 1, 1986, pp. 20-112; No. 2, 1986, pp. 21-100.

<sup>12</sup>F. Shipunov, 'Dokuchaevskie "Bastiony"', NS, No. 2, 1985, pp. 136-163.

<sup>13</sup>Otkliki na stat'yu F. Ya. Shipunova "Dokuchaevskie 'Bastiony'", NS, No. 12, 1985, pp. 179-187.

Resources (Minvodkhoz). A round-table discussion by high-ranking scientists of erosion in the black-earth regions made the same proposal<sup>14</sup>. Minvodkhoz was criticised for disregarding the concept of land improvement and for a one-sided focus on water irrigation, which, it was claimed, resulted in salination and soil erosion<sup>15</sup>. The Ministry's plans to link the Danube to the Dnepr by canal and other 'global ideas of transforming nature' were also condemned. Minvodkhoz, it was argued, should be subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture. One contributor asserted the patriotic nature of ecological conservation. The Russian (russkaya) Plain, he argued, was the 'historical cradle of the Eastern-Slavic and many other peoples', with not only 'a natural and environmental, but also a spiritual and moral significance'<sup>16</sup>.

2) A Cultural Community On the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Russian poet Davydov, a veteran of the Napoleonic war, Kazintsev argued that the Patriotic War had taught Russians 'a conscious reverence for the national community', united the nation against its enemies and sharpened the 'distinctive features of the Russian national [narodnogo] character'<sup>17</sup>. These features are '"openness" [raspashnost]', daring, and native wit', as well as 'boldness, readiness to perform feats for the glory of the Motherland, resourcefulness, modesty'<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup>'Zemlya i khleb', NS, No. 7, 1985, pp. 115-152.

<sup>15</sup>V. Kovda, 'Kak pomoch' nashim chernozemam', NS, No 7, 1985, pp. 117-128. See also Zh. Medvedev, Gorbachev, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988, p. 202.

<sup>16</sup>A. Nazarov, 'Nauka i opyt naroda', NS, No. 7, 1985, pp. 145-150.

<sup>17</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Davydov vojn i poet', NS, No. 8, 1984, pp. 160-164.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid, p. 163.



The journal's writers sought to establish a nationalist literary canon<sup>19</sup>. A review of a collection of reminiscences about Nikolai Rubtsov praised the poet as 'the embodiment of the Russian national character'<sup>20</sup>. Deputy chief editor Vladimir Vasil'ev claimed a place for Sergei Esenin in the nationalist pantheon as the 'poetical heart of Russia'<sup>21</sup>. Vasil'ev also wrote on Evgenii Nosov, stressing his importance to the Russian national literary tradition as a writer on the village and the natural world<sup>22</sup>.

Articles by Stanislav Kunyaev and Anatolii Lanshchikov indicated the conservative nature of nationalist cultural views. Kunyaev sought to exclude the popular singer and songwriter Vladimir Vysotskii from the national canon by arguing that Vysotskii represented a Russian version of Western mass culture<sup>23</sup>. He claimed that the bad behaviour of Vysotskii's fans at the singer's graveyard betrayed this foreign influence. In *Silence of the Talkies*, Lanshchikov took a similarly conservative approach to culture, reproaching film-makers for the poor quality of screen versions of the Russian literary classics, which, he claimed, distorted the originals<sup>24</sup>.

3) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' Kazintsev wrote that the poet of the Napoleonic era, Davydov, had lived at a

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<sup>19</sup>See A. Kazintsev, 'Mekhanika uspekha, ili "Individual'nost' novogo tipa"', NS, No. 10, 1985, pp. 169-175; V. Korobov, 'Vina. Nad stranitsami romana Yu. Bondareva "Igra"', NS, No. 11, 1985, pp. 167-183; S. Semanov, 'Dostovernost' podlinnogo', NS, No. 7, 1985, pp. 184-186; P. Palievskii, 'Sholokhov segodnya', NS, No. 2, 1986, pp. 173-177.

<sup>20</sup>N. Zuev, '"...Rasplatimsya lyubov'yu"', NS, No. 8, 1984, pp. 170-172 (book review: V. Oboturov & A. Gryazev [eds.], *Vospominaniya o Rubtsove*, Severo-zapadnoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo (Vologodskoe otdelenie), Vologda, 1983).

<sup>21</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Poeticheskoe serdtse Rossii. K 90-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya Sergeya Esenina', NS, No. 10, 1985, pp. 176-190.

<sup>22</sup>V. Vasil'ev: 'Golos russkikh prostorov', NS, No 1, 1985, pp. 157-164; 'Tainstvo slova. Zametki o proze Evgeniya Nosova', NS, No 10, 1986, pp. 170-173.

<sup>23</sup>S. Kunyaev, 'Chto tebe poyut? Polemicheskie zametki o modnom v kul'ture', NS, No. 7, 1984, pp. 171-182.

<sup>24</sup>A. Lanshchikov, 'Nemota zvukovogo kino', NS, No. 3, 1985, pp. 178-181.



time when, in the poet's words, 'there was as yet not a single cosmopolitan' and 'insulting the honour of the fatherland was the same as insulting one's own honour'<sup>25</sup>. Kazintsev implied that, in the contemporary Soviet Union, there were 'cosmopolitans' who insulted the honour of Russia. 'Cosmopolitans' was a Zhdanovite codeword for Jews. His article heralded the return of anti-Semitic sentiment to the journal.

Mark Lyubomudrov, a Leningrad theatre critic (and head of the Sector on Theatre at the Leningrad State Institute of Theatre, Music and Cinematography), accused certain dramatists, of probable Jewish background, of viewing national culture and life 'from the side', even with 'a cold sneer'<sup>26</sup>. Lyubomudrov complained that the word Russia (Rossiya) rarely occurred in their works. According to Lyubomudrov, this contrasted with the plays of contemporary 'Russian' dramatists, whose works were 'permeated with a sharp feeling for the Motherland'<sup>27</sup>. Lyubomudrov complained that views such as his were suppressed by a 'terror of the milieu' (a term he claimed to have borrowed from Soloukhin)<sup>28</sup>.

In a rare reference to Freemasonry, Apollon Kuz'min quoted Marx to the effect that 'capitalists, who display so little brotherly feeling when in mutual competition with one another, constitute at the same time a real (poistine) Masonic brotherhood in the struggle with the working class as

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<sup>25</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Davydov vojn i poet', NS, No. 8, 1984, p. 163.

<sup>26</sup>M. Lyubomudrov, 'Teatr nachinaetsya s rodiny', NS, No. 6, 1985, pp. 168-178.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid*, p. 170.

<sup>28</sup>The journal *Teatr*, he objected, had published a letter critical of his views on Meyerhold, but had refused to print his reply. See 'Neobkhodimost' vnesti yasnost' (Pis'mo v redaktsiyu)', *Teatr*, No. 11, 1980, p. 88.

a whole'<sup>29</sup>. What for Marx was a literary metaphor was, for Kuz'min, a matter of belief.

### Legitimising the State

Kunyaev, Seleznev, Kuz'min and Antonov continued the debate on state legitimacy, which had been effectively kept out of the journal since Andropov rose to power. All advocated a statist nationalist ideology, differing from each other in their espousal of either a 'White' or a 'Red' variant.

1) A 'White' Legitimation of the State Both Kunyaev and Seleznev took up the theme of a 'White' statist legitimisation of the state developed by Kozhinov in 1981. Kunyaev gave a strong endorsement to Great Power sentiment (*velikoderzhavnost'*), and prophesied a potentially apocalyptic outcome, a contemporary 'Time of Troubles', if internal dissension within the USSR continued: the state would collapse and become a prey to foreign enemies<sup>30</sup>. He argued that the legitimacy of the Soviet state depended not on 'abstract humanism' (a swipe at the 'universal values' which Gorbachev was later to officially introduce into the Soviet political lexicon), but the character of the Russian people, their 'universal responsiveness'.

Seleznev's article claimed that Dostoevskii had called, in his own day, for 'a fundamentally new view of the historical mission of Russian literature'<sup>31</sup>. This mission was to ensure both the 'intellectual and <sup>the</sup> moral independence

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<sup>29</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'V prodolzhenie vazhnogo razgovora', *NS*, No 3, 1985, pp. 182-190.

<sup>30</sup>S. Kunyaev, 'O "vselenskikh drovakh" i traditsiyakh otechestvennoi poezii', *NS*, No. 2, 1985, pp. 170-81.

<sup>31</sup>Yu. Seleznev, 'Uvazhaite zhizn'!', *NS*, No. 10, 1984, pp. 163-76.



[samostoyatel'nost']' of Russia from Europe, and maintain the independence of the state. In the struggle against foreign imperialists, Seleznev argued, 'our classical inheritance must unquestionably be understood as an ideological weapon of strategic significance'<sup>32</sup>. Seleznev came close to socialist realist orthodoxy in the methodology he used to discuss Dostoevskii's fiction. This he described as 'prophetic realism', or 'realism in the highest sense', since it depicted reality not simply as it was, but in a process of development<sup>33</sup>. Although he purported to offer an alternative to socialist realist orthodoxy, this formula was very close to the official version.

2) A 'Red' Legitimation of the State In several articles, Kuz'min debated the relationship between patriotism and socialism with Yurii Surovtsev, critic and secretary of the USSR Writers' Union<sup>34</sup>. Like Kunyaev, Kuz'min rejected both Andropovite 'internationalism' and 'universal values'. Lenin, Kuz'min claimed, had realised the potential for patriotism to engender socialist consciousness, in particular among the peasant masses. This was what lay behind Lenin's 'patriotic' idea of Socialism in One Country, Kuz'min contested. Kuz'min contrasted this 'Leninist', 'patriotic' position with the views of the Mensheviks, Trotskyites and Zinov'evites who, according to Kuz'min, were

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<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>34</sup>Kuz'min: *op. cit.*; 'Neozhidannye priznaniya', *NS*, No. 9, 1985, pp. 182-190. See also Yu. Surovtsev: 'Po zavetam Gor'kogo v traditsiyakh Pervogo s'ezda', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, September 12th, No. 37, 1984, p. 2; 'V samom dele: prodolzhim razgovor', *NS*, No. 9, 1985, pp. 172-181.



solely interested in world revolution and were indifferent to the peasantry.

3) A 'Red' Statist Reformism Antonov's *The Harmony of Progress* was an attempt to formulate in outline a coherent statist nationalist macro-economic policy based on Russian culture<sup>35</sup>. Somewhat paradoxically, Antonov argued that the USSR could achieve its rightful leading position in the world (thereby winning the admiration of other countries and becoming a model for them to emulate)<sup>only</sup> if it proved able to reform its economy and at the same time isolate itself from the rest of the world. The way to achieve this, Antonov averred, was by harnessing Russian national traditions.

Technology, Antonov argued, was 'nation-specific', in that it 'carries within itself the imprint of the [national] cast of mind and [national] character of its creator', citing Russian tanks of the Second World War as an example of 'one of the embodiments of a specifically Russian genius'. He opposed the introduction of Western capitalist models into the USSR, which would destroy national traditions. Antonov claimed that the wealth of Russian culture inherited from previous generations would enable the USSR to achieve a leading place among the world's states. It is important to note that, as a statist nationalist, Antonov's emphasis was on the USSR as a state, while he stressed only Russian culture.

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<sup>35</sup>M. Antonov, 'Garmoniya progressa', NS, No. 1, 1986, pp. 130-142.

Ivan Sinitsyn argued that the Soviet education system was bedevilled by problems typical of Soviet management and needed *perestroika*<sup>36</sup>. The crude administrative attitude of local school officials alienated the teachers, who could neither feel the interest of the state in their abilities and talents, nor the respect of society. Sinitsyn argued that the state was failing to promote inventiveness in society and that this had a stultifying effect. Innovative teachers were at times subject to administrative persecution; disillusioned youths were vulnerable to harmful influences such as rock music. The remedy, Sinitsyn suggested, was 'education with labour', based on Makarenko's ideas of the 1930s. Unlike Ivan Vasil'ev, then, Sinitsyn saw the 1930s as an ideal period, when the 'heroes of labour' were an 'enormous driving force'. A similar celebration of such heroes was needed today, he urged, to ensure 'people's psychological *perestroika*'.

4) A State Defined by 'the Other' In their writings, Kunyaev and Seleznev both identified 'the Other' as Western capitalist states. Kunyaev wrote that the bourgeois mass culture, emanating from these states, was 'a force inimical to our ideals'<sup>37</sup>. Some Soviet citizens, however, were little better than enemies within, Kunyaev held: the poet Voznesenskii epitomised dangerous liberal views<sup>38</sup>. Seleznev wrote of foreign imperialists who intended 'the destruction of our state, social, civic and patriotic convictions, of

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<sup>36</sup>I. Sinitsyn: 'Delo slavy', NS, No. 1, 1986, pp. 3-12; 'Shkola radosti', NS, No. 2, 1986, pp. 3-19.

<sup>37</sup>Kunyaev, *op. cit.*

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

our ideological, moral and spiritual underpinnings and the fundamentals of our consciousness'<sup>39</sup>. He called for the unification of contemporary anti-western Russian ideological trends in the face of this ideological threat<sup>40</sup>.

Antonov took a similar view, arguing that any kind of dependence on, or influence from, foreign countries, particularly the West, was harmful to the USSR<sup>41</sup>. In the West, Antonov contended, people lived not as humans, but as 'super-occupied workers enslaved to primitive amusements'.

### Conclusions on Themes

In this period a change in political leadership resulted in changes in publication policy, despite the fact that the chief editor and the two deputy chief editors remained the same. The general survey above has masked the important differences between the two periods, which were threefold. Firstly, under Chernenko, the journal published advocates of 'White' statist nationalism (Kunyaev and Seleznev), while after Gorbachev's accession these were no longer printed. Secondly, under Chernenko, anti-Semitic views were published. However, after Lyubomudrov's anti-Semitic article early in Gorbachev's first year, such works ceased to appear. Thirdly, new government policies under Gorbachev were reflected in the journal's publitsistika, notably on ecology.

There were also elements of continuity, however. The journal's leading publitsisty, whether popular (Ivan Vasil'ev) or statist (Mikhail Antonov) nationalist in

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<sup>39</sup>Seleznev, *op. cit.*

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>41</sup>Antonov, *op. cit.*



orientation, published under both leaderships. At the beginning of the Gorbachev period, popular nationalists Rasputin and Belov returned to the journal's pages with important works, which had clearly been written before Gorbachev came to power, and would presumably have been published<sup>even</sup> if Chernenko had not died.

The works by Rasputin and Belov vividly portrayed the negative features of contemporary rural life. In these works, the rural Golden Age is used as a point of reference by which to gauge the extent of present-day decline. In Rasputin's *The Fire*, the Golden Age is represented by the old village lying beneath the waters of the reservoir. In Belov's *Reflections in the Motherland*, the Golden Age is implicitly situated in the pre-collectivisation village.

Yet these 'negative' descriptions of Russian ethnic life by popular nationalists are *self-critical*. They are still based on *positive* interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms. In this, they contrast with the *negative* interpretations of ethnic self-definition put forward by the statist nationalists - Antonov, Kazintsev, Kunyaev, Kuz'min and Seleznev. These latter writers generally seek to define the Russian ethnic group in terms of 'the Other' - the West, capitalism, mass culture, 'cosmopolitans', Jews and Freemasons. In particular, they tend to place the blame for Russia's ills on non-Russian peoples and states.

## Part Two: Political Analysis

### General Secretary Chernenko

Chernenko came to power promising to continue the lines of policy laid down by Andropov<sup>42</sup>. However, in four important areas his predecessor's policies were either put on hold or into reverse. Andropov's programme of renewing party and state cadres was halted (for the thirteen months that Chernenko was in office no promotions to the Politburo at either full or candidate level were made). Andropov's campaign against corruption was stopped. The late General Secretary's internationalist stance in nationalities policy was abandoned: all reference to the future merger (*sliyanie*) of Soviet nations was dropped and replaced by the Brezhnevite 'rapprochement' (*sblizhenie*)<sup>43</sup>. There was also a revival, throughout 1984, of the newly vigorous Soviet Anti-Zionist Committee<sup>44</sup>.

Nonetheless, Andropov's 'heir apparent', Gorbachev, also increased his power following Chernenko's accession. Archie Brown has written:

[...] upon the death of Andropov in February 1984 [Gorbachev] came to supervise a greater number of important areas of policy within the Secretariat than even Suslov had done. [Gorbachev] now became the senior secretary supervising the party organisation and (for the first time) ideology and foreign policy, but he retained responsibility for the economy (which had never been part of Suslov's - or for that matter Chernenko's - domain).<sup>45</sup>

The poor state of the elderly Chernenko's health tended to increase the influence of his aides, and his period of rule rapidly degenerated into an interregnum, during which

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<sup>42</sup>K. Chernenko, 'Rech' General'nogo sekretarya TsK KPSS tovarishcha K. U. Chernenko', *NS*, No. 3, 1984, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup>'Rech' tovarishcha K. U. Chernenko na plenum TsK KPSS, 19 aprelya 1984 g.', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 15, April 11th, 1984, pp. 1-2.

<sup>44</sup>See 'Zasedanie prezidiuma antisionistskogo komiteta', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 11, March 14th, 1984, p. 2; 'Rai, obrnuyshisya adom', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 21, May 23rd, 1984, p. 13; 'Sionizm - natsizm: zloveshchee rukopozhatie', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 42, October 17th, 1984, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup>Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, p. 71.



political factions manoeuvred for position<sup>46</sup>. As Chernenko's health deteriorated, Gorbachev played an increasingly prominent role in ideological matters. In December 1984, Gorbachev spoke at an important conference on ideology, which Chernenko failed to attend for health reasons<sup>47</sup>. Archie Brown has observed that 'never before had Gorbachev introduced so many ideas which departed from the current orthodoxy and which were daring for the time'<sup>48</sup>. In his speech, Gorbachev criticised the 'monotony, featurelessness and superficiality' in press, TV and radio output<sup>49</sup>.

### A New Tone

Chernenko's influence on official attitudes towards Russian nationalism was evident, immediately after Andropov's death, when *Literator's* review of the January journals was marked by a lightness of tone and an absence of threatening undercurrents. The article praised the latest in the series of Soloukhin's *Pebbles in the Palm*, published in *Nash sovremennik*, as 'a work rich in content' which 'takes a successful place in the general composition of the issues of the journal and probably will be accepted with satisfaction by the most varied categories of readers'<sup>50</sup>. This official praise of Soloukhin, humiliated in the press at the beginning of the Andropov period, was symbolic of a new literary and ideological order.

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<sup>46</sup>V. Afanas'ev, *Chetvertaya vlast' i chetyre genseka*, Kedr, Moscow, 1994.

<sup>47</sup>'Vospityvat' kommunisticheskuyu ubezhdenost'. Vsesoyuznaya nauchno-prakticheskaya konferentsiya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 50, December 12th, 1984. p. 2.

<sup>48</sup>Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 78. According to Brown, Chernenko attempted to cancel the conference at the last moment.

<sup>49</sup>'Vospityvat' kommunisticheskuyu ubezhdenost'. Vsesoyuznaya nauchno-prakticheskaya konferentsiya'.

<sup>50</sup>*Literator*, 'Napechatano v yanvare', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 7, February 15th, 1984, p. 5 (*Literator* reviews: V. Soloukhin, 'Kameshki na ladoni', *NS*, No. 1, 1984, pp. 105-114).



## Deputy Chief Editor Korobov

Following Yurii Bondarev's receipt of the USSR state prize for literature for the previous year, the occasion of the writer's sixtieth birthday in March saw the development of an officially sanctioned cult of the writer. The day before his birthday, Bondarev was made a Hero of Socialist Labour<sup>51</sup>. An evening in his honour was attended by Zimyanin, Stukalin and Shauro<sup>52</sup>. All the major literary journals, with the exception of *Druzhba narodov* and *Yunost'*, carried articles to celebrate his birthday. *Nash sovremennik* devoted the same number of pages (17) to articles celebrating Bondarev's 60th birthday as it did to the death of Andropov and Chernenko's accession, reported in the same March issue. An author of one of these articles was Vladimir Korobov, who also contributed similar celebratory articles on Bondarev to the journals *Oktyabr'* and *Sever*<sup>53</sup>.

Korobov (b. 1949) was a young literary critic with Russian nationalist sympathies, a former head of the department of criticism at *Nash sovremennik* (1974-1980) recently appointed to the journal's editorial board, and a frequent writer on Bondarev<sup>54</sup>. It is, therefore, perhaps not

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<sup>51</sup>'Pochta Yuriya Bondareva', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 12, March 16th, 1984, pp. 6-7.

<sup>52</sup>'Pisatel' boets' - vecher, posvyashchennyi 60-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya Yuriya Bondareva', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, 23rd March, No. 13, 1984, p. 5. See also A. Katerinin, 'Dolzhen rasskazat'...', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 13, March 23rd, 1984, p. 5; F. Agamaliev, 'Dolg i sovest'', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 19, May 11th, 1984, p. 7. For Bondarev's own latest work, see Yu. Bondarev, 'Igra', *Novyi mir*, No. 1, pp. 6-73; No. 2, pp. 80-155, 1985.

<sup>53</sup>V. Korobov, interview 25/8/93. See V. Korobov: 'Znaki sud'by', *NS*, No. 3, 1984, pp. 170-179; 'Utverzhdenie i otritsanie. Yuriyu Bondarevu - 60 let', *Oktyabr'*, No. 3, 1984, pp. 190-195; 'Zavetnoe. K 60-letiyu Yu. Bondareva', *Sever*, No. 3, 1984, pp. 97-102 (see also V. Dement'ev, 'Postizhenie istiny', *NS*, No. 3, 1984, pp. 162-170).

<sup>54</sup>See V. Korobov: 'Mnogozvuchie - shtrikhi k portretu Yu. Bondareva', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 6, February 8th, 1984, p. 6; Yurii Bondarev, *Sovremennik*, Moscow, 1984. Korobov had recently written the introduction to an edition of Vikulov's collected works (V. Korobov, "...polyubi ty to, chto ya lyublyu...", in S. Vikulov, *Izbrannye proizvedeniya*, *Sovremennik*, 1982. For an earlier contribution to *Nash sovremennik*, see V. Korobov, "Knigi vystraiwayut sud'by'", *NS*, No. 7, pp. 165-83; No. 8, pp. 157-85, 1981.

surprising that he was Bondarev's nominee to become the new deputy chief editor at *Nash sovremennik*. Korobov's appointment in place of Vladimir Vasil'ev simultaneously increased the influence of Bondarev at the journal and took advantage of the newly tolerant official attitude towards Russian nationalist ideology.

The same month, the RSFSR Writers' Union and the editorial board of *Nash sovremennik*, in order to regain some of the ground lost in the course of 1983, jointly put Mikhail Alekseev's popular nationalist *The Brawlers* forward for the Lenin and state prizes of the USSR<sup>55</sup>. A critic reviewing the work called it 'undoubtedly one of the outstanding literary works of socialist realism'<sup>56</sup>. Meanwhile the RSFSR Writers' Union publicly confirmed its loyalty to the leadership, as in 1983, by affirming its commitment to the struggle for peace<sup>57</sup>.

In the first three months that Korobov worked as deputy chief editor (the June to August issues), a distinctly new, statist nationalist, direction in publication policy was taken. For the first time since 1981, Kunyaev and Semanov were published<sup>58</sup>. Kozhinov's words (on the patriotic significance of Rubtsov's verse) also appeared in the journal for the first time since that year, quoted in a review of a collection of reminiscences about Rubtsov<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup>'Ot komiteta po Leninskim i Gosudarstvennym premiyam SSSR v oblasti literatury, iskusstva i arkhitektury pri Sovete ministrov SSSR', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 10, March 7th, 1984, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>A. Baigushev, 'Zrelost' - o romane Drachuny Mikhaila Alekseeva', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 13, March 23rd, 1984, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup>'Pisateli v bor'be za mir', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 10, March 2nd, 1984, pp. 2-5; S. Mikhalkov, 'Slovo, zovushchee k miru', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 10, March 7th, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup>Kunyaev, 'Chto tebe poyut? Polemicheskie zametki o modnom v kul'ture'; S. Semanov, 'Dostovernost' podlinnogo', *NS*, No. 7, 1985, pp. 184-186.

<sup>59</sup>N. Zuev, "'...Rasplatimsya lyubov'yu'", *NS*, No. 8, 1984, pp. 170-172 (Kunyaev was also quoted in the review). An article in *Literaturnaya Rossiya* described Kozhinov's remarks



The boldness of the nationalist rhetoric of Kazintsev's article on Davydov indicated the journal was set upon a new course<sup>60</sup>. This was also the message of Kunyaev's attack on Vysotskii, written, according to the author, in 1982 during Andropov's rise to power, but only now published<sup>61</sup>. The article was an immediate cause of controversy, both among the public and at the journal<sup>62</sup>. In this period, and that which followed, *Nash sovremennik* regained a tinge of the radicalism with which Yurii Seleznev had endowed it in 1981-1982. Ironically, that June Seleznev died of a heart attack at the age of forty-three while on a visit to the GDR<sup>63</sup>. The published obituary made no reference to Seleznev's time at *Nash sovremennik*, but indicated a partial rehabilitation, speaking of the critic and writer in warm and defiant tones as one who had died 'at the height of his creative powers', a 'writer-Communist' who had 'stood up for the best that has been gathered in the experience and traditions of our national culture and fought for the preservation of the purity of our civic and moral ideals'<sup>64</sup>.

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as 'not objective' (S. Pedenko "'Chto zh budet pamyat'yu poeta?..."', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 24, June 15th, 1984, p. 17).

<sup>60</sup>Kazintsev, 'Davydov voin i poet'.

<sup>61</sup>Kunyaev, *op. cit.* See S. Kunyaev, 'Volk i muravei', *Molodaya gvardiya*, No. 11, 1995, p. 224.

<sup>62</sup>As a result of protests by the journal's responsible secretary, Sergei Lukonin, a photograph of the grave of a Soviet soldier, which Kunyaev claimed had been desecrated by Vysotskii's fans, was removed from the issue (S. Lukonin, interview 18/6/93). Vikulov awarded the article one of the journal's prizes for the year.

<sup>63</sup>Following his death, it became an element of nationalist lore that Seleznev had died as a result of his dismissal (see *Pamyat' sozidayushchaya. Literaturno-kriticheskie stat'i. Vospominaniya o Yu. I Selezneve*, Krasnodarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, Krasnodar, 1987). Rumours also circulated that Seleznev's death may not have been wholly natural (Sporov, interview; Kuz'min interview).

<sup>64</sup>'Yu. I. Seleznev': *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 25, June 20th, 1984, p. 7; *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, June 22nd, 1984, p. 22.



## The Chernenko Line Challenged

Just as Proskurin had challenged the Andropov line on the pages of *Pravda* in January 1983, so Chernenko's tolerant policy towards Russian nationalism was challenged in the same paper. In May, Valentin Oskotskii published what Dunlop has rightly called 'a diatribe against the Russian nationalists' from an Andropovite Marxist-Leninist position<sup>65</sup>. The title of this article, *In the Struggle Against Anti-historicism*, recalled both Yakovlev's well-known publication of 1972 and Oskotskii's own more recent attack on Lobanov<sup>66</sup>. In August, during Chernenko's absence from Moscow on holiday, an article in *Literaturnaya gazeta* quoted Lenin to argue that the fusion (*sliyanie*) of nations, though not an immediate prospect, remained the final goal of Soviet nationalities policy<sup>67</sup>. John Dunlop has interpreted these articles as an expression of 'the Chernenko regime's unhappiness with the nationalists'<sup>68</sup>. However, it seems probable that they represented a sponsored attack on Chernenko's policy of tolerance towards Russian nationalists by elements in the Gorbachev leadership faction, eager to discredit Chernenko and demonstrate the latter's inability to implement a consistent ideological policy in the print media.

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<sup>65</sup>Dunlop, *The New Russian Nationalists*, p. 28.

<sup>66</sup>V. Oskotskii, 'V bor'be s antiistorizmom', *Pravda*, No. 142, May 21st, 1984, p. 2 (book review: Kaltakhchyan, *Markсистко-leninskaya teoriya natsii i sovremennost'*).

<sup>67</sup>I. Dzeverin, 'Dialektika edinstva', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 31, August 1st, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

## Deputy Chief Editor Mussalitin

The prospective 'team' of Krivtsov and Korobov had been barely established when the Central Committee Department of Culture intervened to secure the appointment as chief deputy editor, with effect from the journal's September issue, of Vladimir Mussalitin (b. 1939), a former *Izvestiya* correspondent and a recent graduate of the Academy of Social Sciences of the CPSU. Deputy editor Krivtsov returned from vacation to find his job gone<sup>69</sup>. Mussalitin, in his own words, was sent by the Department of Culture to 'balance' (*uravnovesit'*) the existing forces at *Nash sovremennik* and to 'broaden the range' (*rasshirit'* diapazon) of the journal, while avoiding what were perceived as Russian nationalist extremes<sup>70</sup>. In short, he was to be an antidote to Korobov.

That Mussalitin may have been associated with the Gorbachev, rather than the Chernenko, camp is indicated by the timing of his appointment. In July, Chernenko had left Moscow to rest in the North Caucasus, leaving Gorbachev in charge. Before long, the General Secretary's poor health required his removal to the Crimea, whence, on August 10th, he returned to hospital in Moscow. The decision on Mussalitin's appointment, therefore, coincided with a period when Gorbachev-oriented cadres may have had the confidence to act against the Chernenko line. It was at this time that an ideologically 'Andropovite' article, naming 'fusion' (*sliyanie*) as the goal of nationalities

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<sup>69</sup>Krivtsov, interview.

<sup>70</sup>V. Mussalitin, interview 20/7/93.

policy, appeared in *Literaturnaya gazeta*<sup>71</sup>. Viktor Stepanov, head of the Literature Sector at the Department of Culture and author of *The Thunderers*, telephoned Vikulov to request the appointment<sup>72</sup>. According to Mussalitin, Stepanov did this on instructions from the deputy head of the Department, Belyaev, an official later closely identified with Aleksandr Yakovlev<sup>73</sup>. Vikulov had no choice but to comply, although he viewed the appointment as an unwanted intrusion and a threat to his position<sup>74</sup>.

Mussalitin came to *Nash sovremennik* confident of the support he enjoyed outside the journal, and sure of his independence from Vikulov<sup>75</sup>. From the start, Mussalitin's relations with the chief editor were not good<sup>76</sup>. Mussalitin's relations with Bondarev were also poor<sup>77</sup>, a fact which indicates that Mussalitin's patrons were not those of the deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union.

No doubt with Bondarev's agreement, Vikulov appointed Korobov, the younger of the two deputy chief editors, first deputy chief editor from September 1984. This move sparked a rivalry between the two deputy chief editors which lasted as long as they worked together. Thenceforth, the distinct influences of the two on publication policy were evident.

The strength of Mussalitin's position at the journal is shown by the fact that, despite the opposition to him there, *publitsistika*, which he formally oversaw, now became

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<sup>71</sup>Dzeverin, 'Dialektika edinstva'.

<sup>72</sup>Mussalitin, interview; Vikulov, interview. Mussalitin may have worked with Stepanov earlier in his career (S. Potemkin, interview 5/10/94).

<sup>73</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>74</sup>Vikulov, interview.

<sup>75</sup>'I am too big a fish for Vikulov' ('Ya ne po zubam Vikulovu'), Mussalitin has remarked (Mussalitin, interview).

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup>*Ibid.*



the mainstay of publication policy. *Literator* described Ivan Vasil'ev, who continued to be the backbone of *Nash sovremennik's* rural publitsistika<sup>78</sup>, as 'our prominent publicist' (who, unlike the writers of village prose, had not fallen silent), and described his work as 'activity of state significance' (*gosudarstvennoe znachenie*)<sup>79</sup>. One new direction in publitsistika associated with Mussalitin was the 'patronage' (*shefstvo*) of a major industrial project after the fashion of the 1930s. The official *Literator* recommended 'the patronage [*sheftsvo*] by the literary journals of important national construction projects'<sup>80</sup>. The editors announced that the journal would henceforth 'patronise' the construction of 'the largest blast furnace in the world' at Cherepovets in Vologda region<sup>81</sup>. This innovation, moving away from the traditional rural focus of the journal towards an Andropovite stress on industrial modernisation, thus maintained the journal's link with Vologda, the home region of Vikulov and Belov, among others<sup>82</sup>.

Nonetheless, the new direction was controversial, an indication of the extent to which Mussalitin was a 'foreign body' at *Nash sovremennik*. At the Sixth Congress of the RSFSR Writers' Union in December, Rasputin criticised the

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<sup>78</sup>See I. Vasil'ev, 'Slovo o dele i khozyaine. Zametki publitsista'.

<sup>79</sup>*Literator*, 'Slovo o zemle i khlebe', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 15, April 11th, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup>*Literator*, 'Sluzhenie narodu', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 32, August 8th, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup>See B. Lapin, 'Delo rabochei chesti - Reportazh so stroitel'stva domy No 5', *NS*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 3-9; V. Mussalitin, 'Soldat i Marshal', *NS*, No. 6, 1985, pp. 13-22; '*Nash sovremennik na Severnoi Magnitke*', *NS*, No. 11, 1984, p. 192; '*Nash sovremennik na Severnoi Magnitke*', *NS*, No. 11, 1985, pp. 17-46; Yu. Teshkin, 'Chas "pik"', *NS*, No. 3, 1985, pp. 149-174; 'Zheleznykh del мастера', *NS*, No. 9, 1984, pp. 106-145.

<sup>82</sup>See V. Kuptsov, '"Severyanka" pered puskom', *NS*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 191-92; S. Vikulov, 'Iz kogorty frontovikov', *NS*, No. 1, 1985, pp. 152-156. Aleksandr Bragin, also from Vologda, was now head of the publitsistika department under Mussalitin.

'sheftsvo' of the Cherepovets industrial project<sup>83</sup>. At the end of the year the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union studiously ignored the 'sheftsvo' of Cherepovets when it praised the journal for the successful way it had fulfilled the demands of the decree of 1982, 'On creative links...', for its 'patronage' (shefskaya svyaz') of the non-black earth region, and for publishing writers such as I. Vasil'ev and Sinitsyn<sup>84</sup>.

A second new direction was represented by Shipunov's article on the environmental problems of the southern black-earth zone of the RSFSR, all the more a sensitive topic since this was Second Secretary Gorbachev's home region<sup>85</sup>. Written in 1980, a year of particularly bad soil erosion, the article had lain unpublished at the journal for five years<sup>86</sup>. Mussalitin now edited the article and Vikulov insisted his deputy chief editor take full responsibility<sup>87</sup>. It may be surmised that permission to print the article was obtained from Gorbachev's aides. For Gorbachev, the article served the purposes of strengthening links with popular Russian nationalists, opening a debate on the environment, and encouraging attacks on Minvodkhoz. The publication could also have been calculated to raise Mussalitin's standing in Russian nationalist circles.

Despite the fact that the period of Chernenko's rule offered new opportunities to leading Russian nationalist

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<sup>83</sup>'Shestoi s'ezd pisatelei RSFSR - Stenograficheskiy otchet', Sovremennik, Moscow, 1987, pp. 132-139.

<sup>84</sup>'Krepit' sodruzhestvo', Literaturnaya Rossiya, No. 52, December 28th, 1984, p. 9.

<sup>85</sup>Shipunov, 'Dokuchaevskie "Bastiony"'. The article received one of the journal's prizes for 1985.

<sup>86</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

figures, *Nash sovremennik* suffered from a dearth of quality works of prose, an area of the journal overseen by Korobov<sup>88</sup>. One reason for this may have been that leading figures of the 'village prose' school of writing were ageing. A significant cohort, including Bondarev, Astaf'ev, Nosov, Soloukhin and I. Vasil'ev, reached the age of sixty in this period. Vikulov's declared policy of finding new, young Russian writers 'in the periphery'<sup>89</sup>, for example Sergei Alekseev from Vologda and Mikhail Shchukin from Siberia, was in part designed to compensate for this shortage of works by the leading nationalist writers<sup>90</sup>.

### Chernenko Plays the 'Russian Card'

In September 1984, in a speech to writers and literary officials at the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Union of Writers, the General Secretary reversed many of his anti-nationalist positions of the June 1983 plenum on ideology<sup>91</sup>. He spoke of a 'renaissance of historical themes' in literature and art, approved the artist's striving 'to be guided by the many-century-old cultural traditions of his own people' and 'decisively rejected the petty tutelage of cultural workers'. Evidently, Chernenko and his aides intended to foster a new ideological climate favourable to Russian nationalists. In November 1984, writers honoured with various awards

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<sup>88</sup>See G. Semenov: 'Sem' rasskazov', *NS*, No. 5, 1984, pp. 12-114; 'Stechenie obshchitel'stv', *NS*, No. 12, 1984, pp. 96-110; Yu. Nagibin, 'Sil'nee vsekh inykh velenii', *NS*, No. 12, 1984, pp. 5-93; E. Nosov, 'Iz zapisnoi knizhki "Na rybach'ei trope"', *NS*, No. 1, 1985, pp. 58-81.

<sup>89</sup>Vikulov: interview; 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 9, 1996, p. 19.

<sup>90</sup>See S. Alekseev: 'Paranya', *NS*, No. 11, 1984, pp. 125-133; 'Slovo', *NS*, No. 2, pp. 11-104; No. 3, pp. 10-96; No. 4, pp. 27-115, 1985; M. Shchukin, 'Imya dlya syna'.

<sup>91</sup>K. Chernenko, 'Utverzhdayu pravdu zhizni, vysokie idealy sotsializma. Rech' tovarishcha K. U. Chernenko', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 39, September 26th, 1984, pp. 1-2.



included several nationalists, popular and statist, associated with *Nash sovremennik*: Vikulov, Belov, Rasputin, Kunyaev, Krupin, Pikul' and M. Alekseev<sup>92</sup>. Leading roles in this revisionism were played by Zimyanin, junior Central Committee secretary for ideology, and the head of the Department of Culture, Shauro<sup>93</sup>.

It was against this background that, in three important articles, the journal renewed the publication of statist nationalist works. Articles by Stanislav Kunyaev and the late Yurii Seleznev pressed the case for a statist nationalist revision of official ideology<sup>94</sup>. According to Kunyaev, his article had been refused publication in *Literaturnaya gazeta* at the insistence of Belyaev, deputy head at the Department of Culture<sup>95</sup>. Apollon Kuz'min's article, *In Continuation of an Important Conversation*, attacking the Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy of Yurii Surovtsev, had, according to Kuz'min, been written during the Andropov period but had proved impossible to publish then<sup>96</sup>.

These publications show *Nash sovremennik* promoting an anti-Gorbachev line. Yet there were signs Gorbachev already controlled the Propaganda Department. Despite these publication 'successes', from January 1985 *Nash*

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<sup>92</sup>'Ukaz prezidenta Verkhovnogo soveta SSSR', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 47, November 21st, 1984, p. 2.

<sup>93</sup>See 'Nagrady rodiny vrucheny', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 1, January 1st, 1985, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup>Kunyaev, 'O "vselenskikh drovakh" i traditsiyakh otechestvennoi poezii'; Seleznev, 'Uvazhaite zhizn'!

<sup>95</sup>S. Kunyaev, interview 31/8/93.

<sup>96</sup>Kuz'min, interview. See Kuz'min, 'V prodolzhenie vazhnogo razgovora'. Deputy chief editor Krivtsov had opposed publication: Kuz'min's article appeared only after his departure (Krivtsov, interview).

*sovremennik's* print-run was cut by a further 4,3% (from 230,000 copies to 220,000)<sup>97</sup>.

### Gorbachev's First Year

The first year of Gorbachev's rule saw a resumption of the general direction in policy-making begun under Andropov, albeit with a new political style. In his inauguration speech, Gorbachev committed himself to continuing Andropov's policies, conveniently describing them as those of Chernenko also, in particular the 'speeding up' (*uskorenie*) of economic and social progress. He also made cursory reference to the need for 'the development of the individual [*samogo cheloveka*]' and to widen the scope of 'public openness' (*glasnost*).

*Nash sovremennik* showed no hint, on Gorbachev's succession, of the dissatisfaction it had shown on the appointment of Andropov (in April 1985 all the 'thick' journals printed identical material on the leadership change). Yet, despite the unattractive alternatives (Viktor Grishin and Grigorii Romanov), there is little reason to believe that Russian nationalists welcomed Gorbachev's succession 'with real enthusiasm', as one observer has claimed<sup>98</sup>.

Gorbachev's succession was a deeply ambiguous event for the nationalists. On the one hand, as Andropov's chosen heir, the new General Secretary was closely associated with

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<sup>97</sup>The same month the print-run of *Novyi mir* was increased by more than 50,000 (13%) to 430,000. The print-run of *Znamya* grew by 11%. Those of *Nash sovremennik's* sister nationalist publications *Moskva* and *Molodaya gvardiya* were substantially cut (by 17% and 11% respectively).

<sup>98</sup>Solovei, '*Russkii natsionalizm i vlast' v epokhu Gorbacheva*', p. 50.

the former leader's vigorous campaign against Russian nationalists. On the other, there were grounds to believe that Gorbachev, as the first General Secretary whose background lay in agriculture, and whose period as Central Committee secretary for agriculture (since 1978) had seen increasing investment in that area, would continue to make agricultural policy - a leading nationalist concern - a priority. Indeed, in the first year of Gorbachev's rule, investment in the non-Black Earth zone was increased and, in November 1985, the State Committee on the Agro-Industrial Complex (Gosagroprom) was set up<sup>99</sup>. Moreover, as noted above, *Nash sovremennik* had close links with the Central Committee Agricultural Department, and Gorbachev had encouraged reformist popular nationalist writing in the journal's publitsistika.

There were three other important aspects of Gorbachev's first moves as General Secretary. Firstly, Gorbachev's soon-to-be proposed 'restructuring' (perestroika) of the economy was to be based on Andropovite 'intensification' of economic production and a 'speeding up' of scientific and technical progress<sup>100</sup>. Secondly, Gorbachev resumed the renewal of party and state cadres, begun by Andropov, significantly increasing the proportion of ethnic Russians, and of former Kirilenko cadres, in the highest echelons of power<sup>101</sup>. Thirdly, in foreign policy a new urgency was shown in making contacts with foreign leaders and developing

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<sup>99</sup>Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 44, 60-61, 143. The State Committee on the Agro-Industrial Complex replaced five ministries and one state committee. Vsevolod Murakhovskii, First Secretary of Stavropol region since 1978, was appointed chair.

<sup>100</sup>M. Gorbachev, 'Rech' General'nogo sekretarya', *NS*, No. 4, 1985, pp. 6-9.

<sup>101</sup>P. Duncan, 'Ideology & the National Question: Marxism-Leninism and the Nationality Policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union', p. 197.



strategies on arms' control. Soon, this was to be developed into a new, more open approach to the West.

Valerii Solovei has described Gorbachev's policy towards Russian nationalism in the first two years of his period in office as a policy of 'manipulation' (funktsional'nogo ispol'zovaniya)<sup>102</sup>. However, Gorbachev's policy in this area was to be far more subtle than that of either Chernenko or his own mentor Andropov. In particular, Gorbachev was not simply to suppress Russian nationalist ideology, as Andropov had done, allowing but limited expression of popular nationalist views, but to seek to mobilise it to achieve his own political goals.

### **Egor Ligachev**

Gorbachev's early appointment, in April, of Egor Ligachev to the Politburo as 'Second Secretary' to chair the Secretariat and assume responsibility for ideology was the initial 'public face' of the new General Secretary's moderate reformism - to use Geoffrey Hosking's phrase, the public face of 'Perestroika Mark One'<sup>103</sup>. It was a face, moreover, acceptable to the nationalists. Ligachev, since 1983 head of the Party Organs' Department and relatively unknown in Moscow before then, was a Siberian party official with a reputation for toughness and personal honesty. He had close contacts with fellow Siberian Georgii Markov, the conservative First Secretary of the USSR Writers' Union<sup>104</sup>. When Rasputin, later in 1985, wished to

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<sup>102</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>103</sup>G. Hosking, *The Awakening of the Soviet Union*, second edition, Mandarin, London, 1991, pp. 139-41.

<sup>104</sup>A. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, Progress, Moscow, 1993, p. 95.

approach the Central Committee on the question of Lake Baikal, it was to Ligachev, his fellow Siberian, that he handed a written address<sup>105</sup>. Upon his appointment, Ligachev, together with Mikhail Solomentsev, chair of the Party Control Committee, was put in charge of the anti-alcohol campaign, which began in May with a press campaign and tough new anti-alcohol laws<sup>106</sup>. The campaign, widely supported by Russian nationalists<sup>107</sup>, became the theme of a series of publications in *Nash sovremennik*<sup>108</sup>. Yet, as Solovei has noted, despite Ligachev's sympathy for some Russian nationalist positions, the Second Secretary never became a nationalist, and remained a convinced Marxist<sup>109</sup>.

A Ligachevian tone in literary policy can be identified in an article by Literator, which called for the harnessing of literature to the needs of current economic 'speeding up' (*uskorenie*), and argued that the classic production novels of the 1930s could provide a model for contemporary literature. Ovechkin's *District Routine* was recommended as a literary model<sup>110</sup>.

However, there were early signs of weakness in Ligachev's influence. In the month of his appointment as Second Secretary, Gorbachev snubbed both Markov and

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<sup>105</sup>E. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva*, Interbuk, Novosibirsk, 1992, p. 149.

<sup>106</sup>On the alcohol campaign, see D. Tarschys, 'The Success of a Failure: Gorbachev's Alcohol Policy, 1985-1988', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 1993, pp. 7-25.

<sup>107</sup>For evidence that the alcohol problem had been a long-standing concern of Russian nationalists, see, for example, P. Dudochkin, 'Trezvost' - norma zhizni', *NS*, No. 8, 1981, pp. 133-145; N. Mashovets, 'O trezvosti', *NS*, No. 6, 1981, p. 162-172.

<sup>108</sup>See N. Zagoruiko, '"Sukhoi zakon" dlya sebya', *NS*, No. 6, 1985, pp. 162-167; V. Sukhnev, 'Dostuchat'sya k razumu' (book review: *Trezvost' - norma zhizni*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1984); I. Drozdov, 'Tainy trezvogo cheloveka', *NS*, No. 2, 1986, pp. 140-165; F. Uglov, 'Al'kogol' i mozg', *NS*, No. 4, 1986, pp. 154-161. For a fictional treatment of this theme, showing the damage alcohol wrought in the villages, see A. Konoplin, 'Desyatka za shkurku sobaki', *NS*, No. 12, 1985, pp. 110-127.

<sup>109</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>110</sup>Literator, 'Vremya vpered!', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 29, July 17th, 1985, p. 2. The title of the article, 'Time Forward!', alluded to Kataev's classic socialist construction novel of the first Five Year Plan.

Aleksandr Chakovskii, despite Ligachev's close association with the former, when the literary bureaucrats were told the General Secretary was too busy to see them. This was also a break with the policy of Andropov, who had received both writers soon after assuming power and 'expressed his confidence in them'<sup>111</sup>.

### *Nash sovremennik's First Publications Under Gorbachev*

The popular nationalist tendency in *Nash sovremennik* gained a new vitality with the return of Vasilii Belov and Valentin Rasputin to the journal. Belov's *Reflections in the Motherland* had been written over a twenty-year period, and an extract had been published as early as 1982 before Andropov came to power, but only now did the full text appear<sup>112</sup>. Rasputin's new novella, *The Fire*, was possibly the journal's most important work since Belov's *Harmony*<sup>113</sup>. Edited by Mussalitin in Korobov's absence, *The Fire* was also the cause of a dispute which reflected the difficult personal relations at the journal. Mussalitin had argued, backed at first, he has claimed, by Rasputin, that the genre of *The Fire* was that of a 'short story' (*rasskaz*)<sup>114</sup>. Vikulov, Korobov and Bondarev, however, prevailed in their view that the work was of a longer genre, the 'tale' (*povest'*)<sup>115</sup>. The dispute further soured Mussalitin's relations with Vikulov and Bondarev<sup>116</sup>. Yet Mussalitin's

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<sup>111</sup>Zh. Medvedev, *Gorbachev*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1988, pp. 211-212.

<sup>112</sup>Belov, 'Razdum'ya na rodine'. For the extract, see V. Belov, 'Razdum'ya na rodine', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 41, October 8th, 1982, pp. 12-14.

<sup>113</sup>Rasputin, 'Pozhar'.

<sup>114</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>115</sup>*Ibid.*; Korobov, interview.

<sup>116</sup>Mussalitin, interview.



influence over the prose department continued to increase, not least because of Korobov's occasional absences<sup>117</sup>.

The department of criticism, overseen by Korobov, which had displayed a new vitality, publishing statist nationalist works as the struggle for the Chernenko succession reached its climax, now grew muted. The absence of such works, it might be hypothesised, was the result of Mussalitin's influence, with support from Gorbachevite literary officials. This, presumably, was a cause for frustration among *Nash sovremennik's* nationalists, a frustration which may have been the underlying motive behind the publication of Lyubomudrov's controversial anti-Semitic article on contemporary drama<sup>118</sup>.

In publitsistika, the most important publication was a round table, initiated by Mussalitin, on the theme of erosion in the black-earth regions, whose participants included high-ranking members of the Academy of Sciences (V. Kovda, O. Kolbasov and A. Nazarov), <sup>which</sup> was primarily intended to attack Minvodkhoz<sup>119</sup>. At Glavlit's insistence all the materials published were approved by the State Committee on the Environment (Goskompriroda), headed by Academician Israel, a supporter of Minvodkhoz<sup>120</sup>. The round table, nevertheless, evinced a greater willingness by the party authorities to see criticism expressed in the press: the scientific community was being invited to engage in

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<sup>117</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup>Lyubomudrov, 'Teatr nachinaetsya s rodiny'.

<sup>119</sup>Mussalitin, interview. See 'Zemlya i khleb', NS, No. 7, 1985, pp. 115-152.

<sup>120</sup>Mussalitin, interview; Lukonin, interview.

public discussion of controversial issues. Brudny has noted that:

Soon after Gorbachev took power, *Nash sovremennik* turned ecology, and especially the project to divert Siberian rivers to Central Asia, into one of the main issues on the political agenda. In fact, the journal led the nationalist campaign against the project.<sup>121</sup>

It was only with Gorbachev's blessing, nonetheless, that the campaign against the Northern Rivers' scheme became 'one of the most important phenomena of Russian public life in 1985 and 1986'<sup>122</sup>.

### **Aleksandr Yakovlev: A Three-Point Policy on Russian Nationalism**

In July, Aleksandr Yakovlev replaced Stukalin as head of the Propaganda Department. Yakovlev, author of the 1972 *Literaturnaya gazeta* article condemning Russian nationalism, had the reputation of being a political 'liberal' and was much-reviled in Russian nationalist circles. Yakovlev, a highly ambitious politician, was to leave his strong personal mark on the Gorbachev period. His distinctive political style was not that of the consensus-building politician. On the contrary, Yakovlev liked to take, and implement, concrete decisions himself, subsequently confronting colleagues with the consequences<sup>123</sup>. Such tactics would have been impossible without Gorbachev's support. Without Yakovlev's own

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<sup>121</sup>Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroyka', p. 169.

<sup>122</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 50. In November the published draft Five-Year Plan omitted all plans to divert Siberian rivers to Central Asia (plans to divert northern rivers to the Volga, Caspian and Don basins for the irrigation of the southern Russian steppe were not withdrawn at this time, however).

<sup>123</sup>A. Yakovlev, interview 15/3/95; A. Grachev, *Kremlevskaya khronika*, EKSMO, Moscow, 1994, pp. 109-110.

personal daring, however, the politics of the Gorbachev period could have been fundamentally different.

Yakovlev developed a 'three-point' policy towards culture in general, and towards nationalist ideology in particular. Firstly, he fostered the development of a policy of 'openness' (*glasnost*), according to which writers of many persuasions were given greater freedom of expression. Thus *Pravda* printed a poem in support of reform by the 'liberal' Evtushenko, following a letter the poet wrote to Gorbachev about the poor state of Soviet literature and the severe censorship<sup>124</sup>. The nationalists also benefited from this, particularly in the area of ecology: popular nationalists Zalygin and Likhachev were both published in *Kommunist* at this time. Zalygin, a hydrologist by training, criticised the wasteful loss of fertile land and the irresponsibility of planners<sup>125</sup>. Dmitrii Likhachev co-authored an article calling for parts of the Russian north-west to be declared 'protected historical areas'<sup>126</sup>. *Nash sovremennik*, according to Mussalitin, often received telephone calls from Gorbachev himself, praising particular publications<sup>127</sup>.

Secondly, Yakovlev secured the appointment of reform-minded literary figures and officials to leading positions in the Soviet media. Thus, in this initial period, Yurii Voronov, a former chief editor of *Komsomol'skaya pravda*

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<sup>124</sup>E. Evtushenko, 'Kabychegonevyshlisty', *Pravda*, No. 252, September 9th, 1985, p. 3.

<sup>125</sup>S. Zalygin, 'Proekt: nauchnaya obosnovannost' i otvetstvennost'', *Kommunist*, No. 13, September 1985, pp. 63-73. On his own initiative, Zalygin had taken the article to *Kommunist* to 'test the waters' (S. Zalygin, interview 13/4/94).

<sup>126</sup>D. Likhachev & V. Yanin, 'Russkii Sever kak pamyatnik otechestvennoi i mirovoi kul'tury', *Kommunist*, No. 1, January, 1986, pp. 115-119.

<sup>127</sup>Mussalitin, interview.



dismissed under Brezhnev for publishing anti-corruption articles<sup>128</sup>, replaced Kozhevnikov as chief editor at *Znamya*; and Al'bert Belyaev, until then deputy head of the Central Committee Department of Culture, became chief editor of the Central Committee paper *Sovetskaya kul'tura*<sup>129</sup>.

Thirdly, a series of attacks were orchestrated against Russian nationalists in the press. *Nash sovremennik* was a particular focus of these attacks. The reason may be that, as Brudny has observed:

*Nash sovremennik* was the very first journal in the Gorbachev era to publish neo-Stalinist and anti-Semitic attacks on the new, liberalising trends in Soviet cultural life.<sup>130</sup>

Towards the end of June, a fierce attack on Bondarev's latest novel, *The Game*, in *Komsomol'skaya pravda* signalled an end to the 'cult' of the author, hitherto officially encouraged<sup>131</sup>. At the beginning of August, *Pravda* accused Mark Lyubomudrov of 'setting some writers tendentiously against others' in his recent *Nash sovremennik* article<sup>132</sup>. A week later, in its first publication under Yakovlev, *Literator* condemned Lyubomudrov, using the very same phrase<sup>133</sup>. Soon other officially sponsored attacks on Lyubomudrov appeared. In November, the theatre critic Yurii Dmitriev accused Lyubomudrov of 'ignoring the new historical community - the Soviet people' as well as socialist realism<sup>134</sup>.

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<sup>128</sup>Ivanova, interview 27/4/95; F. Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>129</sup>Yakovlev offered Belyaev this post on January 10th, 1986 (Belyaev, interview).

<sup>130</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>131</sup>K. Skopina & S. Gus'kov, 'Naiti geroya', *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, No. 141, June 22nd, 1985, p. 4. See also A. Yakovlev, 'Nas mozhet skrutit' neterpimost'', *Moskovskii obozrevatel'*, No. 28, 1993, p. 20.

<sup>132</sup>A. Stepanova, 'Tsena slova', *Pravda*, No. 213, August 1st, 1985, p. 3.

<sup>133</sup>*Literator*, 'Velenie vremeni', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 32, August 7th, 1985, p. 2.

<sup>134</sup>Yu. Dmitriev, 'Teatrovedenie trebuet otvetstvennosti', *Teatr*, No. 11, 1985, pp. 136-141.

The article by *Literator*, which had attacked Lyubomudrov, was also highly critical of contemporary journals, identifying among their 'chronic diseases' a clannishness typified by the habit of dividing writers into 'one's own' (*svoi*) and 'others' (*chuzhoi*)<sup>135</sup>. The article included a humiliating personal attack on chief editor Vikulov for having compared Ol'ga Fokina, the Vologdan poet frequently published in *Nash sovremennik*, to Nekrasov, and rebuked Kunyaev for his *Nash sovremennik* article of the previous February, reminding readers that 'making absolutes of one's own aesthetic predilections is an unproductive path in criticism'<sup>136</sup>. This article must have made Vikulov wonder if he would retain his position for long. Indeed, Yakovlev was contemplating Vikulov's removal<sup>137</sup>.

In *Kommunist*, in a more sophisticated version of the anti-nationalist attacks on *Nash sovremennik* of 1982, Yurii Afanas'ev attacked both the popular nationalist Belov and the statist nationalist Kozhinov<sup>138</sup>. Writing of the need for 'clarity of social and class criteria' in the understanding of history, Afanas'ev criticised Belov's *Harmony* for idealising the past and the patriarchal way of life<sup>139</sup>. Afanas'ev also condemned 'the conservative tradition of Russian social thought' and denounced 'inaccurate and mistaken judgements on the nature of the Russian autocracy, on the oprichnina of Ivan the Terrible, on the genealogy of the Decembrists and of the Populists'<sup>140</sup>.

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<sup>135</sup>*Literator*, 'Velenie vremeni'.

<sup>136</sup>*Ibid.* See Kunyaev, 'O "vselenskikh drovakh" i traditsiyakh otechestvennoi poezii'.

<sup>137</sup>Bikkenin, interview.

<sup>138</sup>Yu. Afanas'ev, 'Proshloe i my', *Kommunist*, No. 14, September, 1985, pp. 105-116.

<sup>139</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

The effect of these attacks on *Nash sovremennik*, presumably combined with other administrative measures, was that the journal did not resume publication of such anti-Semitic works as Lyubomudrov's for the rest of Gorbachev's first year in office. Nor was there any return to the publication of statist Russian nationalism, as had occurred in the Chernenko period.

The public dispute over anti-Semitism reflected tension within the political hierarchy between the junior Central Committee Secretary for ideology, the Brezhnev-era official, Mikhail Zimyanin and Yakovlev. Zimyanin blamed 'Jewish' writers for attacking Russian classics, a line staunchly opposed by Yakovlev<sup>141</sup>. Gorbachev himself took a cautious position: in an interview on French television that September he denied, in the traditional Soviet official manner, that there was discrimination against the Jewish population in the Soviet Union<sup>142</sup>. The attacks on *Nash sovremennik's* anti-Semitism showed Yakovlev had greater influence over the media than his nominal superior, Zimyanin.

#### ***Nash sovremennik* and A. Yakovlev: September 1985 to January 1986**

*Nash sovremennik's* issues between September 1985 and January 1986 showed the effect of Yakovlev's policy towards nationalism: the new openness of glasnost', the encouragement of reform-oriented nationalist writing, and the general suppression of statist and anti-Semitic

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<sup>141</sup>Chernyaev, *op. cit.*, p. 54. This opposition probably determined Yakovlev's initially cautious approach to the publication of Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat* (*ibid*, p. 51).

<sup>142</sup>M. Gorbachev, *A Time For Peace*, Richardson & Steirman, New York, 1985, p. 253.



currents. Glasnost' was evident in the continuation of the published debate between Kuz'min and Surovtsev on patriotism and Soviet power<sup>143</sup>. Officially sanctioned reform-oriented nationalism was present in works on ecology<sup>144</sup>, agriculture<sup>145</sup>, economics<sup>146</sup>, and education<sup>147</sup>. Indeed, Antonov believed that Gorbachev now read and approved of his articles. The General Secretary, according to Antonov, remarked to Vikulov in their regard: 'I know your strengths and your weaknesses. Continue to work!'<sup>148</sup>. Such a comment, if it was made, is of course finely ambiguous and may not imply approval of Antonov's views. No doubt in part as a result of the absence of statist and anti-Semitic works, *Nash sovremennik* tended to turn increasingly to its 'in-house' critics - Korobov, Kazintsev and V. Vasil'ev - for contributions, a factor which limited the range and scope of the journal<sup>149</sup>.

### The Sixth RSFSR Writers' Congress

The Sixth RSFSR Writers' Congress, which took place in December 1985, highlighted the leading place *Nash sovremennik* now occupied as a voice of Russian nationalist ideology<sup>150</sup>. Attendance at the opening ceremony by the full Politburo indicated the importance of the occasion. The re-election of the seventy-two year old Sergei Mikhalkov as

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<sup>143</sup>Surovtsev, 'V samom dele: prodolzhim razgovor'; Kuz'min, 'Neozhidannye priznaniya'.

<sup>144</sup>'Otkliki na stat'yu F. Ya. Shipunova "Dokuchaevskie 'Bastiony'"', NS, No. 12, 1985, pp. 179-187.

<sup>145</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Deputatskii zapros'; 'Tsena initsiativy'; 'Zemlyaki', NS, No. 7, 1984, pp. 3-98. Literator praised I. Vasil'ev (see Literator, 'Chelovecheskii faktor', Literaturnaya gazeta, No. 37, September 11th, 1985, p. 2).

<sup>146</sup>Antonov, 'Garmoniya progressa'.

<sup>147</sup>Sinitsyn, 'Delo slavy'.

<sup>148</sup>Antonov, interview.

<sup>149</sup>Kazintsev, 'Mekhanika uspekha, ili "Individual'nost' novogo tipa"'; V. Vasil'ev, 'Poeticheskoe serdtse Rossii. K 90-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya Sergeya Esenina'; Korobov, 'Vina. Nad stranitsami romana Yu. Bondareva "Igra"'.  
<sup>150</sup>'Shestoi s'ezd pisatelei RSFSR - Stenograficheskii otchet', Sovremennik, Moscow, 1987.

chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union may have been a blow to the ambitious Bondarev. Nonetheless, the Congress saw an increase in the status accorded *Nash sovremennik* within the Union. Seven members of the journal's editorial board sat on the presidium and *Nash sovremennik's* representatives on the secretariat of the Union - Vikulov, Shundik and Nosov - were now joined by board members Belov, Rasputin and Frolov (Astaf'ev, not currently a board member at the journal, was also elected to the Union's secretariat at this time).

Belov, Lanshchikov, Rasputin and Vikulov all made important speeches imbued with popular nationalist reformist pathos. Belov and Rasputin denounced the scheme to transfer the waters of the Siberian rivers to the south and the flooding of productive land. Belov was highly critical of ministries (notably Minvodkhoz) supporting the project<sup>151</sup>. He also praised the steps against alcohol and protested against the 'narcotic' of rock music. Rasputin linked the struggle to save the environment with patriotism, stressing the need to focus attention both on Lake Baikal and what he called the 'holy land' of north Russia. 'We are ready', he claimed, 'to immolate ourselves both in the literal and in the figurative sense, if it is necessary for Russia'<sup>152</sup>. Lanshchikov made a remarkable plea to end censorship. He also defended Belov's *Harmony* and Bondarev's *The Game* from recent attacks<sup>153</sup>. Only Vikulov, no doubt in an effort to shore up his position as editor-in-chief, spoke loyally of the 'fresh wind' now blowing

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<sup>151</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 117-122.

<sup>152</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 132-139.

<sup>153</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 227-231.

through the country and condemned the 'rotting blockages of conservatism'<sup>154</sup>.

### Mussalitin alone: January - April 1986

Korobov's relations with chief editor Vikulov, meanwhile, seem to have turned sour, apparently as a result of the new possibilities presented by Gorbachev's developing programme of glasnost'<sup>155</sup>. Korobov, by his own account, wished to take advantage of glasnost' to expand the range of authors and themes, and Vikulov opposed this. According to Korobov, disagreements arose over the chief editor's refusal to publish Viktor Likhonosov's *Our Little Paris*, a novel on the themes of emigration and the intelligentsia at the time of the civil war<sup>156</sup>. Vikulov also refused to publish Dudintsev's *White Clothes*, Platonov's *The Sea of Youth* (Yuvnil'noe more), Yurii Azarov's *Pechora* and 'non-Russian' writers such as Trifonov (a Jew) and Iskander (an Abkhaz)<sup>157</sup>.

This conflict between Vikulov and Korobov would seem to indicate the way in which glasnost' could divide erstwhile allies. While Korobov seemed willing to adapt to the policies developed by Yakovlev and Gorbachev, Vikulov and Bondarev opposed this. The difference was sufficient to determine Korobov's fate. He was removed from his post, the last issue on which he worked as deputy chief editor being that of January 1986 (sent to the printers on October 11th,

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<sup>154</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 181-185.

<sup>155</sup>Korobov, interview.

<sup>156</sup>The novel was later published in the journal *Don* (V. Likhonosov, 'Nash malen'kii Parizh', *Don*, No. 8, pp. 11-80, No. 9, pp. 7-112, 1986).

<sup>157</sup>Korobov, interview. Later, Boris Mozhaev was to criticise Vikulov for not having published the second volume of his novel, *Peasant Men and Women (Muzhiki i baby)* (S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, pp. 33-37).



1985). Korobov remained on the editorial board until May 1986.

Following Korobov's departure there was a hiatus in the recruitment of new personnel and again a 'transitional period' began in the life of the journal. In the absence of a successor to Korobov, Mussalitin, whom Vikulov and Bondarev could not remove because of the patronage he enjoyed in the Department of Culture, remained sole deputy chief editor. If Vikulov and Bondarev had shown their strength in removing Korobov, their failure to rapidly appoint a successor was an indicator of this weakness. Issues of the journal prepared in the period that followed were clearly marking time. Indeed, for reasons apparently similar to those which had made Korobov dissatisfied with Vikulov's policy, Tat'yana Ivanova, head of the department of criticism, left the journal a month after Korobov. She was to become one of the leading opponents of *Nash sovremennik* on the pages of Korotich's *Ogonek*.

On the eve of the 27th Party Congress, therefore, there was a marked contrast between the leading role *Nash sovremennik* played within the nationalist movement, as shown at the December RSFSR Writers' Congress, and the weak organisational state of the journal itself. Vikulov and the journal's sponsors in the RSFSR Writers' Union needed to find new cadres to revive the journal. Yet the journal was dependent on Yakovlev's literary authorities for permission to make the necessary appointments. Indeed, as the recent attacks on Vikulov had witnessed, the chief editor's position may itself have been in the balance.

## Conclusions

The conservative Chernenko brought an end to Andropov's reformist policies and to his attack on Russian nationalist ideology. At *Nash sovremennik*, the response was to break up the Vasil'ev-Krivtsov editorial team and appoint a more adventurous deputy chief editor with sympathies (at that time) for statist nationalist tendencies, in the person of Vladimir Korobov, a critic close to both Bondarev and Vikulov. In the newly-favourable ideological climate for Russian nationalism, the statist tendency, as represented by Kunyaev and Seleznev in particular, was given a new high profile in the journal.

As Chernenko's illness progressed, his authority declined and the Gorbachev faction grew in influence. This faction would seem to have been behind the intervention by the Department of Culture to appoint Vladimir Mussalitin as deputy chief editor (in place of Krivtsov), in an attempt to balance Korobov and 'rein in' the journal's statist nationalist tendency. The period which followed saw a competition for influence within the journal between Vikulov, Bondarev and the RSFSR Writers' Union, on the one hand (represented by Korobov), and Gorbachevite elements in the Central Committee apparatus (represented by Mussalitin), on the other.

When he came to power, Gorbachev sought to guide Russian nationalist ideology into 'acceptable channels'. This policy was not implemented by 'Ideological Secretary' Ligachev, but by Yakovlev at the Department of Propaganda.

The policy towards Russian nationalism, which was as much a break with Chernenko's policy in this area as with that pursued by Andropov, distinguished between popular nationalist views oriented towards reform, which were to be encouraged as a mobiliser of public opinion (in particular, in writing on agriculture, alcohol and ecological issues), and views to be discouraged (Russian nationalist statist tendencies, and especially anti-Semitism).

*Nash sovremennik* was able to take advantage of this policy. As Brudny has noted with regard to the campaign to stop the Northern Rivers' diversion project:

[*Nash sovremennik*] attempted to concentrate on one policy area around which Russian nationalists, as well as wide sections of the general public, could unify in order to create strong pressure in favour of a major policy change.<sup>158</sup>

Clearly, then, in the minds of Gorbachev and his ideological aides, the negative aspects of Russian nationalist ideology were associated with the *statist* rather than the *popular* nationalist tendency. Under this policy, Lyubomudrov and Kunyaev were particular objects of officially-inspired opprobrium, and chief editor Vikulov, to keep him in fear of losing his position, also came under attack.

However, an indication of an inadequacy in this policy may have been that Yakovlev's ideologists also fired warning shots at a popular nationalist, such as Belov. The intention was presumably to urge Belov not to make allies of statist or anti-Semitic nationalists. In the event, however, the popular nationalist tendency, which Belov

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<sup>158</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-5.



represented, was to reveal itself as a rather more complex phenomenon, and one more difficult to manipulate in the interests of reform, than Gorbachev's policy towards Russian nationalism seems to have anticipated. Belov, at least, as will be seen in the next chapter, was not to be intimidated in this manner. Indeed, the attacks on him may have had the opposite effect to that intended, driving him into the arms of the statist nationalists.

## 5. Aleksandr Yakovlev

### and the 'Cultural Offensive'

(Editorial team: chief editor Vikulov, deputy chief editors Mussalitin & Svininnikov.

Journal issues: July 1986 - May 1987).

#### Part One: Thematic Analysis

In this period, Mikhail Gorbachev and Aleksandr Yakovlev introduced sweeping changes into Soviet cultural life. John Dunlop has compared their endeavour with that of Peter the Great three hundred years before:

[Gorbachev and Yakovlev] intended aggressively to Westernise, not because they were uncritical admirers of the West - both were at that time [...] convinced Marxists - but because they believed that an appropriation of Western technology and, in a certain sense, of the Western mentality was essential for the future prosperity, indeed perhaps the survival, of the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the writing in *Nash sovremennik* at this time was a reaction to this Westernisation. While statist nationalist writing was largely absent, popular nationalist

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<sup>1</sup>Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Union*, p. 124.

writing paid little attention to its traditional theme of the rural essence of the nation. Instead, it had three foci: 1) nationalist reformism; 2) the nation as a cultural community; and 3) identifying 'the Other'.

### Imagining the Nation

1) **A Rural Community** *The Swarm*, a novel by the young Vologdan writer Sergei Alekseev, was relatively unusual on the pages of *Nash sovremennik* in this period because it treated the theme of village life directly<sup>2</sup>. Like Rasputin's *The Fire*, the novel, a highly pessimistic account of the negative aspects contemporary rural life, was imbued with a nostalgia for a vanished ethnic Golden Age.

Set in a depopulated and despoiled Siberian village, the novel tells how technological progress uprooted man from a harmonious way of life, perhaps fatally injuring the natural world in the process. A bear, driven from its territory by the destruction of its natural habitat, plagued by bullet wounds, lives on honey, spreading disease among the bees with which one villager hopes to re-establish the village economy. The agony of the bear is a metaphor for the pain of the Russian village.

The greater bulk of writing on the village was now of a reform-oriented popular-nationalist type, whose foremost representative was Ivan Vasil'ev. Unlike 'conspiracy theorists', Vasil'ev identified the causes of social and economic ills within society itself. He developed his

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<sup>2</sup>S. Alekseev, 'Roi', *NS*, No. 9, pp. 19-83; No. 10, pp. 24-94; No. 11, pp. 33-132, 1986.



traditional themes that workers, as creators, should be 'controllers' (khozyaeva) of the process of production, be able to preserve their individuality within the collective, and enjoy an appropriately high level of cultural life in the village<sup>3</sup>. Vasil'ev specifically supported the decisions on agriculture of the 27th Party Congress. In *Points of Reference*, he argued that 'tax in kind' (prodoval'stvennyi nalog), introduced at the Congress, would enable the collective farms to become economically self-reliant, thus motivating the workforce and eradicating what he called the psychology of an 'easy life' ('zhit' bez usilii'), a consequence of the workers' lack of self-interest in their work<sup>4</sup>. In *Night Attacks*, Vasil'ev related how a collective farm chairman, inspired by the decisions of the 27th Party Congress, challenged the unsuitable plan imposed by the local bureaucracy<sup>5</sup>.

Contributors to a second round table on ecological issues, hosted by the journal, included Valentin Rasputin, Sergei Zalygin, a writer with popular nationalist sympathies, Gorbachevite reformist economists (such as Nikolai Petrakov and Pavel Bunich), and the environmentalist Mikhail Lemeshev<sup>6</sup>. Rasputin stressed the failure to improve the ecological situation at Lake 'Baikal'. He called for 'the consolidation [of ecologically-minded writers] with patriotically-minded scientists' and expressed indignation that the cellulose plant on Lake

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<sup>3</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Anatomiya podenshchiny', *NS*, No 10, 1986, pp. 3-21.

<sup>4</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Orientiry', *NS*, No. 6, 1986, pp. 3-27.

<sup>5</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Nochnye pristupy', *NS*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 97-111.

<sup>6</sup>'Ekologiya. Ekonomika. Nravstvennost', *NS*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 112-167; No. 2, 1987, pp. 141-148.

<sup>7</sup>V. Rasputin, 'V poiskakh nuzhnoi tsifry', *ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

Baikal had hidden from him - 'a full citizen of his country' - all relevant figures concerning the ecological state of the lake<sup>8</sup>. However, he evinced some hopes for the new era of 'openness', telling the scientists that the '[future of] glasnost' will depend, to a significant degree, on our alliance with you'<sup>9</sup>.

Zalygin struck a more optimistic note<sup>10</sup>. He stressed the need for human development to be in harmony with the natural world, and the great wealth of natural resources with which Russia, and socialism, were blessed. He emphasised the success of campaigners, particularly writers and journalists, in halting the Northern Rivers' diversion project.

2) A Cultural Community Writing on Russia as a community of culture assumed a new scope and vigour, but inclined to an increasingly exclusive definition of the nation. Aleksandr Kazintsev drew a comparison between national culture and the national ecology. In a discussion of the writings of the late Vladimir Chivilikhin on Lake Baikal and the Siberian forest, Kazintsev argued that the author's main 'discovery' was 'an awareness that the past is not the past, that it is alive both in our memory and in the world that surrounds us, and in our character, formed by the thousand-year experience of the people'<sup>11</sup>. In a second article he developed an analogy between culture and ecology<sup>12</sup>. The Russian environment may be in danger, he wrote, but 'the

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<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>S. Zalygin, 'Razumnyi soyuz s prirodou', *NS*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 113-120.

<sup>11</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Nashi publikatsii', *NS*, No. 8, pp. 127-8.

<sup>12</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Vzyskatel'naya kritika i ee protivniki', *NS*, No. 11, 1986, pp. 184-188.

task, however, is to save not only the Russian environment, but Russian culture as well. Not only the physical health of the people, but also their moral health'. This process, of preserving the national culture, Kazintsev described as a 'cleansing of the cultural soil'.

Kazintsev also sought to establish a nationalist literary tradition. He defended the need for a 'hierarchy of values', and the leading place of *Nash sovremennik's* major writers within this hierarchy, from 'liberal' critics such as Andrei Mal'gin, Andrei Nuikin and Evgenii Sidorov<sup>13</sup>. In similar vein, Kazintsev criticised contemporary poets for their lack of civic concern for the current needs of the people<sup>14</sup>. True 'civic-mindedness', he argued, was a patriotism focused upon the needs of the people. Poetry owed its special role in society, in his view, to the fact that it can 'more fully and faithfully reflect the thoughts and moods of the people'. He explained the failure of some poets to do this by their lack of patriotic feeling for the motherland.

Vladimir Vasil'ev argued that Fedor Abramov was a major figure of the nationalist literary tradition, because of his commitment to understanding the Russian national character and Russian social life<sup>15</sup>. In Vasil'ev's view, Abramov, a 'truthseeker' in the Russian tradition of Avvakum and Tolstoi, did not gloss over the faults of the Russian character. Conscience, Vasil'ev argued, was by its

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<sup>13</sup>A. Kazintsev: 'Prostye istiny', *NS*, No. 10, 1986, pp. 174-185; 'Vzyskatel'naya kritika i ee protivniki'.

<sup>14</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Vremya i poeziya', *NS*, No. 4, 1987, pp. 162-171.

<sup>15</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Iz kolena Avvakumova. Lichnost' i tvorchestvo F. Abramova v svete perestroiki', *NS*, No. 3, pp. 115-124; No. 4, pp. 151-161, 1987. See also F. Abramov: A. Chistyakov, 'Na nive dukhovnoi (o chem molchat kolokola)', *NS*, No. 7, 1986, pp. 129-151; 'Frantik. Starukhi. A voina eshche ne konchilas'', *NS*, No. 3, 1987, pp. 124-136.



very nature linked to national consciousness. Abramov's conscience, therefore, with 'national' and peasant interests at heart, prompted him to be hostile to both collectivisation and the 'scientific-technical revolution'. Forcible collectivisation, Vasil'ev argued, had led to an erosion of (national) conscience, a loss of patriotism and a lack of interest in work. Yet Abramov saw hope for the future of the country, Vasil'ev insisted, in a rebirth of the Russian character, for which Pushkin was a model.

Other authors lauded by the journal's critics included Evgenii Nosov, for his aesthetic appreciation of the natural world and love of village life<sup>16</sup>, and Vladimir Karpov (recently elected First Secretary of the USSR Writers' Union), for his new biographical novel, *The Commander*<sup>17</sup>. Lanshchikov claimed to find in Karpov's hero, the Second World War general Petrov, 'that ideal, which embodies the best features of the national character'.

3) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' Kazintsev's analogy between culture and ecology, and his call for a 'cleansing of the cultural soil', provided a theoretical basis for nationalists to define 'the Other'<sup>18</sup>. The implication of Kazintsev's own criticism of liberal critics was that they were not only hostile to the Russian cultural soil, but also alien to it<sup>19</sup>. Astaf'ev's *Place of Action* was a collection of short sketches based on a recent visit to the

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<sup>16</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Tainstvo slova - zametki o proze Evgeniya Nosova', NS, No. 10, 1986, pp. 170-173.

<sup>17</sup>A. Lanshchikov, 'Delat' zhizn' s kogo. O knige Vladimira Karpova 'Polkovodets'', NS, No. 10, 1986, pp. 163-169.

<sup>18</sup>Kazintsev: 'Nashi publikatsii'; 'Prostye istiny'.

<sup>19</sup>Kazintsev, 'Prostye istiny'.

Caucasus<sup>20</sup>. One story in particular, *Catching Gudgeon in Georgia*, depicted 'the Other' in the form of Georgian people - corrupt, venal and inclined to criminality<sup>21</sup>. Zugdidi, for example, is described in the story thus:

Here is the richest town in Georgia. Here you can buy a car, medicine, an aeroplane, a Kalashnikov automatic, golden teeth, a first class graduation certificate from a Russian school and from Moscow University, without even knowing a single word of Russian, or of Georgian for that matter.<sup>22</sup>

Vasilii Belov's first treatment of urban life in fiction, the novel *Everything Lies Ahead*, was in essence a portrait of 'the Other', not in a non-Russian republic, but in Moscow itself<sup>23</sup>. Belov examined a small circle of Moscow intelligenty (members of the intelligentsia), related by ties of schooling, friendship and marriage. He depicted their lives as pervaded by what were, for Belov, negative phenomena: sexual permissiveness, divorce, alcoholism, women's emancipation, pornography, aerobics, foreign travel and foreign fashion. His hero, Medvedev, having spent some years in a camp after a disaster at the scientific laboratory where he worked, proclaim on his release, 'I am a conservative. I am an inveterate reactionary'. Medvedev is, after prison, not only a conservative, but with his long beard and new insight into life, a Russian nationalist. The urban environment, Belov's story implied, was alien to the Russian people, and therefore engendered immorality.

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<sup>20</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Mesto deistviya', *NS*, No. 5, 1986, pp. 100-141.

<sup>21</sup>'Lovlya peskarei v Gruzii', *ibid.*, pp. 123-141.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>23</sup>V. Belov, 'Vse vpered', *NS*, No. 7, pp. 29-106; No. 8, pp. 59-110, 1986.

*Everything Lies Ahead* also shows Belov's tendency to attribute social ills to the evil intent of Jews<sup>24</sup>. When Medvedev emerged from prison, he found his wife had married an unsympathetically portrayed Jew, Brish, who wanted to adopt Medvedev's children and take them away to America. By a series of hints and innuendoes, Belov also intimated the existence of secret Masonic conspiracies, organised forces of world evil and the hand of Satan himself. John Dunlop, in a discussion of the novel, has argued that Belov portrayed 'a Western oriented Soviet intelligentsia as being in the clutches of a fearful Jewish-Masonic conspiracy'<sup>25</sup>.

Paradoxically, however, Belov's novel could be seen as having many of the features typical of village prose. It fulfils exactly the criteria for this genre set out by Katerina Clark:

In village prose, the city stands for pollution, corruption, ugliness, indifference, and, above all, alienation, while the village stands for the true sense of family and human bonds, for natural existence, for honest labour and craftsmanship, for that which is truly Russian, and perhaps even for closeness to God.<sup>26</sup>

'Cosmopolitanism', a codeword from the Stalinist-Zhdanovite period for Jewishness or liberalism, appeared on the pages of *Nash sovremennik* with increasing frequency. Vladimir Vasil'ev accused the editors and contributors of a recently published almanac of 'cosmopolitanism', which he defined as 'a reactionary bourgeois ideology propagating

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<sup>24</sup>See *ibid.*, No. 8, 1986, pp. 79, 86, 91-2, 99.

<sup>25</sup>J. Dunlop, 'Soviet Cultural Politics', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 36, No. 6, November-December, 1987, pp. 34-56.

<sup>26</sup>Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual*, p. 243.



indifference to the motherland, to one's own people and the national culture'<sup>27</sup>.

Kuz'min defended himself against recent criticism from the critic and secretary of the USSR Writers' Union, Pavel Nikolaev<sup>28</sup>. Nikolaev had accused Kuz'min of holding a 'non-social' view of history and ridiculed him for suggesting that the Decembrists had rebelled against Tsar Aleksandr I, because of the latter's plan to move the Russian capital from St Petersburg to Warsaw<sup>29</sup>. Kuz'min retorted by insisting on the Decembrists' 'true patriotism', a feeling he described as 'the most selfless of social feelings', and accusing Aleksandr I himself of 'cosmopolitanism'<sup>30</sup>.

A notable contributor to the debate on alcohol was the spirited, and long-term, campaigner, Fedor Uglov<sup>31</sup>. Uglov argued forcefully for prohibition, commenting 'We must understand that our people and our future are in danger!'<sup>32</sup>. Uglov's implication was that there were (unnamed) 'enemies' of the Russian people who were opposed to prohibition.

### Legitimising the State

Statist nationalist writing in this period appeared in *Nash sovremennik* exclusively in the guise of a statist nationalist reformism. The chief exemplars of this approach were Mikhail Antonov and Ivan Sinitsyn.

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<sup>27</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Sredi mirazhei i prizrakov', *NS*, No 8, 1986, p. 189 (book review: *KRUG*, *Sovetskii pisatel'*, Leningrad, 1985).

<sup>28</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'Otvety, porozhdayushchie voprosy', *NS*, No. 5, 1986, pp. 189-190.

<sup>29</sup>P. Nikolaev, 'Vremya otvetov', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 12, March 19th, 1986, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup>Kuz'min, *op. cit.*

<sup>31</sup>F. Uglov, '"Glyadya pravde v glaza"', *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 150-157. Uglov had been 'a lonely campaigner for a total ban on alcohol' under Khrushchev and Brezhnev (D. Tarschys, 'The Success of a Failure: Gorbachev's Alcohol Policy, 1985-1988', p. 14).

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 157.

A 'Red' Statist Reformism In a discussion of the railways, criticising the bureaucratic plan-based method of organisation and the <sup>proclaimed</sup> adequacy of theoretical and mathematical models of political economy, Antonov gave the clearest statement of his nationalist vision since his *Nash sovremennik* articles of 1981<sup>33</sup>. This combined a faith in the Leninist ideal of 'civilised co-operators' with the resurrection of pre-Revolutionary Russian economic thought and social forms, in particular the commune and the *artel*'. Antonov argued that the political economy of Smith and Ricardo - and, by implication, of Marx - was 'cosmopolitan' and should be replaced by the ideas of (unnamed) Russian thinkers, rooted in Russian national life. Contradicting his earlier views, Antonov now expressed admiration for Japan as an example of the kind of successful 'nationalisation' of economic modernisation, which Russia could emulate. This may have been inspired by a sense of the greater authoritarianism and collectivist spirit of 'Asiatic' capitalism. Antonov, however, also unfavourably compared Soviet monopolistic railways with those in the US, which were, he believed, responsive both to the profit motive and customer demand.

Sinitsyn again took issue with the Ministry of Education on the role of 'labour' in the education process and the need to allow teachers to innovate. Sinitsyn's writing was unusual for the journal in that it took examples from outside the RSFSR, thus demonstrating an all-

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<sup>33</sup>M. Antonov, 'Uskorenie: vozmozhnosti i pregrady', *NS*, No. 7, 1986, pp. 3-20.



Union statist approach. Sinitsyn praised a boarding school in (the predominantly ethnically Russian) northern Kazakhstan for adopting Makarenko's pedagogical methods<sup>34</sup>. A secretary of the local obkom, Sinitsyn reported, confided to the author that only the opposition of the Ministry of Education had prevented Makarenko's methods being adopted by other schools. In a second article, Sinitsyn described the Soviet education system as close to breakdown and accused, by name, the USSR Minister, Mikhail Prokof'ev, and other top officials, of inhibiting innovation at grass roots level and refusing to countenance criticism from below<sup>35</sup>.

### Conclusions on Themes

In this period, the authorities seem to have used their control of the censorship selectively. Firstly, statist legitimisations of the state, 'White' or 'Red', were effectively kept out of the journal, with the exception of some 'Red' statist reformist writing on the bureaucratic economic machine. Secondly, the journal was able to enjoy the benefits of 'glasnost' by expanding the range of its writing on the nation as a cultural community, and on ecological problems. Most notably, the censorship seems to have reduced its restrictions on popular nationalist writing, which defined the nation in terms of 'the Other'. The negative portrayal of Georgians in Astaf'ev's story, *Catching Gudgeon in Georgia*, exemplified how popular nationalist interpretations of ethnic 'boundary mechanisms'

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<sup>34</sup>I. Sinitsyn, 'Pedagogicheskii proryv', NS, No. 3, 1987, pp. 152-168.

<sup>35</sup>I. Sinitsyn, 'Tormozhenie', NS, No. 5, 1987, pp. 118-136.



could shift between positive and negative. In Greenfeld's terms, the story might be seen as an example of *ressentiment*, or existential envy, of other ethnic groups<sup>36</sup>.

The most outstanding example of this phenomenon was Vasilii Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*, which showed a leading popular nationalist employing negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms in a manner hitherto largely confined to statist nationalists. In one sense, the tone of Belov's latest work of fiction was a development of the 'negative' depictions of the realities of the contemporary world found in Rasputin's *The Fire*, or Sergei Alekseev's *The Swarm*. Yet, in another, Belov's tone was new for a major work of fiction, in that it personified the evil responsible for the problems of contemporary Russian life in the Jew, Brish. Belov made the step, therefore, from a self-critical examination of Russian ethnic life to placing the blame for social problems on members of another ethnic group. This development, it might be hypothesised, revealed a deep lack of confidence among popular nationalists, such as Belov, about the future of the Russian nation under the impact of a Westernisation being promoted by Gorbachev. It provided a bridge between popular Russian nationalist ideology and its statist counterpart, which specialised in the manipulation of negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms.

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<sup>36</sup>Greenfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

## Part Two: Political Analysis

### Yakovlev as Central Committee Secretary

At the 27th Party Congress the growing divide between reformers and conservatives was shown by diverse reactions to responses to a *Pravda* article of February 1986 attacking party privileges<sup>37</sup>. The reformist El'tsin supported the article; Ligachev argued that the article was a 'political mistake'<sup>38</sup>. In his speech to the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachev highlighted another distinction in political views, one between a 'healthy interest in national culture' and 'reactionary, nationalistic and religious survivals'<sup>39</sup>. The General Secretary implied that, while the former was compatible with reform, the latter were not. Ostensibly, this was an endorsement of the 'three-point' ideological policy towards Russian nationalism implemented by Yakovlev over the preceding year. In essence, this had meant encouraging the popular nationalist tendency, particularly in its reformist manifestations, restraining the statist nationalist tendency, and clamping down on 'negative' interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms, particularly anti-Semitism. Yet Gorbachev's rather stark expression, lacking in subtlety, of this policy towards Russian nationalism, popular and statist, seemed bound to alienate far more nationalists than it could win for the cause of reform.

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<sup>37</sup>T. Samolis, 'Ochishchenie', *Pravda*, No. 44, February 13th, 1986, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup>See 'Rech' tovarishcha El'tsina B. N.', *Pravda*, No. 58, February 27th, 1986, pp. 2-3;

'Rech' tovarishcha Ligacheva E. K.', *Pravda*, No. 59, February 28th, 1986, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup>*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 9, February 26th, 1986, p. 6.

Following the Congress, sweeping changes, favouring reform, were made in the personnel of the Central Committee departments of Propaganda and Culture<sup>40</sup>. Yakovlev's replacement at the Department of Propaganda was Yurii Sklyarov, with whom Mussalitin had links which went back at least to 1978<sup>41</sup>. Yakovlev's supporter, Nail' Bikkenin, was promoted to become deputy head of the Propaganda Department. Vasilii Shauro, a Suslov nominee and benefactor of nationalists who had reigned for twenty years at the Department of Culture, was replaced by Yurii Voronov, only recently appointed chief editor of *Znamya*.

At a lower level, however, the changes were somewhat more favourable to the nationalists. Al'bert Belyaev was replaced as deputy head of the sector on literature by Vladimir Egorov, an official with nationalist sympathies, formerly head of the Gor'kii Literary Institute<sup>42</sup>. Ivan Zhukov was replaced as 'overseer' of *Nash sovremennik* by Sergei Potemkin, like Vikulov and Bondarev a veteran of the Great Patriotic War (frontovik)<sup>43</sup>. Potemkin's appointment seems to have strengthened Vikulov's hand and weakened the position of Mussalitin. The new Central Committee 'overseer' told Mussalitin to 'find a common language' with the chief editor<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup>A. Rahr, 'The Apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU', *RL136/87*, April 10th, 1987.

<sup>41</sup>Mussalitin, interview. When Mussalitin had been Supreme Soviet correspondent for *Izvestiya*, Sklyarov had been head of the Supreme Soviet's Department of Letters.

<sup>42</sup>V. Egorov, interview 9/6/94.

<sup>43</sup>S. Potemkin, interview 3/10/94. Zhukov became deputy head of *Literaturnoe obozrenie*, according to Zhukov, at Georgii Markov's suggestion (Zhukov, interview).

<sup>44</sup>Mussalitin, interview.



## The Cultural Offensive Begins: May - June 1986

In the wake of the 27th Party Congress, what Hosking has called 'Perestroika Mark Two'<sup>45</sup> was launched in the form of a 'cultural offensive'. In a policy move which marked a significant change in authoritarian Soviet political culture, Yakovlev sought to give the initiative to a pro-reform lobby within cultural institutions, and by this means to win support for reform among the intelligentsia and the general public. Brudny has written: 'The beneficiaries of Gorbachev's "contract" were liberal and liberal nationalist members of the intellectual elite'<sup>46</sup>:

This expansion [of the permissible cultural range] created a pluralism of cultural forms and content and undermined the Stalinist orthodoxy which viewed such plurality as inimical and dangerous to socialism. It also undermined the almost twenty-year period of privileged access to mass media and literary journals enjoyed by the Russian nationalists.<sup>47</sup>

There followed a series of direct interventions in literary and cultural institutions described by one Western observer as a 'massive pre-emptive strike' against conservative forces<sup>48</sup>. Within a short space of time the main creative unions and the future flagships of glasnost' - *Literaturnaya gazeta*, *Moskovskie novosti*, *Ogonek*, *Novyi mir* and *Znamya* - all gained new leading figures. Anatolii Sofronov was replaced as chief editor of *Ogonek* by Vitalii Korotich<sup>49</sup>; Egor Yakovlev replaced Gennadii Gerasimov at

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<sup>45</sup>Hosking, *The Awakening of the Soviet Union*, pp. 139-41.

<sup>46</sup>Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroika', p. 171.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>48</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p.36.

<sup>49</sup>According to Gorbachev, Ligachev first proposed Korotich, whom he valued for his 'class approach' in ideology, to replace Sofronov as editor-in-chief at *Ogonek* (Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Vol. 1, p. 325). Yakovlev had unsuccessfully sought the removal of Sofronov, an important patron of Russian nationalists, in 1972. See V. Korotich (interview by G. Tsitrinyak), 'Sobach'ya svad'ba i t. d.', *Segodnya*, No. 29, June 29th, 1993, p. 10. Sofronov at that time had outmanoeuvred Yakovlev, organising the letter

*Moskovskie novosti*; the non-party Zalygin took over from Vladimir Karpov at *Novyi mir* (according to Zalygin, on Gorbachev's personal initiative)<sup>50</sup>. The appointment, somewhat later, of Grigorii Baklanov as chief editor at *Znamya* represented a rapprochement between Gorbachev and Westernising elements of the intelligentsia - and, in Baklanov's case, not least with that part of the intelligentsia with Jewish roots<sup>51</sup>.

Yakovlev also sought the removal of Vikulov from *Nash sovremennik*. He ordered an investigation into the journal by the Propaganda Department after, he has claimed, he received complaints from within the journal that 'things were not in order'<sup>52</sup>. However, when Yakovlev brought up <sup>with Gorbachev</sup> the issue of replacing Vikulov, Gorbachev indicated he would not go against chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers Vorotnikov who, it may be deduced, had expressed support for the journal's chief editor<sup>53</sup>. This difference in approach to Vikulov reflected a deeper distinction between the attitudes of the two leaders to Russian nationalist ideology. Yakovlev was more hostile; Gorbachev more accommodating. When, during this period, Yakovlev sent Gorbachev a memorandum on the dangers of fascism, the General Secretary, in Yakovlev's interpretation, showed his disagreement by not replying<sup>54</sup>.

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from Mikhail Sholokhov to the Central Committee which contributed to Yakovlev's dismissal and 'exile' to Canada in 1973 (A. Yakovlev, interview 15/3/95).

<sup>50</sup>Gorbachev had already taken care to sound Zalygin's views (S. Zalygin, interview 13/4/94).

<sup>51</sup>Unlike Zalygin, Baklanov believed he owed his appointment to Yakovlev, rather than Gorbachev (Ivanova, interview 27/4/95).

<sup>52</sup>According to Yakovlev, staff at the journal were guilty of drunkenness, absenteeism and playing football (Yakovlev, interview).

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup>Yakovlev, interview.



Yakovlev's desire to remove Vikulov may have been strengthened by the contents of the May edition of the journal. The issue demonstrated a rapid decline in Mussalitin's influence over publication policy and saw the return to the journal, albeit with minor works, of the statist nationalists Apollon Kuz'min and Stanislav Kunyaev<sup>55</sup>. The 'highlight' of the issue was popular nationalist Astaf'ev's collection of short stories, *Place of Action*, his first publication in *Nash sovremennik*

since he had left the editorial board in 1981; his new work burst upon the Soviet cultural scene with something of the effect of a literary bomb<sup>56</sup>. Publication of the stories, opposed by Mussalitin but supported by Vikulov<sup>57</sup>, indicated a renewed rapprochement between the writer and *Nash sovremennik*, and one all the more important for the journal, following the recent successful publication of Astaf'ev's most substantial recent work, *A Sad Detective Story*, in the rival and increasingly 'liberal' journal *Oktyabr'*<sup>58</sup>.

### The 8th USSR Writers' Congress

The 'cultural offensive' soon gathered pace<sup>59</sup>. However, the 8th Writers' Congress, held in June, was a severe test of the new policies<sup>60</sup>. At a meeting with the intelligentsia

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<sup>55</sup>Kuz'min, 'Otvety, porozhdayushchie voprosy'; S. Kunyaev, 'Pamyati A. Yashina', *NS*, No. 5, 1986, p. 98.

<sup>56</sup>Astaf'ev, 'Mesto deistviya'. See S. Cosgrove, 'The Russian Complex. The Eidel'man-Astaf'ev Correspondence', *Detente, Leeds*, No. 8, Winter 1987, pp. 5-7.

<sup>57</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>58</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Pechal'nyi detektiv', *Oktyabr'*, No. 1, 1986, pp. 8-74.

<sup>59</sup>See R. Pittman, 'Perestroika and Soviet Cultural Politics: The Case of the Major Literary Journals', *Soviet Studies*, Vo. 42, No. 1, 1990, pp. 111-132; Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>60</sup>S. Cosgrove, 'Thoughts on the 8th Writers' Congress', *Detente, Leeds*, No. 7, Autumn 1986, pp. 16-18.



prior to the Writers' Congress, Gorbachev clearly set out his policy of *glasnost'*:

We do not have an opposition. How then can we monitor ourselves? Only through criticism and self-criticism. And most important, through *glasnost'*. [...] The Central Committee needs support. You cannot imagine how much we need the support of a detachment like the writers.<sup>61</sup>

At that meeting Gorbachev seems to have particularly valued the support he received from two senior representatives of different wings of Russian nationalist ideology, the 'conservative' Leonid Leonov and the 'liberal' Sergei Zalygin<sup>62</sup>. At the subsequent Congress, Vladimir Karpov, until then chief editor of *Novyi mir*, was elected First Secretary of the USSR Writers' Union<sup>63</sup>. Karpov was a compromise choice. Two alternatives had been deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Bondarev, and Zalygin<sup>64</sup>. Each represented a different Russian nationalist tendency: Zalygin was a popular nationalist who identified himself with Gorbachev's policies; Bondarev, closer to a statist nationalist position, was increasingly hostile to reform. Ligachev apparently supported Bondarev's candidacy for the post<sup>65</sup>; Zalygin, on the other hand, did not want the post and believed Gorbachev thought him unsuitable<sup>66</sup> (indeed, Gorbachev had presumably already decided to appoint Zalygin to the potentially more influential post of chief editor at *Novyi mir*). Delegates at the Congress, notably from the

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<sup>61</sup>Cited in G. Hosking, 'Introduction', in G. Hosking & G. Cushing (eds.), *Perspectives on Literature & Society in East & West Europe*, Macmillan, London, 1989, p. 4.

<sup>62</sup>Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Vol. 1, p. 332.

<sup>63</sup>Georgii Markov, Ligachev's close associate, was provided with the newly-created honorary position of chair of the Union (*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 26, June 25th, 1986, pp. 1-5).

<sup>64</sup>D. Volkogonov, *Sem' vozhdai*, Kniga 2, *Novosti*, Moscow, 1995, p. 316.

<sup>65</sup>Yakovlev, interview. See also A. Yakovlev, 'Nas mozhet skrutit' neterpimost'', *Moskovskii obozrevatel'*, No. 28, 1993, p. 20; Yu. Bondarev, 'Bifshteks lzhi', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 97, August 17th, 1993, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup>Zalygin, interview.

Ukraine and Belorussia, nonetheless approached Zalygin with a view to putting forward his candidacy<sup>67</sup>, probably because of their apprehension of Bondarev's more statist variety of Russian nationalist view. Bondarev's candidacy was, probably, not helped by the publication of Astaf'ev's *Place of Action* in *Nash sovremennik*, a journal closely associated with his name.

At the Congress, Astaf'ev's story, *Catching Gudgeon in Georgia*, quickly became a cause of scandal<sup>68</sup>. Georgii Tsitsishvili, speaking for the Georgian delegation, referred to 'several writers and leaders of literary organs [who] permit vulgar mistakes'. The official view was given by Sergei Mikhalkov who remarked, 'Let the excellent Russian prose writer Viktor Astaf'ev not condemn me if I say that his story 'Catching Gudgeon in Georgia' published in the journal *Nash sovremennik* offensively and tactlessly wounds the national feelings of a brother people'<sup>69</sup>. Popular Russian nationalist Rasputin, however, came to Astaf'ev's defence, arguing, 'There was no insult directed towards the Georgian people in Astaf'ev's short story; read it and you'll be able to distinguish pain from mockery and truth from a lie'<sup>70</sup>. The Georgian delegation thereupon walked out. It was reported that their departure was 'accompanied by cries of "get back to the markets" and similar chauvinistic abuse'<sup>71</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup>See G. Murrell, 'When the Desert Blooms: Cultural Development under Gorbachev', *Survey*, Vol. 30, October 1988, No. 3, p. 59-78; S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, pp. 37-39.

<sup>69</sup>See *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 27, July 2nd, 1986, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>71</sup>Murrell, *op. cit.*, p. 65.



The bureau of the secretariat, elected at the Congress (consisting of the First Secretary of the USSR Writers' Union, Karpov, the chair of the Union, Markov, the deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Bondarev, and the writers Chingiz Aitmatov, Oles' Gonchar and Vasil' Bykov), had a majority for moderate reform. Bondarev, as a representative of Russian nationalist views, was largely isolated.

### **Policies to Attract Russian Nationalists**

Gorbachev proceeded to develop policies designed to win Russian nationalists to reform. These included cancellation of the Northern Rivers water diversion project and the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the *Lay of Igor's Campaign*<sup>72</sup>. In the summer of 1986, nationalist painter Il'ya Glazunov was allowed to hold an exhibition of his works at the Manezh<sup>73</sup>. The appointment in November 1986 of Dmitrii Likhachev as chairman of the newly created Soviet Cultural Foundation was another indication of the desire of the authorities to patronise representatives of the intelligentsia who were pro-reform yet were sympathetic to some nationalist positions<sup>74</sup>.

These policies opened up divisions among Russian nationalists. The nationalists who most eagerly adopted a

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<sup>72</sup>'Bessmertnyi pamyatnik otechestvennoi kul'tury' [TASS], *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 116, September 27th, 1986, pp. 1-2; 'Vospityvat' ideinuyu ubezhdennost'', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 118, October 2nd, 1987, pp. 1-2 & 6. See Solovei, 'Russkii natsionalizm i vlast' v epokhu Gorbacheva', p. 51.

<sup>73</sup>Solovei, *ibid.*

<sup>74</sup>See 'Bogatstva kul'tury otechestva - narodu', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 137, November 15th, 1986, p. 2; 'V sootvetstvii s zakonom...', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 127, October 23rd, 1986, p. 3; *Literator*, 'Kornevaya svyaz'', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 15, April 9th, 1986, p. 2. Likhachev, a much-feted figure on the pages of both Korotich's *Ogonek* and Belyaev's *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, became a Hero of Socialist Labour on his 80th birthday in November ('Ukaz', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 143, November 29th, 1986, p. 2).



pro-reform position were the 'self-denying' (or 'cultural') nationalists, such as Zalygin and Likhachev<sup>75</sup>. Solovei has noted that the policy towards nationalism, developed by Gorbachev and Yakovlev, 'succeeded in breaking off such fellow-travellers as Sergei Zalygin [...] and academician Dmitrii Likhachev from the Russian nationalist establishment'<sup>76</sup>. Indeed, as chief editor of *Novyi mir*, Zalygin, in Laqueur's words, was to make that journal 'a bulwark of enlightened nationalism'<sup>77</sup>; yet this 'enlightened' attitude was to estrange him from a great number of Russian nationalists, popular as well as statist:

During this time liberal nationalists like Likhachev, Zalygin and Mozhaev became leaders of the pro-Gorbachev coalition among the intelligentsia. At the other end of the Russian nationalist spectrum, radical Slavophiles and neo-Stalinists formed an anti-perestroika alliance and fought hard against the liberalisation of culture.<sup>78</sup>

Influential popular nationalist writers, such as Rasputin and Astaf'ev, initially inclined to adopt a position of 'political "fence-sitting"'<sup>79</sup>, were increasingly faced with the need to make a choice between nationalist positions, 'for' and 'against' reform.

### After the USSR Writers' Congress

In the aftermath of the USSR Writers' Congress, Vikulov once more came under pressure to resign<sup>80</sup>. The relative weakness of *Nash sovremennik* is evident in the subdued

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<sup>75</sup>On Zalygin, see Y. Brudnyi (Brudny), 'Between Liberalism and Nationalism: The Case of Sergei Zalygin', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. XXI, Nos. 3/4, 1988, pp. 331-340.

<sup>76</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>77</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>78</sup>Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroika', p. 172.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>80</sup>Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, p. 39.

tones of the issues for the next two months. Ivan Vasil'ev provided the 'acceptable face' of the journal, supporting the decisions of the 27th Party Congress on agriculture<sup>81</sup>, contributing extensively to the Central Committee paper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*<sup>82</sup>, and receiving the Lenin prize for literature for his publitsistika, including several articles first published in *Nash sovremennik* in 1982<sup>83</sup>. Given Gorbachev's early links with the journal through the Central Committee Department of Agriculture, the award was probably a personal mark of favour from the General Secretary - in his memoirs Gorbachev was to write of Vasil'ev's 'outstanding articles'<sup>84</sup>.

No doubt on official insistence, *Nash sovremennik* now printed a letter from distinguished Georgians complaining about the Astaf'ev publication<sup>85</sup>. Astaf'ev soon came under attack again, this time for religious views he had expressed in *Place of Action*, in an article strongly reminiscent of the attack on Soloukhin in 1982 (he was accused of 'flirting with Godikins [koketnichaya s bozhen'koi]'<sup>86</sup>. The author, Iosif Kryvelev, a Soviet 'authority' on religion, cited Astaf'ev's call for a 'chastising rain' to revenge the 'contemporary defilers of temples' and expressed the view that it was 'more than strange' to read such ideas in a Soviet publication.

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<sup>81</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Orientiry'.

<sup>82</sup>I. Vasil'ev: 'Bol'shoe delo ne dlya trusa', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 96, April 27th, 1986, p. 3; 'Nakaz partii - nastupat'', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 106, May 4th, 1986, p. 1; 'Predpochitayu strogie otsenki', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 153, July 1st, 1986, p. 2; 'Zemnoi peredel', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Nos. 231-234, 1986; 'Vozvrashchenie printsipov', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 43, February 22nd, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>83</sup>*NS*, No. 6, 1986, p. 2. The *Nash sovremennik* articles were: I. Vasil'ev: 'Khvala domu svoemu'; 'Vozvrashchenie k zemle. Zametki publitsista'; 'Pis'ma iz derevni'.

<sup>84</sup>Gorbachev, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

<sup>85</sup>'Pis'mo v redaktsiyu', *NS*, No. 7, 1986, pp. 188-189.

<sup>86</sup>I. Kryvelev, 'Koketnichaya s bozhen'koi', *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, No. 174, July 30th, 1986, p. 4.



Astaf'ev was also criticised, particularly for anti-Semitism, by the distinguished Jewish literary historian, Natan Eidel'man, in an exchange of private letters, which later circulated widely<sup>87</sup>.

*Sovetskaya kul'tura*, meanwhile, in a series of articles (under the rubric 'We are Born of October' [My rodom iz Oktyabrya]) by authors such as Afanas'ev and Kaltakhchyan, attacked exponents of conservative and statist nationalist views, in particular figures such as Kozhinov and Kuz'min associated with *Nash sovremennik*, from Marxist-Leninist positions<sup>88</sup>. These attacks showed that, under Yakovlev's direction, Gorbachev's ideological apparatus was not willing to surrender traditional Marxist-Leninist rhetoric to the conservatives. In addition, by attacking statist nationalists in these terms, Gorbachev and Yakovlev may have hoped to make it more difficult for conservative Communists and Russian statist nationalists to ally in opposition to reform.

### A New Freedom: Deputy Chief Editor Svininnikov

As the 'cultural offensive' gathered momentum, the hiatus in *Nash sovremennik's* organisational life, which had begun prior to the 27th Party Congress with Korobov's departure, continued. Vikulov and the RSFSR Writers' Union must have feared not only that Vikulov would lose his post,

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<sup>87</sup>See S. Cosgrove, 'The Russian Complex. The Eidel'man-Astaf'ev correspondence'; N. Eidel'man & V. Astaf'ev, 'Perepiska iz dvukh uglov', *Sintaksis*, No. 17, Paris, 1987, pp. 80-89; T. Venclova, 'Ethnic Identity and the Nationality Issue in Contemporary Soviet Literature', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. XXI, Nos. 3/4, 1988, pp. 319-29; E. Evtushenko, 'Pravo na neodnoznachnost'', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 2, January 3rd, 1987, p. 4.

<sup>88</sup>See, for example, S. Kaltakhchyan, 'Kuda stremitsya "edinyi potok"? - O leninskoi kontseptsii "dvukh kul'tur" i ee izvrashcheniyakh', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 33, March 17th, 1987, p. 6; Yu. Afanas'ev, 'S pozitsii pravdy i realizma', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 35, March 21st, 1987, p. 3.



but that the need to replace Korobov would provide an opportunity for Yakovlev's cultural authorities to increase their influence over the journal.

In the event, the authorities allowed Vikulov to remain as chief editor (a concession to Bondarev<sup>89</sup>), and also gave him and the RSFSR Writers' Union a free hand in the choice of a new deputy chief editor. By late spring, Valentin Svininnikov had been appointed to this post<sup>90</sup>.

Svininnikov (b. 1937), a journalist of statist nationalist sympathies with considerable administrative experience and, since 1971, a frequent reviewer on the journal, was a long-term and close associate of Vikulov<sup>91</sup>. In 1981 the chief editor had sought, unsuccessfully, to bring Svininnikov, then deputy chief editor at *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, to *Nash sovremennik*<sup>92</sup>.

The appointment of Svininnikov significantly reduced Mussalitin's influence. Appointed co-deputy chief editor from the July issue, two months later, in a deliberate snub to Mussalitin, Svininnikov was made first deputy chief editor. On Svininnikov's initiative, *Nash sovremennik* now organised a series of public meetings, intended to spread the journal's ideas and increase the readership<sup>93</sup>. Often covered by press, TV and radio, the meetings were frequently taped by members of the audience, and the

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<sup>89</sup>Vikulov, *loc. cit.*

<sup>90</sup>V. Svininnikov, interview 24/5/93.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.* See V. Svininnikov, 'Tverskie "dosugi" Pushkina', *NS*, No. 2, 1981, pp. 190-191; 'Chuzhaya радость kak svoya', *NS*, No. 4, 1981, pp. 160-170; 'Poeziya prozy', *NS*, No. 2, 1982, pp. 174-175.

<sup>92</sup>Vikulov, interview. Svininnikov believed his appointment to *Nash sovremennik* at that time had been barred by the chairman of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Sergei Mikhalkov, on the grounds of suspected anti-Semitism (Svininnikov, interview). Vikulov nevertheless kept faith with Svininnikov by regularly publishing him (see Note 91).

<sup>93</sup>The first meetings were held in late summer 1986 at the Moscow House of Builders and the Central House of Writers (TsDL) (Svininnikov, interviews 17/12/92; 24/5/93).

recordings circulated informally<sup>94</sup>. At a time when open political gatherings were still banned, these meetings were evidence of a new, nascent political process. The journal encouraged readers in their own localities to set up 'Clubs of Friends of *Nash sovremennik*' to discuss publications and encourage subscription.

With Svininnikov's appointment, a distinction between the opposing views of deputy chief editors, evident under Korobov and Mussalitin, became yet more marked. Mussalitin's department of publitsistika persevered with a pro-reform popular nationalist line, publishing Lenin prize laureate Ivan Vasil'ev's demands for perestroika in the countryside, and Antonov's nationalist critique of bureaucratic mismanagement of the railways<sup>95</sup>. However, the theme of the shefstvo of the Cherepovets iron foundry was now abandoned, and the anti-alcohol campaign was relegated to the sidelines<sup>96</sup>. Publitsistika was clearly losing priority to Svininnikov's departments of prose and criticism, which gave voice to a newly strident nationalist radicalism.

### ***Belov's Everything Lies Ahead***

The best example of the new line associated with Svininnikov was Belov's novel *Everything Lies Ahead*<sup>97</sup>. The editorial office had had a manuscript of the novel in its possession since at least the summer of 1985, and Korobov

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<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup>Antonov, 'Uskorenie: vozmozhnosti i pregrady'; I. Vasil'ev, 'Anatomiya podenshchiny'.

<sup>96</sup>See 'Protiv zla - vsem mirom. Stroki iz pisem chitatelei o vrede p'yanstva i alkogolizma' (under the rubric 'Klubam trezvosti'), *NS*, No. 11, 1986, pp. 146-155.

<sup>97</sup>Belov, 'Vse vpered'.



had initially prepared the text for publication<sup>98</sup>. Despite Bondarev's support for the novel, it was not then published<sup>99</sup>. Subsequently, the novel was re-edited by Mussalitin and changes, toning down the work, were agreed with Belov<sup>100</sup>. The fact that Vikulov had kept his post and been given a free hand in the appointment of Svininnikov, however, seems to have inspired the chief editor with a new confidence. He overruled the agreed changes and, against Mussalitin's wishes, published the novel in an earlier, more outspoken variant<sup>101</sup>.

The stridency of the work reflected the growing tensions of this early period of perestroika, as well as increasing glasnost'. Publication produced an immediate storm of protest. Reviewers divided in their views with a polemical intensity hitherto unseen. Of reviews published by the end of 1986, only *Molodaya gvardiya* carried one which was favourable<sup>102</sup>. *Literaturnaya gazeta*, *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* all published hostile notices<sup>103</sup>.

Another sign of renewed radicalism was the return of the popular and controversial Valentin Pikul' to the journal's pages, for the first time since the scandal of the 1979 publication of *At the Final Boundary*<sup>104</sup>. An example

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<sup>98</sup>Korobov, interview.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup>I. Sheveleva, 'Neobkhodimost' vybora', *Molodaya gvardiya*, No. 12, 1986, pp. 229-247.

<sup>103</sup>O. Kuchkina, 'Strannaya literatura - zametki kritika', *Pravda*, No. 306, November 2nd, 1986, p. 3; V. Lakshin, 'Po pravde govorya', *Izvestiya*, No. 337, December 2nd, p. 3; No. 338, December 3rd, p. 3, 1986; P. Nikolaev, 'Kritika kak nauka', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 43, October 22nd, 1986, p. 4; P. Ul'yashov, 'Kakov zhe itog?...', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 49, December 5th, 1986, p. 6; I. Volkov, 'Chuvstvo sotsial'noi otvetstvennosti', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 39, September 24th, 1986, p. 3.

<sup>104</sup>V. Pikul', 'Krov', slezy i lavry - Istoricheskie (politicheskie) miniatyury', *NS*, No. 9, 1986, pp. 87-135. See also S. Zhuravlev, 'Chuvstvo Rodiny. O tvorchestve Valentina Pikulya', *NS*, No. 9, 1986, pp. 135-147.



of Vikulov's avowed policy of publishing young writers from the provinces was the appearance of *The Swarm*, the young Vologdan writer Sergei Alekseev's latest novel on rural life<sup>105</sup>. The printing of the late Konstantin Vorob'ev's war novel, *It's Us, Oh Lord!*, expanded the range of the journal by treating a theme generally shunned by official Soviet literature before Gorbachev, that of a Russian taken prisoner of war by the Germans<sup>106</sup>. According to Svininnikov, the novella had been offered to *Novyi mir* eighteen years before, but had not then been published<sup>107</sup>.

Something of the stridency of Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead* was felt in the journal's literary criticism, which also showed a marked narrowing in the range of its authors<sup>108</sup>. Only in Anatolii Lanshchikov, perhaps, did the journal find an authoritative critical voice outside the immediate circle of its associates. Literary politics may have played a part, since Lanshchikov's praise of the new biographical novel by the recently elected First Secretary of the Writers' Union, Vladimir Karpov, *The Commander*, may have been a reverence in the direction of Bondarev's successful rival for the post of First Secretary (and possibly one which Bondarev himself may not have appreciated)<sup>109</sup>. Lanshchikov's article may have been intended to attract the favourable attention of Yakovlev. Indeed, the appearance of such an article in *Nash*

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<sup>105</sup>S. Alekseev, 'Roi'.

<sup>106</sup>K. Vorob'ev, 'Eto my, gospodi!', *NS*, No. 10, 1986, pp. 96-155.

<sup>107</sup>Svininnikov, interview.

<sup>108</sup>A. Kazintsev: 'Nashi publikatsii'; 'Prostye istiny'; 'Vzyskatel'naya kritika i ee protivniki'; V. Vasil'ev: 'Sredi mirazhei i prizrakov'; 'Tainstvo slova -zametki o proze Evgeniya Nosova'.

<sup>109</sup>A. Lanshchikov, 'Delat' zhizn' s kogo. O knige Vladimira Karpova 'Polkovodets'.

*sovremennik* could have been the consequence of pressure from Yakovlev's officials. Such speculations are not idle, given that Lanshchikov was to be the candidate favoured by Yakovlev to succeed Vikulov as chief editor of the journal during 1988-1989<sup>110</sup>.

### Yakovlev As Candidate Politburo Member

The January 1987 Central Committee plenum marked a new stage in Yakovlev's rise to power and influence, when Gorbachev appointed him junior Central Committee secretary for ideology, and therefore a candidate member of the Politburo, in place of Zimyanin. In his closing address, Gorbachev gave full backing to Yakovlev's bold moves in culture, remarking, 'We need democracy as we need air'<sup>111</sup>.

Although Ligachev remained Second Secretary with responsibility for ideology, and formally Yakovlev's senior, he henceforth seemed to lack the General Secretary's backing and was less influential than Yakovlev in the actual making of ideological policy<sup>112</sup>.

From this time onwards, therefore, there were, in practice, two rival 'ideological' administrations within the party apparat. Second Secretary Ligachev ran the conservative and 'formal' administration. Yakovlev, with Gorbachev's backing, headed a more informal structure with a strongly reformist line. As Andrei Grachev has observed:

Editors of newspapers and journals from now on could choose with whom to consult on [the publication of] unorthodox materials [...] As a result, the bolder

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<sup>110</sup>See Chapter Six.

<sup>111</sup>Cited in M. Dejevsky, 'Glasnost' and the Soviet Press', in J. Graffy & G. Hosking (eds.), *Culture and the Media in the USSR Today*, Macmillan, Basingstoke & London, 1989, p. 31 (see also *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, SU/8480/C2/1, January 31st, 1987).

<sup>112</sup>A. Grachev, *Kremlevskaya khronika*, EKSMO, Moscow, 1994, p. 11.



materials of the first revolutionary period of glasnost', before they appeared in the papers, were prepared behind the back of the official Department of Propaganda in the offices of Yakovlev's sub-department.<sup>113</sup>

Yakovlev's elevation came at a time when the initial phase of the 'cultural offensive' was beginning to bear practical fruit. The old limits had first been stretched by a film - Abuladze's *Repentance*<sup>114</sup>. The banner soon passed to literature<sup>115</sup>. From the beginning of 1987, a wide range of previously unpublished or banned works was printed, many as a result of the direct intervention of Yakovlev himself<sup>116</sup>.

The success of Yakovlev's policy could be seen in the rapid increase in demand for precisely those publications which were the flagships of glasnost'. An indication of Yakovlev's power was that, in the interests of the new policy, and to satisfy this demand, he was able to push through the Department of Propaganda a decision, presumably opposed by Ligachev, to allow the levels of print-runs to rise, despite the chronic shortage of paper<sup>117</sup>. In January 1987, the print-runs of the reformist journals *Novyi mir* and *Znamya* rose by 16% and 11% respectively. Those of 'opposition' journals over the same period either decreased or stagnated. Mikhail Alekseev's *Moskva* fell by 14%;

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<sup>113</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

<sup>114</sup>Gorbachev, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

<sup>115</sup>G. Hosking, 'At last an exorcism', *Times Literary Supplement*, No. 4,410, October 9-15, 1987, pp. 1111-1112; G. Murrell, 'When the Desert Blooms: Cultural Development under Gorbachev'.

<sup>116</sup>Yakovlev, interview. See B. Mozhaev, 'Muzhiki i baby', *Don*, No. 1, pp. 18-136; No. 2, pp. 5-129; No. 3, pp. 62-106, 1987; V. Dudintsev, 'Belye Odezhdyy', *Neva*, No. 1, pp. 6-111; No. 2, pp. 62-132; No. 3, pp. 3-77; No. 4, pp. 18-124, 1987; D. Granin, 'Zubr', *Novyi mir*, No. 1, pp. 19-95; No. 2, pp. 7-92, 1987; A. Pristavkin, 'Nochevala tuchka zolotaya', *Znamya*, No. 3, pp. 3-75; No. 4, pp. 25-79, 1987; Yu. Trifonov, 'Ischeznovenie', *Druzhba narodov*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 6-95; A. Rybakov, 'Deti Arbata', *Druzhba narodov*, No. 4, pp. 3-133; No. 5, pp. 67-163; No. 6, pp. 23-151, 1987.

<sup>117</sup>In part, extra copies for rising individual subscriptions were found by prohibiting departmental subscriptions to the journals (Yakovlev, interview). However, this would not account for the overall rise in the levels of the print-runs.



Anatolii Ivanov's *Molodaya gvardiya* declined by 1,5%. That of *Nash sovremennik* was unchanged.

In the wake of the flood of literature, new and old, in the reformist journals, five conservative-nationalist publications mounted a rear-guard action, largely in their pages of literary criticism. The key, co-ordinating, institutional role of the RSFSR Writers' Union is shown by the fact that three of these publications - *Nash sovremennik*, *Moskva* and *Literaturnaya Rossiya* - were organs of that body (*Moskva* was also an organ of the Moscow Writers' Organisation). The only journal of the RSFSR Writers' Union to follow the reformist line was *Oktyabr'*. Under the chief-editorship of Anatolii Anan'ev, this publication became a thorn in the side of its parent organisation. Two other conservative publications were centres of opposition to reform: *Molodaya gvardiya*, an organ of the Komsomol, and *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, the organ of the RSFSR Council of Ministers (jointly with the Central Committee). *Molodaya gvardiya*, in particular, assumed an important role in the political-literary debates, well described by Brudny:

[*Molodaya gvardiya*] not only joined *Nash sovremennik* as a very important forum of Russian nationalist reaction to the cultural liberalisation but, in fact, it became the most important publication of the neo-Stalinist nationalists who opposed Gorbachev's reform projects.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup>Brudny, *loc. cit.*

## Ligachev and the Russian Nationalists

As the rift between reformers and conservatives grew wider, Ligachev responded by what amounted to a public recognition of the lack of authority of orthodox Marxism-Leninism. He allied himself more openly with Russian nationalists, maintaining regular contacts with their leading representatives and publicly agreeing with some of their views<sup>119</sup>. He therefore increasingly tended to personify conservative opposition to reform and the emerging alliance of anti-reform party functionaries with Russian nationalist writers.

In March 1987 this development was symbolised by Ligachev's visit to Saratov, a few days before the opening of an RSFSR Writers' Union plenum in that city<sup>120</sup>. The March plenum of the RSFSR Writers' Union was a milestone in the organisation of opposition to reform and, indeed, something of a watershed in Soviet life, marking as it did the first tentative steps towards an open and legal opposition to the ruling regime since the 10th Party Congress<sup>121</sup>. The venue for the plenum had special significance. Saratov was the literary fiefdom of Mikhail Alekseev and home to the 'thick' journal *Volga*, for many years edited by Nikolai Shundik, a literary official of statist nationalist sympathies. At the plenum, Bondarev, now 'the unchallenged

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<sup>119</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>120</sup>'Talant khudozhnika - delu perestroiki. Vstrecha E. K. Ligacheva s khudozhestvennoi intelligentsiei Saratovskoi oblasti', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 32, March 14th, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>121</sup>'Perestroika - volya, muzhestvo i otvetstvennost'', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 13, March 27th, 1987, pp. 2-4; J. Dunlop, 'The Return of Russian Nationalism', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer 1990, pp. 114-122; Brudny, *loc. cit.*; Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 54; J. Wishnevskaya, 'Ligachev, Pamyat', and Conservative Writers', *Report on the USSR*, Vol. 1, No. 10, 1989, pp. 12-15; J. Wishnevskaya, 'Who is in charge of Soviet culture?', *RL273/87*, July 14th, 1987.



leader of the united Russian nationalist opposition to Gorbachev's cultural policies'<sup>122</sup>, called memorably in a keynote speech for a 'new Stalingrad' to be fought and won against the tide of reform. Developments at the plenum inevitably thrust *Nash sovremennik*, the chief literary journal of the RSFSR Writers' Union, further into the literary and political limelight.

In April, at a conference held by the USSR Writers' Union, the statist nationalists, in particular, put forward their case in a series of speeches critical of reform<sup>123</sup>. John Dunlop has commented on the April Conference:

It seemed obvious that a strong coalition of nationalists [...], pro-military neo-Stalinists [...] and endangered literary bureaucrats [...] was emerging. Russian nationalists appeared to be the dominant group in this alliance.<sup>124</sup>

At later meetings of the Writers' Union, differences of opinion continued to be sharply expressed<sup>125</sup>. Soon afterwards a number of nationalist writers, including Vikulov and Kunyaev, issued a collective appeal in defence of the Russian nationalist *Pamyat'* organisation<sup>126</sup>.

### ***Nash sovremennik* Steps Back: February - May, 1987**

Nonetheless, after the sensation of *Everything Lies Ahead*, the journal's prose section became less adventurous. The polemics in which *Nash sovremennik* engaged were largely conducted in the criticism section (by authors mostly

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<sup>122</sup>Brudny, *loc. cit.*

<sup>123</sup>'Plenum pravleniya Soyuza pisatelei SSSR. *Sovremennost' i literatura*', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 19, May 6th, 1987, pp. 2-11. See Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, pp. 124-127.

<sup>124</sup>Dunlop, 'Soviet Cultural Politics', p. 49.

<sup>125</sup>R. Eggleston, 'Writers' Union officials discuss Soviet Authors', *RL247/87*, June 30th, 1987, pp. 1-3.

<sup>126</sup>'Chto takoe ob'edinenie 'Pamyat'', *Russkaya mysl'*, No. 3,684, July 31st, 1987, p. 6.



members, or ex-members, of the editorial office). In an article widely denounced in the liberal press, Petr Tataurov, head of the journal's department of criticism, defended the anti-Semitic Lyubomudrov<sup>127</sup>. Kazintsev was much criticised for his views, not least by Tatyana Ivanova, now a regular contributor to *Ogonek*<sup>128</sup>. The journal published a review of a posthumous collection of essays by the journal's former deputy chief editor Yurii Seleznev<sup>129</sup>. Deputy chief editor Svininnikov was cautious, stressing, in a review of a novel about a Russian dynasty of workers, the importance of moral qualities in human behaviour (as opposed to relations of production), which he termed, in suitably Gorbachevite language, the 'human factor'<sup>130</sup>.

Mussalitin's publitsistika continued along its established path, including among its publications works by Ivan Vasil'ev, Sinitsyn and some items on the anti-alcohol campaign<sup>131</sup>. The round table on ecological issues, organised by Mussalitin, attracted a wide range of opinion<sup>132</sup>. Most significantly, it witnessed to an emerging 'alliance for glasnost' between nationalist writers and much of the

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<sup>127</sup>P. Tataurov, 'Perestraivat'sya po suti', *NS*, No. 2, 1987, pp. 169-178. See K. Stepanyan, 'Mezhdru stsenoi i chitatel'yami', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 37, March 26th, 1987, pp. 4-5; Inna Solov'eva, 'Reshaite sami', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 41, April 4th, 1987, p. 4.

<sup>128</sup>See A. Kazintsev, 'Vremya i poeziya', *NS*, No. 4, 1987, pp. 162-171; T. Ivanova, 'Ne sotvori kumira', *Ogonek*, No. 35, 1987, pp. 28-29. Kazintsev was appointed to the long-unfilled post of head of the poetry department, vacated by Shitikov in September 1985, from January 1987.

<sup>129</sup>N. Zuev, 'Prodolzhenie zhizni', *NS*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 185-187 (book review: Yu. Seleznev, 'Zlataya tsep', *Sovremennik*, Moscow, 1985).

<sup>130</sup>V. Svininnikov, 'Paradoksal'nost' istin vechno novykh', *NS*, No. 3, 1987, pp. 187-9 (book review: M. Ancharov, 'Kak ptitsa garuga', *Studencheskii meridian*, No. 1, pp. 29-37, 44-52; No. 2, pp. 35-38, 44-59; No. 3, pp. 36-45, 49-57; No. 4, pp. 27-38, 42-50; No. 5, pp. 28-47; No. 6, pp. 29-45, 1986).

<sup>131</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Nochnye pristupy'; I. Sinitsyn: 'Pedagogicheskii proryv'; 'Tormozhenie'. On the anti-alcohol campaign, see 'S veroi v trezvoe budushchee' (Otkliki chitatelei na publikatsiyu zhurnala "Protiv zla - vsem mirom"), *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 144-150; F. Uglov, "Glyadya pravde v glaza", *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 150-157; V. Odintsov (interview by S. Gagarin), 'Ot bor'by s p'yanstvom - k bor'be za trezvast', *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 157-161.

<sup>132</sup>Mussalitin, interview. See 'Ekologiya. Ekonomika. Nравstvennost'.

scientific community on these issues<sup>133</sup>. As Hosking has noted, writers and scientists were 'the two categories of Soviet citizens most forcefully impressed by the discrepancy between ideal and reality in Soviet life, and also the two categories in the best position to voice concern about the problem'<sup>134</sup>. The round table also revealed the extent of bureaucratic opposition in this area: the Minister of Minvodkhoz refused an invitation to take part, and the text was examined closely in the Central Committee (in the aftermath, the Department of Agriculture admonished Mussalitin for the views expressed<sup>135</sup>). The same month Zalygin published a major article in *Novyi mir* on the Northern Rivers' scheme, *Turning Point*, setting out the institutional interests surrounding the project<sup>136</sup>. Zalygin insisted that 'from now on public opinion has acquired the rights of citizenship'<sup>137</sup>.

*Glasnost'* could also be seen in action when representatives of the Railways' Ministry, including deputy minister B. Nikiforov, replied to Antonov's criticisms of the Ministry on the pages of *Nash sovremennik*: Antonov thereupon defended his views in a further response<sup>138</sup>.

In May 1987 the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union discussed the work of *Nash sovremennik*, in the light of the March plenum, and drew organisational conclusions (*orgvyvody*). The secretariat concluded that the journal

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<sup>133</sup>See p. 151.

<sup>134</sup>Hosking, *'Homo Sovieticus or Homo sapiens. Perspectives from the Past'*, p. 9.

<sup>135</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>136</sup>S. Zalygin, *'Povorot'*, *Novyi mir*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 3-18.

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4. Cited in Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 12 (translation by G. Hosking).

<sup>138</sup>See B. Nikiforov, V. Inozemtsev, A. Lisitsyn, *'Prakticheskie illyuzii na zheleznoi doroge'*, *NS*, No. 4, 1987, pp. 172-177; M. Antonov, *'Otvét M. Antonova'*, *NS*, No. 4, 1987, pp. 177-188.



should be improved by the choice of 'professional' and gifted editors'<sup>139</sup>. This was no doubt only confirmation of a decision, already taken, to remove Mussalitin in order to make *Nash sovremennik* a more effective organ of nationalist opposition to reform. The May issue was the last on which Mussalitin worked, and shortly afterwards he became the chief editor at *Sovetskii Pisatel'*, the publishing house of the more liberal USSR Writers' Union<sup>140</sup>.

## Conclusions

The 'cultural offensive' engineered by Yakovlev made the reforming intentions of Gorbachev clearer. It opened a period crucial for the crystallisation of ideological forces in Soviet society over the issue of reform. The unfolding policy in literature and the arts, which saw the appointment of pro-reform personnel within the 'creative unions' and in the editorial offices of selected leading publications, showed the authorities looking, above all, to the liberal and Westernising elements in the intelligentsia for support. In response, these elements gave their enthusiastic backing to Gorbachev. This tended to alienate Russian nationalists, both popular and statist. The antagonism became particularly intense among writers: it was they, with their traditional authority in Russian culture, who were the natural spokespeople for the various competing views.

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<sup>139</sup> 'Obsuzhdenie raboty zhurnala *Nash sovremennik*', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 20, May 15th, 1987, p. 4.

<sup>140</sup> Mussalitin, interview. The appointment of Gennadii Buzmakov, who had headed the department of publitsistika under Seleznev (from January 1981 until December 1982), to replace Bragin as head of that department (overseen by Mussalitin) in May 1987 probably indicated a decline in Mussalitin's influence.



The 'cultural offensive' revealed orthodox Marxism-Leninism as a largely uncompetitive ideological force on the intellectual market of ideas opened up by glasnost'. In reaction to this, conservative apparatchiki, led by Ligachev, began a process of progressively co-opting Russian nationalist ideology, in both its popular and statist variants, to co-ordinate opposition to reform. This manipulation of Russian nationalism by conservative political elites endowed it with a powerful public image of hostility to reform. The polarisation among intellectuals was thus intensified by the manipulation of politicians.

Gorbachev himself persistently sought to break down this polarisation and bring nationalists 'on side' by promoting policies of which they approved. In this, he seems to have held a somewhat different position from that of Yakovlev, who, it would seem, was in general more hostile to Russian nationalism than Gorbachev.

The General Secretary's intention seems to have been to prevent his opponents from 'playing the Russian card' by himself continuing to patronise Russian nationalists (including *Nash sovremennik*). Although Ligachev increasingly, and publicly, courted the nationalists of the RSFSR Writers' Union, it was Gorbachev who took some crucial decisions in their favour, notably, and apparently against Yakovlev's wishes, to allow Vikulov to keep his post as chief editor at *Nash sovremennik*.

Gorbachev's chief problem, and Ligachev's advantage, in this competition for the loyalty of the nationalists was what Walter Laqueur has described as the 'violent reaction'

of some, in my terms popular, nationalists, exemplified by Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*, to the beginnings of reform<sup>141</sup>.

Laqueur has suggested that Belov's novel was 'part of a wider phenomenon: the gradual move to the right, even the extreme right, of a whole group of writers'<sup>142</sup>. Laqueur has argued, emphasising the role of emotion in the nationalist temperament<sup>143</sup>, that there is a 'basic difference' between nationalist moderates, 'who are willing to engage in introspection, self-criticism, and, where called for, penitence', and the extreme right, who 'seek the cause of Russian's misfortunes entirely in the machinations and intrigues of foreign and domestic enemies'<sup>144</sup>. Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*, in such an account, places the author squarely in the camp of the extremists, who seek the cause of Russia's ills in foreign or domestic enemies. Belov's novel, as the work of a leading and prestigious popular nationalist, also gives grounds to believe that such 'extremism' was relatively widely spread among Russian nationalists.

Popular nationalists, such as Belov, perceived Yakovlev, and the cultural forces he was unleashing, as oriented to the West and as representing a serious threat to Russian national values. The 'cultural offensive', therefore, may have brought to the surface what Greenfeld has identified as *ressentiment*<sup>145</sup>. To the extent to which

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<sup>141</sup>Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 90.

<sup>142</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>143</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 282.

<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.*, p. xv.

<sup>145</sup>Greenfeld, *loc. cit.*, p. 15.



this *ressentiment* was a pervasive feature of the Russian nationalist psyche, the beginning of Gorbachev's reforms - Westernisation combined with increasing *glasnost* - provided the conditions to bring it out into the open.

Geoffrey Hosking's telling phrase, that Gorbachev's reforms provoked a 'return of the repressed'<sup>146</sup>, is also apt. *Glasnost* allowed the open expression of a deep negative reaction, which might be called a 'revulsion', on the part of some popular nationalists to Westernisation. I would suggest that this reaction was all the stronger since a comparable 'revulsion' to Sovietisation had, in large measure, been forcibly suppressed, and to a degree psychologically repressed, in the Soviet period. The ills and the circumstances of the Communist past, therefore, conditioned the reaction of these nationalists to the first Westernising reforms which Gorbachev introduced.

A further reason for the strength of the reaction of some popular nationalists to the reforms, I would argue, relates to the very nature of the popular nationalist tendency. As I have argued, an inherent aspiration of this tendency is for an ethnic statehood, as a necessary means to protect the *ethnie*. In Soviet conditions, this aspiration had been suppressed. Yet without a state, and without a developed aspiration for a state, which open political struggle for the national ideal engenders and strengthens, the popular nationalist must perceive the ethnic group as peculiarly defenceless. This perception of

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<sup>146</sup>Hosking, *The Awakening of the Soviet Union*, Chapter Three.



the 'defenceless nation', I would suggest, in part contributed to the production of a work such as Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*.

A certain caveat needs to be made. Despite the political polarisation at this stage of Gorbachev's reforms, and no doubt in good measure as a result of Gorbachev's policies towards the nationalists, the ideological situation seems to have preserved a degree of fluidity. While it was clear Gorbachev was set upon reform, just what these 'reforms' actually were, or where the 'reform process' would lead, were less certain. This gave some hope to nationalists of various types.

The ideological fluidity of the situation was reflected in *Nash sovremennik*. At this period, the journal was not on one side of the political divide, but rather the polarisation evident in society also ran within the journal. Disparate ideological tendencies were reflected in the contrasting views of two very different deputy chief editors, Mussalitin and Svininnikov. It can be surmised that this was in part a result of the influence of Gorbachev, Yakovlev and their officials, who kept Mussalitin in place longer than Vikulov or officials in the RSFSR Writers' Union would have wished. It was probably also the influence of Yakovlev which kept statist nationalist writing generally out of the journal at this time, despite *glasnost*'.

As the authorities strove to attract popular nationalists to support reform, the journal's statist nationalists, in reaction, seem to have encouraged *negative*

interpretations of ethnic 'boundary mechanisms', with a view to strengthening, by this means, solidarities between the two chief nationalist tendencies. The most influential form which this took was anti-Semitism, which, it became clear, could prove a valuable weapon in the hands of conservatives in building alliances against the Westernising challenge of reform<sup>147</sup>.

If all these processes were at this stage still nascent, they were nonetheless identifiable. As ideological differences deepened and solidified, Russian nationalist writers increasingly became spokespeople for an opposition to reform. *Nash sovremennik* became the chief 'intellectual' organ of this opposition.

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<sup>147</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80.

## 6. Ligachev and the Conservative Counter-Offensive

(Editorial team: chief editor Vikulov, deputy chief editors Svininnikov & Kazintsev.

Journal issues: June 1987 - September 1989)

### Part One: Thematic Analysis

Conservative political elites in this period sought, unsuccessfully, to haul back Gorbachev's reforms. The ideological battles took place ever less on the terrain of Marxism-Leninism, and increasingly were couched in terms of a debate between Westernising and Russian nationalist trends.

In *Nash sovremennik*, 'White' and 'Red' statist nationalists sought common ground, both with each other and with non-nationalist conservatives, in opposition to reform. At the same time, a virtual explosion of writing on 'the Other', preponderantly as anti-Semitism, took place. In discussions of the legitimacy of the state, for the first time, the RSFSR began to assume the role of an



alternative object for political loyalties. This held the potential of developing into a popular nationalist view of statehood (the 'ethnic' state). Yet statist Russian nationalists could not give such a development their support, except for short-term, tactical considerations.

### Imagining the Nation

1) A Rural Community Popular nationalist writing on the rural Russian nation remained at a low ebb. A short story by Belov depicted a village community ravaged by alcohol and bearing the tragic impact of the war in Afghanistan<sup>1</sup>. Rasputin described the Russian communities of the north and east of the country, stressing their traditions and ecological problems (especially the efforts to save Lake Baikal from factory pollution)<sup>2</sup>. Astaf'ev wrote in praise of traditional rural life and the natural beauty of the Russian north-west, lamenting the destruction of the Russian peasantry<sup>3</sup>. He also spoke out against the construction of the Turukhansk hydroelectric power station on the Nizhnyaya Tunguska river in Siberia<sup>4</sup>. Ivan Vasil'ev's novel *Cleansing. Renewal. Overcoming*, set in the non-black-earth zone of north-west Russia, was a plea for agricultural production to be freed from party tutelage<sup>5</sup>. Elsewhere, Vasil'ev argued that rural reform must be focused on individuals and their needs rather than on the

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<sup>1</sup>V. Belov, 'Derevenskoe utro', NS, No. 10, 1988, pp. 19-25.

<sup>2</sup>V. Rasputin: 'Russkoe ust'e', NS, No. 5, 1988, pp. 3-40; 'Sibir', Sibir'...', NS, No. 8, 1988, pp. 3-54; 'Baikal', NS, No. 7, 1989, pp. 12-44. These were extracts from: V. Rasputin, *Sibir', Sibir'*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1988.

<sup>3</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Zatesi', NS, No. 10, 1987, pp. 49-60.

<sup>4</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Vечно zhivi, rechka Vivi', NS, No. 5, 1989, pp. 3-24.

<sup>5</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Ochishchenie. Obnovlenie. Preodolenie', NS, No. 8, pp. 3-75; No. 10, pp. 3-45; No. 12, pp. 3-41, 1987.

production process'. Fatei Shipunov, in the first part of his study of the Russian peasantry, *The Great Hush-Up*, examined the history of collectivisation in a village in the Altai region'. Collectivisation, he argued, had destroyed the 'moral personality of the peasantry'<sup>8</sup>.

2) A Religious Community Mikhail Antonov was now the journal's leading articulator of religious ideas. In *People Who Do Not Exist*, he argued that socialism in Russia had been profoundly penetrated by Christian thinking'. In *There Is a Way Out!*, he contended that only the Orthodox church, the vital guardian of moral and spiritual values, could enable the Russian intelligentsia to regain its sense of responsibility and patriotism<sup>10</sup>. '[T]he Church', he wrote, 'in the shape of many of its rank-and-file workers will be able to give the people precisely that word, which is now necessary for the salvation of our common earthly Fatherland'<sup>11</sup>. From among the lower orders of the church, he predicted, would emerge the future leaders of the country, morally pure people 'such as the world has not seen, perhaps, since the times of the Apostles'<sup>12</sup>. Antonov's argument also had messianic tones. 'Russia's calling', he wrote, 'is again to become the spiritual leader of the world'<sup>13</sup>.

3) A Cultural Community Writing defining the Russian nation as a cultural community gained in prominence. Deputy

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<sup>8</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Obretem golos - stanem grazhdanami', *NS*, No. 6, 1987, pp. 110-140.

<sup>9</sup>F. Shipunov, 'Velikaya Zamyatnya', *NS*, No. 9, 1989, pp. 3-28.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup>M. Antonov, 'Nesushchestvuyushchie lyudi', *NS*, No. 2, 1989, pp. 125-150.

<sup>12</sup>M. Antonov, 'Vykhod est'!', *NS*, No. 8, pp. 71-110; No. 9, pp. 139-162, 1989.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 8, p. 110.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 9, p. 153.

chief editor Kazintsev restated his view that the primary criterion for judging a work of literature was its attitude towards the 'people'<sup>14</sup>, going so far as to claim that criticism of the 'national organism' was inadmissible<sup>15</sup>.

Walter Laqueur has commented of such views:

[T]here is something strange, even pathological, in the extreme sensitiveness shown by those seeing a mortal sin in all and any criticism of the nation and putting all the blame for what went wrong in Russia on foreigners.<sup>16</sup>

Kazintsev further argued that Russians were potentially powerful (he identified them as a nation of one hundred and fifty million people), but lacked national consciousness because adherents of the 'Russian Idea' were in a minority<sup>17</sup>. Kazintsev identified this 'Russian Idea' in a literary and philosophical tradition, which included Nikolai Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov, Georgii Fedotov, Semen Frank, Vasilii Rozanov, Lev Shestov and Vladimir Solov'ev<sup>18</sup>. He argued that the proponents of the 'Russian Idea' had always been in opposition to the Communist regime.

The journal also claimed, variously, Aleksandr Kuprin, Platonov, Rubtsov and Aleksandr Yashin as belonging to this Russian tradition<sup>19</sup>. Astaf'ev evoked the memory of the little-known nineteenth-century Russian nationalist author, Sergei Maksimov (1831-1901)<sup>20</sup>. The journal's critics argued

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<sup>14</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Litsom k istorii: prodolzhateli ili potrebiteli', *NS*, No. 11, 1987, pp. 166-175.

<sup>15</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Ochishchenie ili zloslovie?', *NS*, No. 2, 1988, pp. 186-189.

<sup>16</sup>Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 101.

<sup>17</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Maskony', *NS*, No. 7, 1989, pp. 142-158.

<sup>18</sup>Kazintsev, 'Novaya mifologiya'.

<sup>19</sup>See A. Kuprin, 'Izvozchik Petr', *NS*, No. 11, 1988, pp. 106-108; V. Vasil'ev, 'Natsional'naya tragediya: utopiya i real'nost'. Roman Andreyeva Platonova "Chevengur" v kontekste ego vremeni', *NS*, No. 3, 1989, pp. 172-182 (Platonov's *Chevengur* had recently been published in the liberal *Druzhba narodov*, see A. Platonov, 'Chevengur', *Druzhba narodov*, No. 3, 1988, pp. 96-149); 'Pis'ma Nikolaya Rubtsova k Aleksandru Yashinu', *NS*, No. 7, 1988, pp. 178-186.

<sup>20</sup>V. Astaf'ev, 'Radetel' slova narodnogo', *NS*, No. 8, 1987, pp. 168-175 (an extract was published in the weekly press, see V. Astaf'ev, 'Radetel' slova narodnogo', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, 19th June, 1987, pp. 18-19).



that among contemporary writers, embodying this tradition, were Astaf'ev, Belov, Bondarev and Rasputin<sup>21</sup>. When it became possible to publish Solzhenitsyn, the journal also claimed him as its own<sup>22</sup>.

4) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' Negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms, defining the Russian nation in terms of 'the Other', now became a characteristic feature of the journal. The lead was taken in this by 'White' statist nationalists (Kunyaev, Kozhinov, Shafarevich and Kazintsev).

Jews were the chief object of attack. Kunyaev, in *A Stick with Two Ends*, argued that the chief characteristic of the Russian national character was an 'openness', which enabled Russians to assimilate other ethnic groups, but meant they lacked the necessary instinct for self-preservation<sup>23</sup>. The Jewish national character, in Kunyaev's view, was, on the contrary, self-complacent and closed, which enabled Jews to take advantage of Russians. The Jewish community, Kunyaev argued, was therefore harmful to its Russian host, and should be assimilated<sup>24</sup>. Kunyaev argued that the Jews had played a harmful role in the social upheavals of the 1920s and 1930s (not least in the security services)<sup>25</sup>, a theme he also took up in *It All Begins with Labels*<sup>26</sup>. In this latter article, Kunyaev emphasised the negative influence on Soviet history

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<sup>21</sup>See Kazintsev: 'Novaya mifologiya'; 'Predislovie', NS, No. 8, 1987, pp. 104-5; V. Sorokin, 'Svoi chuzhie', NS, No. 8, 1989, pp. 168-178.

<sup>22</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Pominal'noe slovo o Tvardovskom. Zhit' ne po lzhi!', NS, No. 9, 1989, pp. 159-160.

<sup>23</sup>S. Kunyaev, 'Palka o dvukh kotsakh', No. 6, 1989, p. 157.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 158-9.

<sup>26</sup>S. Kunyaev, 'Vse nachinaetsya s yarlykov', NS, No. 9, 1988, pp. 180-189.

of Bukharin and Trotskii, while downplaying the part played by Stalin<sup>27</sup>.

Kozhinov argued that Jews were responsible for numerous specific ill-doings of the Soviet regime<sup>28</sup>. Thus Kaganovich, not Stalin, was the initiator of the reconstruction of Moscow, which destroyed so much of the historic city; and 'the main responsibility' for the famine of 1933 lay with Yakov Yakovlev (formerly Epshtein), chairman of the Kolkhoztsentr and People's Commissar of Agriculture. The poet Valentin Sorokin similarly argued that most of those responsible for the ills experienced by Russians were, and had always been, Jews (who had held leading positions following the revolution, especially in the NKVD, and had influenced Soviet leaders from Stalin to Brezhnev)<sup>29</sup>. Two works of historical fiction, Sergei Alekseev's *The Crime*, on the Civil War, and Vladimir Zazubrin's novella *The Splinter*, on the activities of the Cheka in the 1920s, also suggested Jewish culpability for the disasters of Russian history<sup>30</sup>.

In *Russophobia*, ex-dissident Igor' Shafarevich argued that revolutions, whether English, French or Russian, were primarily the result of the influence of a disaffected minority on the social body, a revolutionary element, or 'Little People' (Malyi narod)<sup>31</sup>. According to Shafarevich, in Russia the core of the 'Little People' lay in the Jewish

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<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 180-83.

<sup>28</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Pravda i istina', *NS*, No. 4, 1988, pp. 160-175.

<sup>29</sup>Sorokin, 'Svoi chuzhie'.

<sup>30</sup>S. Alekseev, 'Kramola', *NS*, No. 1, pp. 39-92; No. 2, pp. 63-122; No. 3, pp. 37-106; No. 4, pp. 24-111, 1989; V. Zazubrin, 'Shchepka', *NS*, No. 9, 1989, pp. 31-68. On the latter, see S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', *NS*, No. 11, 1996, p. 25.

<sup>31</sup>I. Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya', *NS*, No. 6, 1989, pp. 167-192. For a Western review, see J. Klier, 'Russophobia', *London Review of Books*, April 19, 1990, p. 6.

ethnic group, which nursed a hatred of the Russian majority (the Bol'shoi narod) and was the originating force behind rusofobiya. Shafarevich claimed that Jews continued to thrust their concerns to the forefront of the world's attention, while those of the Russians were forgotten:

Jewish national emotions put our country, and the whole world, into a fever, they influence arms control negotiations, trade and the international links of scientists, they call forth demonstrations and sit-down strikes and surface in almost every conversation...But the very existence of a 'Russian question', evidently, is not recognised at all.<sup>32</sup>

Writers defended the Pamyat' organisation. Kunyaev complained that the authorities permitted anti-Russian movements to enjoy the benefits of 'pluralism', whereas Pamyat' was threatened by the KGB<sup>33</sup>. Kozhinov agreed that not everything about Pamyat' was good, but noted, 'At the beginning of the movement of any current, there is always foam on the surface'<sup>34</sup>. Rasputin also defended Pamyat'<sup>35</sup> and, on another occasion, denied that Russian chauvinism existed, lamenting the lack of gratitude to Russians on the part of non-Russians<sup>36</sup>.

Kuz'min denied the existence of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, but accused the Central Committee paper *Sovetskaya kul'tura* of being pro-Jewish and anti-Russian<sup>37</sup>. Both he and Kunyaev made reference to *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*<sup>38</sup>. Kunyaev described *The Protocols* as 'the

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<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>33</sup>Kunyaev, 'Palka o dvukh kotsakh', pp. 158-159.

<sup>34</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'My menyaemsya?', *NS*, No. 10, 1987, p. 171. See J. Wishnevsky, 'The Origins of Pamyat'', *Survey*, Vol. 30, No. 3, October 1988, p. 90.

<sup>35</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Zhertvovat' soboyu dlya pravdy', *NS*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 169-176.

<sup>36</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Vystuplenie na S'ezde narodnykh deputatov SSSR', *NS*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 133-136.

<sup>37</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'Sport' po sushchestvu', *NS*, No. 3, 1989, pp. 190-192. See also A Kuz'min: 'Chto pishem i chto v ume?', *NS*, No 7, 1988, pp 191-192; 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?'

<sup>38</sup>Kunyaev, *op. cit.*; Kuz'min: 'Sport' po sushchestvu', p. 192.



fruit of the work of an anti-human mind and almost supernatural, truly satanic, will'<sup>39</sup>. They were, he argued, 'iron instructions' and recommendations for the seizure of power, which Lenin had studied<sup>40</sup>. Both authors defended the Belorussian anti-Semite Begun<sup>41</sup>. Mark Lyubomudrov rejected the accusations of theatre director Tovstonogov that he held views of 'an openly Great-Power and chauvinistic character'; he accused a leading Jewish liberal (Vladimir Arro) of wanting 'to set those who have Russian national roots against those who do not have them'; and protested that a small, intolerant group was trying to seize control of theatrical bodies and exclude their opponents<sup>42</sup>. Fedor Uglov, writing in support of prohibition, hinted at the existence of enemies which *Nash sovremennik's* anti-Semitic readers would understand to mean the Jews:

The degradation of the people is too high a price for the use of alcohol, too great a concession to our enemies who dream of our destruction with the help of the narcotic poison.<sup>43</sup>

Another enemy was Freemasonry. Pikul', in an interview, argued that his 1979 novel, *At the Final Boundary*, had exposed the 'devil's Sabbath on Russian land' and the 'secret forces' which surrounded the Tsar. It was an illusion to think, he added, that 'Russia has no enemies' today, since chief among these were the Freemasons,

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<sup>39</sup>Kunyaev, op. cit., pp. 160-61.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*; A. Kuz'min, 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?', *NS*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 191-2.

<sup>42</sup>M. Lyubomudrov, '...Kak slovo nashe otzovetsya (Otvety opponentam)', *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 167-175.

<sup>43</sup>F. Uglov, "'Glyadya pravde v glaza'", *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 150-157. See Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroyka', p. 175.

striving to achieve world domination<sup>44</sup>. Kuz'min also believed in the danger posed by Freemasonry<sup>45</sup>.

For Kazintsev 'the Other' included the liberals and dissidents who were portrayed as leaders in the struggle against Communism by the pro-reform media, which had developed what Kazintsev called a 'New Mythology'<sup>46</sup>. These dissidents, Kazintsev claimed, were isolated from the Russian people, and under Jewish and Western influence. They consisted *both* of 'court dissidents' (such as Evgenii Evtushenko, Mikhail Shatrov or Yuri Lyubimov), *and* those who left the country (with the single exception of Solzhenitsyn, who was deported) in the primarily Jewish 'Third Wave'. The so-called 'pluralist' press, he argued, under the same Jewish and foreign influence, was hostile to the Russian nation, permeated with *rusofobiya*, and intolerant of patriotic publications such as *Nash sovremennik*<sup>47</sup>. Favourite targets of Kazintsev and other contributors were Granin's novel *The Bison*, Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat*, in general works by writers of probable Jewish origin, and Korotich's journal *Ogonek*<sup>48</sup>. Apollon Kuz'min attacked the reformist Marxism-Leninism promoted by such newspapers as *Sovetskaya kul'tura*

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<sup>44</sup>'Chest' sobstvennogo imeni. Dialog pisatelya Valentina Pikulya i kritika Sergeya Zhuravleva', *NS*, No. 2, 1989, pp. 184-192.

<sup>45</sup>See, for example, Kuz'min: 'Chto pishem i chto v ume?'

<sup>46</sup>Kazintsev, 'Novaya mifologiya'. Solzhenitsyn, whom Kazintsev generally praises, is accused of being 'utopian' since his plans could not be realised without the help of those social forces to which he is so hostile.

<sup>47</sup>Kazintsev, 'Maskony'. The title, which may involve a play on the word 'Masons' [Masonry], is from a novel by Stanislaw Lem in which additives to the water (called 'maskony') enable the rulers to control the masses.

<sup>48</sup>See, for example, N. Fed', 'O chem spor?', *NS*, No. 6, 1988, pp. 163-184; D. Il'in, 'Neprikasaemaya literatura', *NS*, No. 6, 1989, pp. 140-149 (book review: D. Granin, 'Zubr', *Novyi mir*, No. 1, pp. 19-95; No. 2, pp. 7-92, 1987); A. Ivanov (interview by V Svininnikov), 'Chernyi khleb iskusstva', *NS*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 171-179; Kuz'min, 'Chto pishem i chto v ume?', p. 192. On *Ogonek*, see M. Yur'ev, 'Vnuki Shvondera', *NS*, No. 5, 1989, p. 191; *NS*, No. 7, 1989, pp. 189-190.



(notably under its rubric 'We Are Born of October') and *Komsomol'skaya pravda*<sup>49</sup>.

The West, and particularly Western mass culture (notably rock music), was a frequent object of attack<sup>50</sup>. Anatolii Ivanov, chief editor of *Molodaya gvardiya*, in an interview published in *Nash sovremennik*, also attacked rock music, and capped his comments with praise of Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead* as a warning of the dangers of foreign influence<sup>51</sup>. Nikolai Fed', a critic reportedly close to Bondarev<sup>52</sup>, condemned Gorbachev's 'New Thinking' as an attempt to impose on the Russian people 'an alien understanding of the world'<sup>53</sup>.

### Legitimising the State

In this period, 'White' statist nationalists put forward particular arguments which narrowed their differences with their 'Red' counterparts. More generally, they developed arguments against rapid social change, which in effect tended to legitimise the status quo. 'Red' contributions were reduced in number. A new development was the prominence of writing on the RSFSR which, if developed, held promise of becoming a popular nationalist view of Russian statehood.

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<sup>49</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'Meli v eksterritorial'nom potoke', *NS*, No. 9, 1987, pp. 173-179.

<sup>50</sup>On rock music, see A. Chirkin, 'Podrostok, sem'ya i rok-muzyka', *NS*, No. 10, 1988, pp. 141-149; A. Chirkin, 'Rok vavilon i dykhanie vremeni', *NS*, No. 6, 1989, pp. 121-129; V. Chistyakov & I. Sanachev, 'Troyanskii kon'', *NS*, No. 10, pp. 126-141; M. Dunaev, 'Rokovaya muzyka', *NS*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 157-168; No. 2, pp. 163-171, 1988; B. Gun'ko, 'Dve estetiki', *NS*, No. 10, 1988, pp. 121-125; Iz nashei pochty ('Pis'mo v redaktsiyu'), *NS*, No. 9, 1989, p. 180; 'Otkliki chitatelei na publikatsii zhurnala o rok-muzyke i anketu', *NS*, No. 6, 1989, pp. 129-134; M. Pinaev, 'Zdravstvui, radostnaya Rus'!', *NS*, No. 10, 1988, pp. 150-156.

<sup>51</sup>Ivanov, 'Chernyi khleb iskusstva'.

<sup>52</sup>Mussalitin, interview.

<sup>53</sup>N. Fed', 'Poslanie drugu, ili Pis'ma o literature', *NS*, No. 4, pp. 3-20; No. 5, pp. 169-185.



1) A 'White' Legitimisation of the State In polemics with liberal opponents over Stalinism, Kozhinov, in *Truth Subjective and Objective*, developed a viewpoint which, in essence, promoted an alliance between 'White' and 'Red' statist nationalist positions<sup>54</sup>. His article 'shelved' the question of the legitimacy of the October revolution, while down-grading the tragedies of the Stalinist years, highlighting the disasters of the 1920s, and identifying the Jews as scapegoats for Soviet ills. Kunyaev advanced a similar position<sup>55</sup>. Soloukhin also effectively downplayed the evils of the Stalin era when he refused to support a project, by the human rights organisation, Memorial, to build a monument to Stalin's victims<sup>56</sup>. However, Soloukhin, as his explanation made clear, was too earnest an opponent of Communist ills to be amenable company for either 'Red' statist nationalists or neo-Stalinists:

I refused to sign the *Memorial* letter then, not because I consider the victims of the Stalinist repressions unworthy of commemoration, but because, having commemorated them, at the same time we throw into the shadows of forgetfulness all the other victims, and they are hundreds and thousands of times more numerous and bloody.<sup>57</sup>

A series of authors put forward conservative arguments against revolutionary change. In *The Greatest Danger*, Kozhinov argued that Stalinism had been the result of the rapid, revolutionary, and therefore destructive, change which occurred in the 1920s<sup>58</sup>. He identified the chief exponent of this change (*lomka*, or break with the past) not

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<sup>54</sup>Kozhinov, 'Pravda i istina'.

<sup>55</sup>Kunyaev, 'Vse nachinaetsya s yarlykov'.

<sup>56</sup>V. Soloukhin, 'Pochemu ya ne podpisalsya pod tem pis'mom' *NS*, No. 12, 1988, pp 186-189.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>58</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Samaya bol'shaya opasnost'', *NS*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 147-179.

Stalin, but the newly-fashionable figure of Bukharin<sup>59</sup>.

Kozhinov developed his position into an argument against revolutionary social change per se - identifying as the advocates of such change pro-Gorbachev publicists, such as Nikolai Shmelev and Vitalii Korotich<sup>60</sup>. He argued that an alternative to the 'lomka' had been put forward by *Molodaya gvardiya* in the 1960s. This was 'the idea of the rebirth of the native environment, of the thousand-year history, of the natural, folk [narodnogo] <sup>way</sup> of life, of spiritual values'<sup>61</sup>.

The line taken by Shafarevich in *Russophobia*, that revolutions were primarily the result of the influence of a disaffected Jewish minority (*Malyi narod*), was also an argument against Gorbachev's reformism<sup>62</sup>. In similar vein, Vladimir Vasil'ev, in his analysis of Platonov's novel *Chevengur*<sup>63</sup>, argued that an attempt by society to build itself anew by discarding old traditions would end in tragedy, and that Soviet communism had been doomed precisely because it had projected itself as a society without a past.

2) A 'Red' Legitimation of the State 'Red' statist nationalist views were less sophisticated. In a series of articles, Kuz'min continued to insist on the compatibility of socialism and patriotism, and <sup>to</sup> deplore the 'conjunction of rusofobiya with anti-Sovietism'<sup>64</sup>. Anatolii Ivanov warned

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<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 151-3.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 173-5.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>62</sup>Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya'.

<sup>63</sup>Vasil'ev, 'Natsional'naya tragediya: utopiya i real'nost'.

<sup>64</sup>A. Kuz'min, 'K kakomu khramu ishchem my dorogu?', *NS*, No. 3, 1988, pp. 154-164 (the title is a reference to Abuladze's film, *Pokayanie*). See also Kuz'min: 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?'; 'Meli v eksterritorial'nom potoke'.

the party leadership not to dismantle mechanisms of control, not to rehabilitate state and party activists who had committed crimes, and argued that 'social classes which have been overthrown always try to get revenge'<sup>65</sup>. Tat'yana Glushkova justified the status quo by insisting that there would be a real danger of a future Stalinist-type repression of nationalist thought, a 'liberal terror', if the Communists' opponents - the democrats - came to power<sup>66</sup>.

3) A 'Red' Statist Reformism Mikhail Antonov put forward a revision of 'Red' views, which attempted to fuse pre-Revolutionary secular and, in particular, religious traditions with Communist ideology. In *People Who Do Not Exist*, he argued the country needed a 'national idea', which in his view perestroika lacked<sup>67</sup>. The basis for this Idea, he argued, should be socialism, or the desire for social justice, which he called 'the eternal dream of our people'. In practical terms, this would combine a strong, centralised state with a revival of the traditional Russian village communes and arteli. The required synthesis of socialism with the traditions of Russian thought would add to the canonical texts of Marxism-Leninism the works of Russian thinkers from Ilarion and Vladimir Monomakh, through Tolstoi, Dostoevskii, Sergei Bulgakov and Dmitrii Mendeleev to Abramov and Rasputin.

Antonov's economic ideas took a decisive turn towards justifying the status quo and opposing reform. He distinguished between *kuptsy* (merchants) and *kavaleristy*

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<sup>65</sup>Ivanov, 'Chernyi khleb iskusstva'.

<sup>66</sup>T. Glushkova, 'O "russkosti", o schast'e, o svobode', NS, No. 7, 1989, p. 181.

<sup>67</sup>Antonov, 'Nesushchestvuyushchie lyudi'.



(cavaliers). In his view, the kuptsy (Nikolai Shmelev, Larissa Piyasheva, Abel Aganbegyan, Leonid Abalkin and Oleg Bogomolov) were technocrats and economists, who wanted to see an Americanisation of the USSR and were the ideological successors of Bukharin and his supporters in the twenties. The kuptsy, moreover, were a cosmopolitan 'comprador bourgeoisie' which had its origins in the black market of the Brezhnev period and were, in his view, intent on transforming the USSR into a colony of transnational corporations<sup>68</sup>. The black market was now a 'second power' behind the authorities, and Antonov foresaw the seizure of power by the comprador bourgeoisie, in the name of 'democracy', as 'the most undesirable, though highly probable, outcome of perestroika'<sup>69</sup>.

The kavaleristy were those Soviet bureaucrats and bosses whose self-interest had been best served during the era of stagnation<sup>70</sup>. For all their faults, they had, Antonov believed, demonstrated, by their industrial achievements in the Stalinist era, that they had an effective *social idea*. Possession of 'a more or less clear social ideal' had given Stalin and Khrushchev a 'right to power' (in Stalin's case, 'socialism in one country'; in Khrushchev's, 'building communism in a generation')<sup>71</sup>. The kavaleristy, Antonov claimed, had inherited the ideals of Stalin and Khrushchev and therefore, in the contemporary USSR, embodied the principle of 'gosudarstvennost'<sup>72</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup>Antonov, 'Vykhod est'!. Antonov attributes the term 'comprador' to Anatolii Salutskii (*ibid.*, No. 8, 1989, p. 92).

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 9, 1989, p. 155.

<sup>70</sup>Antonov, 'Nesushchestvuyushchie lyudi'.

<sup>71</sup>Antonov, 'Vykhod est'!.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*

Ivan Sinitsyn's articles again showed that, like Antonov, he was attracted to the 1930s as a model<sup>73</sup>. However, his enthusiasm for perestroika lacked nationalist overtones. He called for 'deep, revolutionary changes in school life on the basis of the Marxist-Leninist principles of uniting study, labour and physical training' (in other words, Makarenko's educational doctrines). Unusually for a contributor to *Nash sovremennik*, therefore, Sinitsyn depicted himself as one of the 'enthusiasts for perestroika' (and one who was confronted, at a recent teachers' congress, by indifferent officials who consistently blocked his ideas<sup>74</sup>).

4) A State Defined by 'the Other' The West was widely employed by statist nationalists as an 'anti-model' for the Russian/Soviet state. In *Russophobia*, Shafarevich argued that Western democracy was alien and unsuitable for Russia, and its imposition would result in a bloody period of transition<sup>75</sup>. Multi-party systems, he alleged, far from being a model to be imitated, were 'a departing social form'. Kuz'min blamed the troubles in the non-Russian republics on a malign American influence<sup>76</sup>.

Viktor Ivanov's novel *Judgement Day* depicted the USA as the chief enemy of the Soviet state, while bringing into play other traditional enemies, such as the Whites, the Jews and the Masons (as well as the CIA). The novel told the tale of the crisis of conscience of the son of a Russian émigré, recruited to return to the USSR as a spy by

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<sup>73</sup>I. Sinitsyn, 'Latat' ili perestraivat'?', *NS*, No. 6, 1987, pp. 141-168.

<sup>74</sup>I. Sinitsyn, 'Ne vidya dramu?...', *NS*, No. 7 1989, pp. 123-131.

<sup>75</sup>Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya'.

<sup>76</sup>Kuz'min, 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?'.



a White Masonic organisation with roots in Judaism and links with American intelligence<sup>77</sup>. The novel suggested that perestroika was an externally inspired revolution.

5) The RSFSR - A Popular Nationalist State? Contributors to the journal discussed relations between the RSFSR and other Soviet republics with a new openness. The implication of these discussions was that, if Russians were not benefiting as they should from the USSR, then the RSFSR could provide an alternative object of political loyalty.

Kazintsev argued that Russians were subject to discrimination, not only in the non-Russian republics, but also in their own republic<sup>78</sup>. He cited the various institutions which the RSFSR lacked in comparison with the non-Russian republics (for example, a republican Communist Party, Academy of Science, various state committees and a television channel). Galina Litvinova similarly argued that the RSFSR and the Russian people occupied a subordinate position relative to other republics and peoples within the USSR<sup>79</sup>. Both Belov and Rasputin, in speeches at the Congress of People's Deputies, subsequently published in *Nash sovremennik*, denounced the 'unequal position' of the RSFSR within the Union. Belov stressed the lack of RSFSR institutions, the demographic and financial weakness of the Russian republic, and hinted darkly at power lying in

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<sup>77</sup>V. Ivanov, 'Sudnyi den'', *NS*, No. 4, pp. 14-78; No. 5, pp. 45-109; No. 6, pp. 27-81, 1988.

<sup>78</sup>Kazintsev, 'Maskony'.

<sup>79</sup>G. Litvinova, 'Starshii ili ravnyi' (under the rubric 'K Plenumu TsK KPSS po natsional'nomu voprosu'), *NS*, No. 6, 1989, pp. 10-20.



'hidden hands'<sup>80</sup>. Rasputin rhetorically asked whether Russia might not be better off out of the Union<sup>81</sup>.

### Conclusions on Themes

For the first time in the period of this study, the statist Russian nationalist tendency predominated in *Nash sovremennik*. In a series of large-scale articles on the theme of state legitimacy, 'White' statist nationalists moved to reduce the differences between 'White' and 'Red' positions. This 'reconciliation' took place primarily over three issues: a partial rehabilitation of Stalin; the use of Jews as scapegoats for Russian ills; and in the general form of arguments against radical social change.

Writing on 'the Other', and in particular the 'Jewish question', therefore, was an important aspect of this 'Red'-'White' ideological reconciliation. As hitherto (with the notable exception of Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*), this remained largely the domain of statist nationalists.

The debate over the status and role of the RSFSR raised the prospect of the development of a popular nationalist ethnic Russian state. Yet statist nationalists, 'White' and 'Red', could not tolerate an 'RSFSR state'. Just at the time, therefore, that 'White' and 'Red' currents were drawing closer, the issue of the political status of the RSFSR arose, potentially capable of disrupting the linkage between *statist* and *popular* nationalist tendencies. In part, it might be hypothesised, the statist nationalist

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<sup>80</sup>V. Belov, 'Vystuplenie na S'ezde narodnykh deputatov SSSR', *NS*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 136-138.

<sup>81</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Vystuplenie na S'ezde narodnykh deputatov SSSR', *NS*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 133-136.

stress on 'the Other' - in particular anti-Semitism - was intended to generate a sufficient sense of shared threat to bind popular nationalists closer to them, in the face of this new development in the debate on statehood.

## Part Two: Political Analysis

### Deputy Chief Editors Svininnikov & Kazintsev

Aleksandr Kazintsev (b. 1953) was the first non-Communist-party deputy chief editor to be appointed in the history of the journal (with effect from the June 1987 issue). His selection showed the new freedom enjoyed by Vikulov and the RSFSR Writers' Union. It also reflected the processes of radicalisation and coalition-building proceeding within the nationalist camp. Kazintsev was an associate of Kozhinov and other 'White' statist nationalist radicals. He was appointed to work alongside the 'Red' Svininnikov.

#### 1) Nash sovremennik on the Defensive: June 1987 - March 1988

At the June 1987 party plenum, Yakovlev, the chief opponent of the Russian nationalists, was promoted to full membership of the Politburo. This elevation of the 'junior' ideological secretary simultaneously challenged Ligachev, conservative opponents of reform, and the Russian nationalists.

Immediately after the June plenum, Yakovlev seemed to include popular nationalist tendencies in a wide-ranging condemnation of 'unhealthy mutual [national] relations,

nationalism and chauvinism, Zionism and anti-Semitism' and 'religious prejudices', while insisting that there should be no 'waxing lyrical about what is reactionary in the history and culture of the past'<sup>82</sup>. At the long-awaited plenum of the USSR Writers' Union on nationalities questions, First Secretary Karpov, no doubt at Yakovlev's behest, condemned nationalism in his official report<sup>83</sup>. Yakovlev, meanwhile, continued to press home the need for glasnost'<sup>84</sup>. An October *Kommunist* editorial, attributed to Yakovlev, linked contemporary glasnost' with earlier party traditions of ideological tolerance embodied in the 1925 decree on literature<sup>85</sup>. One commentator has called this editorial 'the most liberal and enlightened statement of party policy on cultural affairs' since that earlier decree<sup>86</sup>.

Yakovlev built popular support for reform by overseeing the return of much of the Russian twentieth-century literary heritage in the pro-reform monthlies *Novyi mir*, *Oktyabr'*, *Druzhba narodov* and *Znamya*<sup>87</sup>. The results of this could be seen in the extraordinary increases in the print-runs of the reformist journals<sup>88</sup>. *Nash sovremennik*, despite

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<sup>82</sup>A. Yakovlev, 'Perestroika i npravstvennost'', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 87, June 21st, 1987, p. 2.

<sup>83</sup>V. Karpov, 'Sovershenstvovanie natsional'nykh otnoshenii, perestroika i zadachi sovetskoi literatury', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 10, March 9th, 1988, pp. 2-3.

<sup>84</sup>A. Yakovlev: 'Rabotat', myslit', otvechat', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 145, December 5th, 1987, p. 2; 'Slagaemye novogo soznaniya', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 7, February 17th, 1988, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup>'Prizvanie sotsialisticheskoi kul'tury', *Kommunist*, No. 15, October, 1987, pp. 3-4.

<sup>86</sup>G. Murrell, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>87</sup>A. Rybakov, 'Deti Arbata', *Druzhba narodov*, No. 4, pp. 3-133; No. 5, pp. 67-163; No. 6, pp. 23-151, 1987; M. Bulgakov, 'Sobach'e serdtse', *Novyi mir*, No. 6, 1987, pp. 73-135; A. Platonov, 'Kotlovan', *Novyi mir*, No. 6, 1987, pp. 50-123; B. Pasternak, 'Doktor Zhivago', *Novyi mir*, No. 1, pp. 10-112; No. 2, pp. 96-157; No. 3, pp. 90-174; No. 4, pp. 48-128, 1988 (see also B. Pasternak, 'Doktor Zhivago' [extract], *Ogonek*, No. 50, 1987, pp. 10-15; D. Likhachev, 'Razmyshleniya nad romanom B. L. Pasternaka 'Doktor Zhivago'', *Novyi mir*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 5-10); V. Grossman, 'Zhizn' i sud'ba', *Oktyabr'*, No. 1, pp. 3-127; No. 2, pp. 27-103; No. 3, pp. 25-150; No. 4, pp. 3-143; No. 9, pp. 205-7, 1988.

<sup>88</sup>*Druzhba narodov* increased by 400%, *Znamya* by 81% and *Novyi mir* by 13.5%.



its vigorous campaign of public meetings, edged its print-run up by only 20,000 (9.1%)<sup>89</sup>.

Ligachev led in defending conservative positions. In response to Yakovlev, in July he twice visited the offices of the leading reformist paper *Sovetskaya kul'tura* to stress his conservative views and his agreement with Russian nationalist writers, in particular Rasputin<sup>90</sup>. Ligachev attacked the liberal publications *Moskovskie novosti* and *Ogonek*, and claimed that 'unprecedented heights were reached in the development of culture, education, literature and the arts' in the 1930s<sup>91</sup>. An important ally of Ligachev, it soon became clear, was KGB Chairman Chebrikov. On the 70th anniversary of the Cheka's foundation (December 20th, 1987), Chebrikov accused the forces of 'imperialism' of seeking to penetrate Soviet society, instil 'bourgeois' democracy and break the control of the party<sup>92</sup>.

Gorbachev invariably intervened in this debate in Yakovlev's favour<sup>93</sup>. Yet the General Secretary at times issued contradictory signals. Attempts to establish a middle ground may be attributed to him. For example, in August, an officially inspired *Pravda* article called on journals and their writers to 'seek the truth together', 'learn to live in conditions of glasnost', and to have a greater tolerance of criticism and more respect for one's

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<sup>89</sup>Moskva's print-run increased by 14%, that of *Molodaya gvardiya* by 9.4%.

<sup>90</sup>E. Ligachev, 'Razdvigat' ramki deyatelnosti, okhvatyvay vse uchastki kul'turnogo stroitel'stva', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 81, July 7th, 1987, p. 2. See Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, pp. 127-8; Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>91</sup>'Perekhodit' k konkretnym delam', *Pravda*, No. 239, August 27th, 1987, p. 2.

<sup>92</sup>Waller, *Secret Empire*, p. 51.

<sup>93</sup>See 'Prakticheskiye delami uglublyat' perestroiku', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 29, July 17th, 1987, pp. 2-5; M. Gorbachev, 'Revolutsionnoi perestroike - ideologiyu obnovleniya', *Kommunist*, No. 4, March, 1988, pp. 5-31.

opponents: 'In a word, we now have more discussions, but we lack the culture to conduct them'<sup>94</sup>.

In his November speech on the anniversary of the Revolution, Gorbachev for the first time criticised Stalin, albeit mildly, for 'real crimes stemming from an abuse of power', saying that 'many thousands of party members and non-party members were subjected to mass repressions'<sup>95</sup>. In the same speech Gorbachev noted that, with regard to Stalin's policy in the countryside, 'flagrant violations of the principles of collectivisation took on a universal character'<sup>96</sup>. The same month, however, he dismissed the leading reformer, El'tsin, as Moscow party boss. At a January 1988 meeting with cultural figures, Gorbachev adopted a conservative line, equivocating on the nature of glasnost'. 'We are for glasnost' in the interests of socialism', he remarked<sup>97</sup>. The General Secretary, moreover, continued to maintain good relations with Bondarev<sup>98</sup>. Indeed, according to Yakovlev, Gorbachev was influenced by the deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union<sup>99</sup>. This was despite the fact that Bondarev had taken a position strongly critical of reform on public platforms and in the press, for example criticising Dmitrii Likhachev for having argued the need for 'repentance' for the tragedies of the Soviet era<sup>100</sup>. Gorbachev also maintained good relations with

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<sup>94</sup>V. Petrov, 'Kul'tura diskussii', *Pravda*, No. 215, August 3rd, 1987, p. 1. See Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>95</sup>'Oktyabr' i perestroika: revolyutsiya prodolzhaetsya. Doklad General'nogo sekretarya TsK KPSS M. S. Gorbacheva', *Pravda*, No. 307, November 3rd, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup>'Demokratizatsiya - sut' perestroiki, sut' sotsializma', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 2, January 15th, 1988, pp. 2-7.

<sup>98</sup>Egorov, interview.

<sup>99</sup>Yakovlev, interview.

<sup>100</sup>Yu. Bondarev, 'Kritika - kategoriya istiny?', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 103, August 27th, 1987, p. 6.

Belov and Rasputin<sup>101</sup>. The fact that *Nash sovremennik* was given Central Television air time in July 1988 indicated a degree of official approval<sup>102</sup>.

### Popular & Statist Nationalism: Two Threads of Policy in *Nash sovremennik*

There were two threads to *Nash sovremennik's* publication policy at this time: a 'moderate', essentially popular nationalist line, and a radical element, statist nationalist in nature.

A pro-reform popular nationalist element was represented by Georgii Semenov's largely autobiographical novel, *The Devil's Wheel*<sup>103</sup>. In contrast to Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*, Semenov's novel portrayed the ills of contemporary urban life as originating, not in a Zionist-Masonic plot, but in human nature<sup>104</sup> and the rejection, in the post-revolutionary period, of private property<sup>105</sup>. Vikulov apparently published this work unwillingly<sup>106</sup>, and, it may be speculated, was pressurised into doing so by Yakovlev's literary functionaries.

*Nash sovremennik* continued to draw on its traditional sources of publitsistika, in particular Ivan Vasil'ev<sup>107</sup>, of whom Vikulov spoke at this time as 'an encyclopaedia, a loud-speaker of perestroika, the embodiment of the people's soul, an expert on the bureaucratic machine that harms and

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<sup>101</sup>Belov, interview; Rasputin, interview.

<sup>102</sup>M. Osipova, 'V Irkutske - *Nash sovremennik*', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 31, August 5th, 1988, p. 5.

<sup>103</sup>G. Semenov, 'Chertovo koleso', *NS*, No. 1, pp. 24-116; No. 2, pp. 21-115, 1988.

<sup>104</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 2, p. 61.

<sup>105</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 1, p. 98.

<sup>106</sup>E. Semenova, interview 31/5/94.

<sup>107</sup>I. Vasil'ev: 'Obretem golos - stanem grazhdanami'; 'Ochishchenie. Obnovlenie. Preodolenie'.



tears the people's soul'<sup>108</sup>. The reformist *Sovetskaya kul'tura* evidently agreed, and published an extract from Vasil'ev's latest novel<sup>109</sup>. The return of Viktor Astaf'ev as a regular contributor of *publitsistika* was also a sign of the journal's ability to attract less radical supporters (from March 1988 Astaf'ev was again a member of the editorial board)<sup>110</sup> - although Astaf'ev's reconciliation with the journal had been a result of the affair over his story on Georgia.

The radical statist nationalist element was evident in the war of words between *Nash sovremennik* and an array of reformist publications, including *Oktyabr'*, *Znamya*, *Novyi mir* and, above all, Korotich's *Ogonek*<sup>111</sup>. This was typified by Vadim Kozhinov, who returned to the journal for the first time since November 1981 to defend nationalist positions from the attacks of *Sovetskaya kul'tura* and *Komsomol'skaya pravda* (including a defence of *Nash sovremennik*'s new-found ally Viktor Astaf'ev from an attack in *Voprosy literatury*). Kozhinov accused many 'democratic' critics of having been, but recently, orthodox Marxist-Leninists<sup>112</sup>. Similar contributions were made by deputy chief editor Kazintsev, Kuz'min and Lyubomudrov<sup>113</sup>. In these

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<sup>108</sup>'Vstrecha redaktsii i avtorov zhurnala *Nash sovremennik* s chitatel'nyami', *Russkaya mysl'*, No. 3, 711, February 12th, 1988, pp. 6-7.

<sup>109</sup>I. Vasil'ev, 'Ne kosi travu do tsveteniya', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 110, September 12th, 1987, p. 6.

<sup>110</sup>Astaf'ev: 'Zatesi'; 'Radetel' slova narodnogo' (also printed in *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, June 19th, 1987, pp. 18-19).

<sup>111</sup>N. Ivanova: 'Ot 'vragov naroda' - k 'vragam natsii?'; *Ogonek*, No. 36, 1988, pp. 18-20; Ivanova, 'Perekhod cherez boloto', *Ogonek*, No. 25, 1988, pp. 13-15; T. Ivanova: 'Kto chem riskuet', *Ogonek*, No. 24, 1988, pp. 10-12; 'Zvezdy zheny sosedki Mitrofana', *Ogonek*, No. 34, 1988, pp. 28-30.

<sup>112</sup>Kozhinov, 'My menyaemsya?', pp. 160-163.

<sup>113</sup>Kazintsev, 'Litsom k istorii: prodolzhateli ili potrebiteli'; A. Kuz'min: 'Meli v eksterritorial'nom potoke'; 'K kakomu khramu ishchem my dorogu?'; Lyubomudrov, '...Kak slovo nashe otzovetsya [Otvét opponentam]', *NS*, No. 7, 1987, pp. 167-175 (by Lyubomudrov, see also 'Radi dukhovnogo obnovleniya cheloveka', *NS*, No. 8, 1988, pp. 153-163; 'Uchimsya demokratii?', *NS*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 190-191).

and other publications, anti-Semitic and anti-Western motifs figured prominently.

Popular nationalists were also drawn into these polemics, particularly in the debate over the Pamyat' movement. Rasputin's defence of Pamyat' was most controversial<sup>114</sup>, although he was doing no more than confirming a view expressed earlier, and one shared by other colleagues at *Nash sovremennik*, including Belov, Vikulov and Bondarev<sup>115</sup>. Rasputin's article resulted in the first serious criticism of him in the Soviet press<sup>116</sup>. *Nash sovremennik* also controversially spoke out in support of Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead*<sup>117</sup>. Indeed, Belov's *Everything Lies Ahead* continued to attract public and critical attention, no doubt because of the manner in which it cut a clear, dividing line through the literary world<sup>118</sup>.

The developments within Russian nationalist ideology at this period were made manifest by the changes in the relationship between Vikulov's *Nash sovremennik* and Zalygin's *Novyi mir*. In Brudny's view:

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<sup>114</sup>Rasputin, 'Zhertvovat' soboyu dlya pravdy'. This was a republication of his speech at the 5th Congress of VOPIK held in Gor'kii (now Nizhnii Novgorod) that June.

<sup>115</sup>See 'Aktivnaya sila perestroiki', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 42, October 16th, 1987, p. 5.

<sup>116</sup>P. Gutiontov, 'Podmena', *Izvestiya*, No. 58, February 26th, 1988, p. 3. Rasputin repeated his defence of the organisation on a visit to Sweden (V. Rasputin [interview], *Dagens Nyheter*, August 21st, 1987).

<sup>117</sup>'Chitateli o romane V. Belova Vse Vpered', *NS*, No. 8, 1987, pp. 176-181.

<sup>118</sup>For favourable reviews of Belov's novel in this period, see V. Gorbachev, 'Chto vpered?', *Molodaya gvardiya*, No. 3, 1987, pp. 250-277; I. Egoren'kova, 'Chto zhe s nami proiskhodit?', *Moskva*, No. 4, 1987, pp. 194-203; G. Elin, 'Na zemle Novgorodskoi', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 4, January 23rd, 1987, p. 15; V. Shchelogov, 'Ne ob izbe - o vremeni', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 6, February 6th, 1987, p. 17. For hostile reviews, see I. Dedkov, 'Literatura i novoe myshlenie', *Kommunist*, No. 12, August, 1987, pp. 57-65; D. Ivanov, 'Chto vpered', *Ogonek*, No. 2, 1987, pp. 12-14; I. Zolotusskii, 'Otchet o puti', *Znamya*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 221-240; N. Ivanova, 'Ispytanie pravdoi', *Znamya*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 198-220; T. Ivanova, 'Otkuda beretsya seraya literatura', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 7, February 11th, 1987, p. 7; D. Urnov, 'O blizkom i dalekom', *Voprosy literatury*, No. 9, 1987, pp. 113-131; A. Mal'gin, 'V poiskakh "mirovogo zla"', *ibid.*, pp. 132-164; 'Ot redaktsii', *ibid.*, pp. 164-168; E. Evtushenko, 'Pravo na neodnoznachnost'', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 2, January 3rd, 1987, p. 4; A. Yakovlev, 'Perestroika i npravstvennost'', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 87, July 21st, 1987, p. 2. In June 1987 the novel was published, in an edition of 2,700,000, by *Sovetskii pisatel'*, and was one of the best-selling books of that year (N. Diuk & A. Karatnycky, *The Hidden Nations: The People Challenge the Soviet Union*, William Morrow and Co. Inc., New York, 1990).



[...] *Nash sovremennik* [...] served primarily as a forum for the radical Slavophiles. This [...] meant the end of the journal as a forum for all branches of the Russian nationalist movement. From late 1986 onwards, such prominent liberal nationalists as Dmitrii Likhachev [and] Sergei Zalygin [...] no longer contributed to *Nash sovremennik*. [...] *Novyi mir* [...] became, from the time of Zalygin's appointment as its chief editor, the main liberal nationalist journal.<sup>119</sup>

### Vikulov's Position Under Threat

The relatively low level of *Nash sovremennik's* print run, it can be surmised, was cause for widespread concern among Russian nationalists and conservatives<sup>120</sup>. The journal was patently losing in the competition for readers, and this was, in the long run, to become one of the chief reasons for Vikulov's replacement in the summer of 1989<sup>121</sup>. Vikulov seems to have been adamant, however, in his refusal to publish formerly banned writings. He remarked to a visiting Western scholar: 'Nobody has sent us any such scripts: that's why we haven't published them'<sup>122</sup>.

Confrontation with the reformist leadership, however, strengthened perceptions among Russian nationalists of the increasing inappropriateness of 'party-minded' Vikulov as chief editor. Moreover, Vikulov lacked the necessary temperament and polemical skills to take up the role of a leader of a warring faction. His contributions to *Nash sovremennik*, stressing his loyalty to Gorbachev's reformist

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<sup>119</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-5.

<sup>120</sup>'Ot redaktsii', *NS*, No. 9, 1987, p. 190.

<sup>121</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

<sup>122</sup>S. Vikulov, interview 5/5/88 (by G. Hosking). See also 'Vstrecha redaktsii i avtorov zhurnala *Nash sovremennik* s chitatel'nyami', *Russkaya mysl'*, No. 3,711, February 12th, 1988, pp. 6-7. Some 'archival' works did appear in the following period, however. See A. Kirillov, 'V seredine tridtsatykh - dnevniki ssyl'nogo redaktora', *NS*, No. 11, 1988, pp. 109-142; A. Kuprin, 'Izvozchik Petr', *ibid.*, pp. 106-108; 'Pis'ma Nikolaya Rubtsova k Aleksandru Yashinu', *NS*, No. 7, 1988, pp. 178-186.



goals and focusing on the theme of perestroika in the countryside, show him unwilling to tackle the larger themes of national politics<sup>123</sup>. Indeed, Vikulov demonstrated his loyalty and moderation by calling for a clean-up of the bureaucracy and emphasising the need for patriotism at a meeting between cultural figures and Gorbachev<sup>124</sup>. The mass media, Vikulov said, should 'awake in people a feeling of pride in their country [and] confidence in the victory of perestroika'<sup>125</sup>. Perhaps to repay him, Gorbachev seems to have accorded Vikulov a greater than usual prominence at such meetings<sup>126</sup>.

Thus radical nationalist opinion swung in favour of a new chief editor more hostile to the political leadership. This movement in opinion within Russian nationalist ideology was one from 'Red' ('collaborationist') to 'White' ('oppositionist')<sup>127</sup>. Moderate voices in the RSFSR Writers' Union counselled for Gorbachev's consent to be obtained in appointing a successor to Vikulov; radicals pushed for an appointment to be made 'without a decision of the Central Committee'<sup>128</sup>. Bondarev insisted, no doubt realistically, on obtaining Gorbachev's consent<sup>129</sup>.

## 2) The 'Nina Andreeva Effect': April 1988-December 1988

The publication of the Ligachev-inspired Nina Andreeva letter of March 13th, 1988, in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* was the

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<sup>123</sup>S. Vikulov: 'Nachal'stvo privezlo novogo', *NS*, No. 2, 1987, pp. 123-138; 'Pereplavit' v deistvie', *NS*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 126-147; 'U kogo chto bolit', *NS*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 128-141.

<sup>124</sup>'Cherez demokratizatsiyu - k novomu obliku sotsializma', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 19, May 11th, 1988, pp. 1-3 (see also *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 57, May 12th, 1988, pp. 1-2).

<sup>125</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup>*Ibid.* In the published report of the meeting, Vikulov was third to speak.

<sup>127</sup>Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, pp. 383-4.

<sup>128</sup>V. Ogryzko, interview 25/7/94.

<sup>129</sup>*Ibid.*

most serious challenge yet to the General Secretary<sup>130</sup>. Gorbachev later called the *Letter* 'a frontal attack on the ideology of perestroika'<sup>131</sup>.

The *Letter* was a neo-Stalinist programmatic statement against the reforms, which set out the common ground for an alliance between conservative Marxist-Leninists and Russian nationalists, both statist and popular. The nationalists were offered support on the issues of corruption, the anti-alcohol campaign, ecological issues, the preservation of historical monuments and the struggle against mass culture. In return, they were asked to adopt an ideologically 'Red' statist nationalist position, by reconciling themselves with the October revolution and abandoning certain 'backward-looking' views on Tsarism, the peasantry and religion. The article also advanced anti-Semitism as a weapon in the ideological struggle against reform, and as a 'glue'<sup>132</sup> to join nationalist and conservative factions together.

In the wake of the *Letter*, conservatives orchestrated a co-ordinated ideological campaign, the degree of co-ordination indicating the powerful political patronage of Ligachev<sup>133</sup>. A major feature of the campaign was an alliance between the two leading nationalist publications, *Nash sovremennik* and *Molodaya gvardiya*, despite key disagreements between statist nationalists and neo-

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<sup>130</sup>N. Andreeva, 'Ya ne mogu postupit'sya printsipami', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 60, March 13th, 1988, p. 3. See K. Devlin, 'L'Unita on "Secret History" of Andreeva Letter', *RL215/88*, May 26th, 1988.

<sup>131</sup>M. Gorbachev (interview by V. Marsov), "'Andropov ne poshel by daleko v reformirovanii obshchestva'", *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, No. 217, November 11th, 1992, p. 5.

<sup>132</sup>The term is Brudny's (see Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80).

<sup>133</sup>For an example of reservations that Ligachev was involved, see Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

Stalinists on the issue of Stalinism. The aim of the two journals, therefore, was 1) to 'avoid extensive treatment of Stalinism, since it meant both the acceptance of the agenda of the socio-political debate set by radical reformers and the danger of a potential breakdown of the Russian nationalist alliance over this issue'<sup>134</sup>; and 2) a heavy emphasis on 'anti-intellectual and anti-Semitic elements in order to keep the nationalist alliance together'<sup>135</sup>.

The April 1988 issue of *Nash sovremennik* reflected this campaign in a new crop of aggressive publications, by predominantly 'White' statist nationalists, which promoted 'Red' statist nationalist positions, compatible with Nina Andreeva's neo-Stalinism. Leading the way was Kozhinov's *Truth Subjective and Objective*, essentially a variation on the theme of the Nina Andreeva Letter and a statist nationalist counter-proposal, setting out the ideological ground for a conservative-nationalist alliance<sup>136</sup>.

A second example of the 'Nina Andreeva effect' was Viktor Ivanov's novel, *Judgement Day*, which was a justification of the activities of the KGB<sup>137</sup>. Indeed, publication of the novel, which 'openly endorsed a theory of Judeo-Masonic conspiracy'<sup>138</sup>, showed strong signs of having been inspired by that organisation. *Judgement Day* appeared in the month that Chebrikov spoke out against the threat posed by foreign intelligence services<sup>139</sup>. The fact

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<sup>134</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>135</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>136</sup>Kozhinov, 'Pravda i istina'

<sup>137</sup>Ivanov, 'Sudnyi den'

<sup>138</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>139</sup>Waller, *op. cit.*, p.52.



that the editorial office had had a copy of the manuscript for six months before publication indicates that timing was important<sup>140</sup>. Immediately the first part of the novel appeared, there was an outcry in the reformist press<sup>141</sup>. The publication also caused dissension at the journal itself: Svininnikov defended the publication, in a television broadcast, as a portrayal of 'the ideological struggle against our people'<sup>142</sup>, but responsible secretary Lukonin resigned soon afterwards, at least partly in protest<sup>143</sup>.

Two other examples of the 'Nina Andreeva effect' were publications indicating the new solidarity between *Nash sovremennik* and *Molodaya gvardiya*. In the one instance, Mikhail Lobanov, a *Molodaya gvardiya* veteran and loyalist, defended both that journal's record under Tvardovskii's contemporary, Anatolii Nikonov, and the signatories of the *Letter of the 11* (who included Vikulov) from recent attacks in the reformist press<sup>144</sup>. In a second, a 'symbolic act of solidarity with the editorial line of *Molodaya gvardiya*'<sup>145</sup>, chief editor Anatolii Ivanov set out the common political and cultural ground between neo-Stalinists and conservative nationalists - in other words, between *Molodaya gvardiya* and *Nash sovremennik*<sup>146</sup>. The May issue contained an article in praise of Ligachev's campaign against alcohol which sought, as Brudny has noted, 'to present Ligachev and his

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<sup>140</sup>Svininnikov, interview.

<sup>141</sup>'Eshche raz o proiskakh i zagovorakh', *Ogonek*, No. 20, 1988, p. 19; V. Verin, 'Khozraschet shpiona Baikalova', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 24, June 15th, 1988, p. 4.

<sup>142</sup>J. Wishnevsky, 'Nash sovremennik Provides Focus for 'Opposition Party'', *Report on the USSR*, Vol. 1, No. 3, January 20th, 1989, p. 2.

<sup>143</sup>Lukonin has described the novel as a 'shameful publication' (Lukonin, interview).

<sup>144</sup>M. Lobanov, 'Posleslovie. Iz vospominanii', *NS*, No. 4, 1988, pp. 154-159. See Yu. Burtin, "'Vam, iz drugogo pokolen'ya...'", *Oktyabr'*, No. 8, 1987, pp. 191-202; M. Lobanov, 'Samozvantsy "Pravogo dela"', *NS*, No. 7, 1988, pp. 189-190.

<sup>145</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

<sup>146</sup>Ivanov, 'Chernyi khleb iskusstva'.

appointees as leaders whose records show a deep understanding of Russian nationalist concerns'<sup>147</sup>.

These particular publications were accompanied by a general intensification in anti-Semitic polemics (led by contributions from Kazintsev and Kuz'min<sup>148</sup>), and publication, for the first time since 1979, of a full-scale novel, *I Have the Honour*<sup>149</sup>, by the popular novelist, and, as noted above, conspiracy theorist, Valentin Pikul' (in Walter Laqueur's words, 'at one time probably the most widely read author, alive or dead, in the Soviet Union with the exception of Alexandre Dumas'<sup>150</sup>).

*Nash sovremennik*, meanwhile, continued to publish leading popular nationalist authors such as Belov, Rasputin and Soloukhin<sup>151</sup>. Rasputin, in particular, continued to be courted by both conservatives and reformers, as witnessed by the publication in the reformist press of extracts from his latest works<sup>152</sup>. In a contrary move, *Nash sovremennik* now found no place for the reformist popular nationalist Ivan Vasil'ev. Kazintsev, meanwhile, accused the authorities of stifling *Nash sovremennik* and promoting a 'one-sided' glasnost'<sup>153</sup>.

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<sup>147</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 178. See E. Chernykh, 'Nastuplenie prodolzhaetsya', *NS*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 152-160 (especially p. 156).

<sup>148</sup>Kazintsev, 'Istoriya - ob'edinyayushchaya ili razobshchayushchaya'; Kuz'min: 'Chto pishem i chto v ume?'; 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?'; 'Sport' po sushchestvu'.

<sup>149</sup>V. Pikul', 'Chest' imeyu', *NS*, No. 9, pp. 28-111; No. 10, pp. 41-120; No. 11, pp. 29-102; No. 12, pp. 9-133, 1988.

<sup>150</sup>Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 40.

<sup>151</sup>Belov, 'Derevenskoe utro'; Rasputin: 'Russkoe ust'e'; 'Sibir', 'Sibir...'; Soloukhin: 'Pochemu ya ne podpisalsya pod tem pis'mom'; 'Sos'vinskie motivy'; 'Osoznavat' svetlo i trezvo...', *NS*, No. 9, 1989, pp. 29-30; 'Vzoshlo solntse yasnoe...', *NS*, No. 7, 1989, pp. 67-70. Soloukhin published an outspoken attack on Lenin towards the end of this period (see V. Soloukhin, 'Chitaya Lenina', *Grani*, No. 151, 1989, pp. 5-35).

<sup>152</sup>See V. Rasputin: 'Gornyi Altai', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 35, March 22nd, 1988, p. 6; No. 36, March 24th, 1988, p. 6; 'Kyakhta - Pamyat' Istorii Svyashchenna', *Ogonek*, No. 23, June, 1986, pp. 8-11 (this won one of *Ogonek's* prizes for 1986 [*Ogonek*, No. 1, 1987]).

<sup>153</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Igra v podpisu', *NS*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 190-1; 'Ot redaktsii', *NS*, No. 4, 1988, p. 190. Not only opposition editors and writers complained (see S. Zalygin, 'Ne upustit' shans!', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 39, September 28th, 1988, p. 1).



## Reformers Counterattack

The Nina Andreeva affair ultimately tipped the balance of influence in ideological policy in Yakovlev's favour:

An immediate result of the Andreeva affair was that, while Ligachev remained in charge of the party organisation and was still jointly, along with Yakovlev, in charge of ideology, he lost his share in the supervision of the press to Yakovlev, who now had primary responsibility within the Central Committee Secretariat for the mass media.<sup>154</sup>

It was almost a month after the appearance of the Nina Andreeva Letter that *Pravda* printed an anonymous rebuttal, assumed to come from Yakovlev, and thereafter the reformers regained the upper hand<sup>155</sup>. Yakovlev's counterattack had such success that the nationalist weekly of the RSFSR Writers' Union, *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, came under his influence, publishing the reformist authors Oskotskii and Afanas'ev<sup>156</sup>. When liberal writers affirmed their commitment to Gorbachev's policies, and opposition to Ligachev, conservative writers, including Bondarev and Mikhail Alekseev, found it necessary also to comply<sup>157</sup>. The authorities also took steps to engage their opponents in dialogue, as witnessed by a conference, attended by Yakovlev and leading nationalist figures, statist and popular, including Astaf'ev, Kazintsev, Lanshchikov, and Zalygin, on the relationship between literature and history<sup>158</sup>.

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<sup>154</sup>Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, p. 175.

<sup>155</sup>'Printsipy perestroiki: revolyutsionnost' myshleniya i deistvii', *Pravda*, No. 96, April 5th, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>156</sup>Yu. Afanas'ev, 'Perestroika i istoricheskoe znanie', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 24, June 17th, 1988, pp. 2-3 & 8-9; V. Oskotskii, 'Prodolzhenie sleduet', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 23, June 10th, 1988, p. 7.

<sup>157</sup>'Bol'she glasnosti, bol'she demokratii, bol'she sotsializma!', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 16, April 20th, 1988, p. 1; 'Bol'she glasnosti, bol'she demokratii, bol'she sotsializma!', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 16, April 22nd, 1988, p. 3.

<sup>158</sup>See 'Istoriki i pisateli o literature i istorii', *Voprosy istorii*, No. 6, 1988, pp. 3-114.



In the long run, however, the *Letter* had the effect of making Gorbachev more wary of losing influence over the nationalists. Part of Gorbachev's response was to develop a rapprochement with the Orthodox church in the year of its millennium<sup>159</sup>. This policy was designed to drive a wedge between neo-Stalinists and conservative Russian nationalists, taking advantage of the 'golden opportunity' provided by Ligachev's hostility to religion<sup>160</sup>. This did not prevent Gorbachev from drawing the disastrous anti-alcohol campaign to a close in the autumn of 1988<sup>161</sup>.

### The Search for a New Chief Editor

At the Nineteenth Party Conference, preparations for which (despite his rebuff in ideological policy) were largely controlled by Ligachev, Bondarev signalled his agreement with the Second Secretary by speaking critically of perestroika, as an aeroplane which was taking off without knowing where it would land<sup>162</sup>. If Bondarev's speech was not, as Solovei has called it<sup>163</sup>, 'the first public protest from the literary elite against the political course of the General Secretary', it was nonetheless an important, public signal to Gorbachev.

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<sup>159</sup>In April 1988, for the first time in the post-war period, a Soviet leader met the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pimen, and other members of the Holy Synod. That year approximately 500-700 new churches were opened (Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 57).

<sup>160</sup>Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Union*, pp. 15, 127.

<sup>161</sup>See D. Tarschys, 'The Success of a Failure: Gorbachev's Alcohol Policy, 1985-1988', p. 22; E. Ligachev, 'Povyshat' sozidatel'nyu rol' pressy', *Zhurnalist*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 1-9. *Nash sovremennik* continued, however, to publish on this theme. See F. Uglov: "'Glyadya pravde v glaza"'; 'Nam nekuda otstupat'!', *NS*, No. 1, 1989, p. 192; E. Chernykh, 'Nastuplenie prodolzhaetsya', *NS*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 152-160; "'Dusha dorozhe kovsha". Chitatel'skii "kruglyi stol"', *NS*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 142-172; 'Nel'zya trubit' otboi! Pis'ma nashikh chitatelei', *NS*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 160-167.

<sup>162</sup>'Vystuplenie tovarishcha Bondareva Yu. V. (zamestitel' predsedatelya Soyuza pisatelei RSFSR)', *Pravda*, No. 183, July 1st, 1988, p. 3.

<sup>163</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

Despite the fact that, at the Party Conference, Bondarev had defended *Nash sovremennik* and its chief editor from their critics<sup>164</sup>, following the defeat of the Nina Andreeva initiative, by the early summer of 1988 the influential deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union had probably come to share the view that Vikulov should be replaced. Bondarev, presumably in consultation with his colleagues at the RSFSR Writers' Union and at *Nash sovremennik*, and possibly emboldened by Gorbachev's apparent tolerance of his criticism, began to look for a 'White', 'oppositionist', chief editor to take Vikulov's place.

Bondarev's preferred candidate seems to have been the 'White' statist nationalist poet and critic Stanislav Kunyaev, whose appointment to the *Nash sovremennik* editorial board, from the May issue, had been further evidence of the 'Nina Andreeva effect'<sup>165</sup>. Kunyaev's appointment seems to have owed more to Bondarev than to Vikulov (who had no high regard for Kunyaev as a poet<sup>166</sup>). Kunyaev's recent receipt of the RSFSR state prize for literature for that year could be construed as a mark of Bondarev's favour<sup>167</sup>.

Vikulov, who was willing to leave his post, seems to have played a part in attempting to circumvent the appointment of Bondarev's nominee. The chief editor sounded

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<sup>164</sup>'Vystuplenie tovarishcha Bondareva Yu. V. (zamestitel' predsedatelya Soyuza pisatelei RSFSR)', p. 4.

<sup>165</sup>The May issue was 'sent to typesetters' on 12/2/88 and 'signed for printing' on 18/4/88.

<sup>166</sup>Since Gorbachev had come to power, Kunyaev had been published as a poet in *Nash sovremennik* only once before his appointment to the board (S. Kunyaev: 'Iz knigi Mat' syra-zemlya', *NS*, No. 12, 1987, pp. 42-44).

<sup>167</sup>'Postanovlenie Soveta ministrov RSFSR', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 293, December 22nd, 1987, p. 1.



out a number of potential candidates, including Kunyaev, Rasputin, Belov, Lanshchikov and Stepanov, head of the literature sector in the Cultural Department<sup>168</sup>. Of these, Lanshchikov seems to have been favoured by Yakovlev<sup>169</sup>. Vikulov's hasty publication of an article by Lanshchikov in July may also indicate the chief editor's preference for a successor<sup>170</sup>. In the article, Lanshchikov distanced himself from recent writing in the journal on the question of Stalinism, arguing there was both evil and necessity in what Stalin did, and avoided either seeking Jewish scapegoats for national ills, or demonising Trotskii. This contrasted sharply with the line taken by Kunyaev in his first article in the journal since February 1985, which, in essence, restated the 'White' statist nationalist compromise with Nina Andreeva<sup>171</sup>.

After the Party Conference, Vikulov proposed to Lanshchikov that he became chief editor<sup>172</sup>. Such a proposal could scarcely have been made at this time without the consent of Yakovlev and the Central Committee. It was presumably Lanshchikov's sense of opposition from Bondarev and the RSFSR Writers' Union which made him demur.

### 3) A New Politics: January - September 1989

As Soviet society continued on its path of progressive polarisation, in conditions of increasing freedom and

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<sup>168</sup>Egorov, interview. Stepanov died that August (see *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 34, August 24th, 1988, p. 7).

<sup>169</sup>Yakovlev, interview. Lanshchikov believed Vikulov to be aware of the preference of both Gorbachev and Yakovlev for his candidacy (Lanshchikov, interview).

<sup>170</sup>Lanshchikov, interview. See A. Lanshchikov, 'My vse glyadim v Napoleony', *NS*, No. 7, 1988, pp. 106-142. The June 1988 issue announced forthcoming publications by both leading candidates for Vikulov's post, Lanshchikov and Kunyaev (*NS*, No. 6, 1988, p. 184).

<sup>171</sup>Kunyaev, 'Vse nachinaetsya s yarlykov'.

<sup>172</sup>Lanshchikov, interview; Vikulov, interview.



mounting political and ethnic conflict, Gorbachev succeeded in strengthening his own position, achieving the 'almost complete isolation' of Ligachev<sup>173</sup>, and, by September 1989, establishing a 'total dominance over the Politburo'<sup>174</sup>. An important indication of this was the reorganisation of the Central Committee departments into commissions covering a reduced number of policy areas<sup>175</sup>. Vadim Medvedev, a Gorbachev loyalist, was appointed to head the new Ideological Commission, becoming at the same time a full member of the Politburo. The Cultural Department was abolished and a Propaganda Department, headed by A. Kapto, was subordinated to the Ideological Commission<sup>176</sup>. Ligachev became head of the Commission on agriculture and Yakovlev head of the Commission on foreign affairs<sup>177</sup>.

From November 1988, the new freedoms were manifested by the ability of political activists to form associations, political pressure groups and parties-in-embryo. This allowed the traditional *gruppovshchina*, which had always characterised literary life, to flow into new organisational forms<sup>178</sup>. It also allowed Russian nationalists, including *Nash sovremennik's* writers and editors, to begin what John Dunlop has called a 'Going to the People' (in the words of another commentator, 'a

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<sup>173</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>174</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>175</sup>'O nekotorykh voprosakh perestroiki tsentral'noi partiinoi pechati', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 94, August 8th, 1989, p. 1.

<sup>176</sup>'O komissiyakh Tsentral'nogo komiteta KPSS', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 143, November 29th, 1988, pp. 1-2.

<sup>177</sup>Ligachev's ally at the KGB, Chebrikov, was appointed head of the Legal Affairs Commission, among the duties of which was supervision of the KGB under new chairman Kryuchkov (Waller, *op. cit.*, p. 228). These changes were soon followed by the 'transformation' of the KGB's Fifth Directorate, responsible for operations in ideology and culture, into a 'Directorate for the Defence of the Constitutional System' ('Directorate Z').

<sup>178</sup>See Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, pp. 130-136; P. Duncan, 'The Rebirth of Politics in Russia', in G. Hosking, J. Aves, P. Duncan, *The Road to Post-Communism*, Pinter Publishers, London & New York, 1992, pp. 83-86.

desperate attempt to mobilise wide public support for nationalist positions')<sup>179</sup>. As Belov remarked, 'There is just no time to write, I have to spend my time on politics'<sup>180</sup>. Newly founded organisations, in which *Nash sovremennik* associates took part, included *The Association of Russian Artists* (Tovarishchestvo russkikh khudozhnikov)<sup>181</sup>; the *Union for the Spiritual Rebirth of the Fatherland* [Soyuz za dukhovnoe vozrozhdenie otechestva]<sup>182</sup>; *Fatherland* [Otechestvo]<sup>183</sup>; and *The Fund for Slavonic Literature* (Fond slavyanskoi pis'mennosti)<sup>184</sup>. According to Brudny, '*Nash sovremennik* as an institution and its leading contributors' sought to use the United Workers' Front (OFT) as an umbrella for the creation of 'a powerful coalition capable of making a serious impact on the direction of political and economic reforms'<sup>185</sup>. This coalition would include, 'in addition to Russian nationalist institutions and societies, workers, trade unions, conservative party officials, intellectuals, economists and their publications, and members of the Supreme Soviet'<sup>186</sup>. Under Svininnikov's energetic direction, meanwhile, the journal conducted a busy schedule of meetings in Moscow and other

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<sup>179</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-1.

<sup>180</sup>V. Belov, 'Iznachal'nye tsennosti', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 48, December 2nd, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>181</sup>For the programme, see *Moskovskii literator*, December 16th, 1988, p. 3.

<sup>182</sup>Antonov, interview. See Duncan, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>183</sup>Kuz'min, interview. See 'Otechestvo - glavnaya tsennost'', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, June 23rd, 1989, p. 14; Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 135; Duncan, *op. cit.*, p. 84; D. Smith, 'Moscow's Otechestvo - a link between Russian nationalism and conservative opposition to reform', *Report on the USSR*, Vol. 1, No. 30, July 28th, 1989, p. 8.

<sup>184</sup>See Yu. Yushkin, 'Sozdaetsya fond slavyanskoi pis'mennosti', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 6, February 10th, 1989, p. 3. See also 'Pervoe zasedanie Dvizheniya lyubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti i iskusstva "Edinstvo"', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 39, September 27th, 1989, p. 7.

<sup>185</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>186</sup>*Ibid.*



regions, some of them jointly with the nationalist organs *Molodaya gvardiya*, *Moskva* and *Roman-gazeta*<sup>187</sup>.

The high point of these new political activities was undoubtedly the March 1989 elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, in which leading *Nash sovremennik* writers and editors participated. Popular nationalists, with official support, met with success. Non-Communist-party members Rasputin and Astaf'ev successfully stood as candidates from the USSR Writers' Union<sup>188</sup>, while party members Belov and I. Vasil'ev were elected as candidates from the CPSU<sup>189</sup>. Statist nationalist figures who stood as independent candidates, and had no official support, such as Bondarev and Kozhinov, met with defeat.

Yet, despite the steps taken by officialdom, these new forms of political activity revealed the predominant influence of the statist nationalist ideological tendency among Russian nationalists at this stage of Gorbachev's reforms. The chief concern of virtually all the newly created organisations of a nationalist orientation, irrespective of whether their members were popular or statist, 'Red' or 'White', was the preservation of the Soviet Union as a state. This concern for Soviet statehood was also evident in a series of published appeals to the general public<sup>190</sup>.

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<sup>187</sup>Svininnikov, interview. See 'Zhivaya svyaz', *NS*, No. 9, 1988, p. 192; P. Duncan, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

<sup>188</sup>'Narodnye deputaty SSSR - chleny Soyuza pisatelei', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 23, June 7th, 1989, p. 2.

<sup>189</sup>'Soobshchenie izbiratel'noi komissii po vyboram narodnykh deputatov SSSR ot KPSS', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 64, March 19th, 1989, p. 1.

<sup>190</sup>See 'Sud'ba u nas obshchaya - Obrashchenie russkikh pisatelei', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 21, May 26th, 1989, p. 5; 'Obrashchenie ko vsem grazhdanam Estonii, k trudyashchimsya, k intelligentsii Sovetskogo Soyuza', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 34, August 25th, 1989, p. 3.



In September, most of these nationalist organisations united under a broad umbrella organisation, the United Council of Russia (Ob''edinennyi sovet Rossii)<sup>191</sup>. Among the goals of this organisation were preserving 'the state sovereignty of the USSR as a voluntary union of republics' and 'assisting the development of the sovereignty of the RSFSR'<sup>192</sup>. The element of mutual exclusivity between these two goals was finessed by the special relationship ascribed between RSFSR and USSR. As Dunlop has remarked:

The United Council pulled no punches in asserting its conviction that the Russian Republic served as the indispensable core and the nucleus of the Soviet Union.<sup>193</sup>

This statist nationalist mood was intensified by the sense that, at the end of 1988 and beginning of 1989, Gorbachev seemed to be distancing himself from the conservatives<sup>194</sup>. No doubt in reaction, in December, at an important plenary meeting of the RSFSR Writers' Union, conservative writers criticised Gorbachev by name<sup>195</sup>. It was probably at this meeting that Bondarev and his colleagues in the RSFSR Writers' Union reached a final decision to support Kunyaev as candidate to succeed Vikulov, and reject the more moderate Lanshchikov. Somewhat ironically, given the desire of the RSFSR Writers' Union to replace Vikulov, the pro-reform Moscow Writers' Organisation chose this moment to call for all chief editors, who had served for

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<sup>191</sup> 'Ob''edinennyi sovet Rossii', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 38, September 22nd, 1989, p. 5.

<sup>192</sup> Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>194</sup> See Gorbachev, 'Narashchivat' intellektual'nyi potentsial perestroiki', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 2, January 11th, 1989, pp. 1-4.

<sup>195</sup> 'Perestroika i publitsistika', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 51, December 23rd, pp. 2-5 & No. 52, December 30th, pp. 3-5, 1988. See also Yu. Berlichenko, 'Trevogi pisatelei Rossii: zametki s plenuma SP RSFSR', *Krasnaya zvezda*, No. 292, December 20th, 1988; J. Wishnevsky: 'Nash sovremennik Provides Focus for 'Opposition Party''; 'Conflict between the Military and the Intelligentsia', *RL372/88*, August 22nd, 1988.

more than ten years, to be replaced<sup>196</sup>. That Yakovlev and Gorbachev had some sympathy with this view was shown by the retirement at this time, no doubt at their prompting, of Aleksandr Chakovskii and Georgii Markov<sup>197</sup>. Gorbachev, however, was initially opposed to the appointment of Kunyaev. Vladimir Egorov, now deputy head of the Department of Propaganda, at Gorbachev's behest spoke, unsuccessfully, with Bondarev to dissuade him from backing Kunyaev<sup>198</sup>. A popular-statist nationalist 'alliance' of Belov, Rasputin and Bondarev thereupon lobbied both Ligachev and Medvedev on Kunyaev's behalf<sup>199</sup>. Lukyanov and Gorbachev were also lobbied<sup>200</sup>.

Gorbachev's tactics in this affair, making it necessary for the Russian nationalists to secure his support over the appointment, seem to have been successful in inducing leading popular nationalist figures not to break with the General Secretary. Belov and Rasputin both spoke in support of Gorbachev at the Congress of USSR Deputies. As Valerii Solovei points out:

[...] Belov and Rasputin [...], at the first Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR, to all intents and purposes declaimed their support for Gorbachev, trying to defend him from 'extremist' attacks and insinuations.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>196</sup>S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', NS, No. 11, 1996, p. 39. The Moscow Writers' Organisation, formally subordinated to the RSFSR Writers' Union, also demanded republican status for itself from the USSR Writers' Union (*Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 51, December 21st, 1988, p. 1); S. Mikhalkov (an interview), 'Po slukham - i na samom dele', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 23, June 9th, 1989).

<sup>197</sup>On Chakovskii, see 'V redaktsii Literaturnoi gazety', No. 50, December 14th, 1988, p. 1. On Markov, see 'V sekretariate pravleniya SP SSSR', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 1, January 4th, 1989, p. 1.

<sup>198</sup>Egorov, interview.

<sup>199</sup>Belov, interview; Rasputin, interview.

<sup>200</sup>Kunyaev, interview.

<sup>201</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 56.



It would seem plausible that these two writers were keen to avoid offending Gorbachev at the moment when he might make a key decision in their favour.

### Vikulov's Last Months

In the wake of the failure of the Nina Andreeva project, two versions of statist nationalism, one 'Red', identified with Vikulov, the other 'White', identified with Kunyaev, now competed on the pages of *Nash sovremennik*. Observers noted the publication of émigré literature as a particular point of contention<sup>202</sup>. As Vikulov's influence over publication policy declined, that of Kunyaev, his heir apparent, increased<sup>203</sup>. This took place as the liberal journals continued to increase their print-runs at an extraordinary rate<sup>204</sup>, and the mood among Russian nationalists became progressively more radical. Two of the more 'liberal' non-executive board members, Semenov and Nosov, now left *Nash sovremennik* (from the April and September issues, respectively). Kazintsev, on the contrary, was evidently pleased with the prospect of Kunyaev taking over as chief editor, and his fulsome tributes to Bondarev may have been in recognition of the latter's support for Kunyaev's candidacy<sup>205</sup>.

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<sup>202</sup>For example, Vikulov refused to countenance the publication of Ivan Bunin's *Okayannye dni*, proposed by Kunyaev (V. Ogryzko, interview 25/7/94).

<sup>203</sup>For example, Pikul' indirectly criticised Vikulov in the journal, when he complained about unauthorised changes made to *The Final Boundary* in 1979 ('Chest' sobstvennogo imeni. Dialog pisatelya Valentina Pikulya i kritika Sergeya Zhuravleva', *NS*, No. 2, 1989, pp. 184-192).

<sup>204</sup>In January 1989 *Znamya's* print run rose by 90%, that of *Oktyabr'* by 53,4%, of *Novyi mir* by 45,5%, and of *Druzhba narodov* by 38%. *Nash sovremennik's* print-run by contrast went up by only 4.4%. Of other nationalist journals, *Moskva* secured an increase of 13%; *Molodaya gvardiya's* print-run fell by 7,7%.

<sup>205</sup>Kazintsev, 'Maskony', p. 158.



Symbolically, the most important 'White' publication was that of the popular nationalist Solzhenitsyn<sup>206</sup>. However, the single most influential 'White' contribution was the first part of statist nationalist Shafarevich's anti-Communist and anti-Semitic samizdat article *Russophobia*<sup>207</sup>. Other important 'White' contributions (Kozhinov's *The Greatest Danger* and Kunyaev's *A Stick With Two Ends*<sup>208</sup>, in both of which Stalinism was the central issue), were also statist in nature. 'White' works were also now prominent in imaginative literature<sup>209</sup>. Brudny has given a summary sketch of *Nash sovremennik*'s 'White' statist nationalist publication policy at this time, in comparison with that of the neo-Stalinist *Molodaya gvardiya*:

[...] *Nash sovremennik*'s approach to dealing with Stalinism and its legacy was far more sophisticated than that of *Molodaya gvardiya*. [...] All these essays effectively deny Stalin's responsibility for collectivisation and the terror by tracing the foundations of the Stalinist system back to the politics and ideas of the 1920s, or even to the revolution itself.<sup>210</sup>

Brudny errs somewhat in his view that the 'orthodox Stalinist defence of collectivisation, the terror, and the command economy was entirely absent' from *Nash sovremennik*, however. The 'Red' spectrum of opinion was represented, in

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<sup>206</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Pominal'noe slovo o Tvardovskom. Zhit' ne po lzhi!', *NS*, No. 9, 1989, pp. 159-160. This followed publication of Solzhenitsyn in *Novyi mir*: A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Arhipelag GULAG', *Novyi mir*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 7-94 (further instalments: No. 9, pp. 68-165; No. 10, pp. 25-149; No. 11, pp. 63-175, 1989).

<sup>207</sup>Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya'.

<sup>208</sup>Kozhinov, 'Samaya bol'shaya opasnost''; Kunyaev: 'Palka o dvukh kotsakh'. See also S. Kunyaev, 'A. Shchipov i ego mal'chiki, ili otkrytoe pis'mo glavnomu redaktoru ezhenedel'nika Knizhnoe obozrenie g. Averinu', *NS*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 188-89; Kazintsev: 'Novaya mifologiya'; 'Maskony'; V. Vasil'ev, 'Natsional'naya tragediya: utopiya i real'nost'. Roman Andreyeva Platonova "Chevengur" v kontekste ego vremeni'; Sorokin, 'Svoi chuzhie'; Shipunov, 'Velikaya Zamyatnya'.

<sup>209</sup>Soloukhin: 'Vzoshlo solntse yasnoe...'; 'Osoznavat' svetlo i trezvo...'; 'Rasskazy', *NS*, No. 3, 1989, pp. 111-123; S. Alekseev, 'Kramola'; V. Zazubrin, 'Shchepka'.

<sup>210</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p.183.

its most sophisticated form, by Mikhail Antonov<sup>211</sup>, who, since his last *Nash sovremennik* article in April 1987, had become a more frequent contributor to the rival nationalist journals, *Molodaya gvardiya* and *Moskva*. The month (March 1988) that Kunyaev joined the *Nash sovremennik* board, Antonov had joined the board at *Moskva*. While anti-Semitism was lacking from Antonov's writing, it was a strong presence in the works of other 'Red' writers, such as Kuz'min, Lyubomudrov, Fed' and Glushkova<sup>212</sup>.

### The RSFSR

Paradoxically, as 'White' statist nationalists came to dominate *Nash sovremennik*, some works in the journal raised the issue of the political status of the RSFSR. The 'White' statist nationalist Kazintsev briefly voiced the need to improve the political status of the republic<sup>213</sup>. However, significantly, the two most outspoken proponents of this 'RSFSR patriotism' were popular nationalists Belov and Rasputin<sup>214</sup>.

### Gorbachev Consents

In the early summer of 1989<sup>215</sup>, Gorbachev took the decision to appoint the 'White' statist nationalist Kunyaev

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<sup>211</sup>Antonov, 'Nesushchestvuyushchie lyudi'.

<sup>212</sup>Kuz'min: 'Kto vinovat i komu eto nuzhno?'; 'Sporit' po sushchestvu'; 'Chto pishem i chto v ume?'; N. Fed', 'Poslanie drugu, ili Pis'ma o literature'; Lyubomudrov, 'Iz vlechem li uroki? O russkom teatre i ne tol'ko o nem'; Glushkova, 'O "russkosti", o schast'e, o svobode'.

<sup>213</sup>Kazintsev, 'Maskony'. See also Litvinova, 'Starshii ili ravnyi'. Litvinova had co-authored an important article on the same theme in 1982 (G. Litvinova & B. Uralnis, 'Demograficheskaya politika Sovetskogo Soyuza', *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo*, No. 3, 1982, pp. 38-46).

<sup>214</sup>Belov, 'Vystuplenie na S'ezde narodnykh deputatov SSSR'; Rasputin, 'Vystuplenie na S'ezde narodnykh deputatov SSSR'.

<sup>215</sup>Kunyaev, interview; Yakovlev, interview. Kunyaev's appointment was announced in the press in mid-August ('Stanislav Kunyaev', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 33, August 16th, 1989, p. 7).



as chief editor of *Nash sovremennik* against influential opinion within his own entourage: both Yakovlev and Medvedev were against<sup>216</sup>. Gorbachev probably had four chief motives for giving his consent. Firstly, and perhaps least importantly, it was part of that general process of liberalising cultural life, allowing writers and their organisations to take their own decisions. More importantly, the decision was part of Gorbachev's desire to reinforce 'empire-saving' views and institutions. The statist nationalist Kunyaev would provide some ideological underpinning for Gorbachev to neutralise RSFSR institutions as a base for opposition to the centre. Similar intentions by Gorbachev can be seen in the party's programme on nationalities policy, developed that summer. The August draft programme, although it described Russia (Rossiya) as the 'consolidating basis of the whole of our Union', contained a proposal to weaken the RSFSR by dividing it into a number of large regions, while strengthening the 'autonomous republics'<sup>217</sup>. When the policy document was adopted at a Central Committee plenum in September, a limited concession to the RSFSR in the form of a Khrushchev-style bureau for RSFSR affairs at the Central Committee was proposed, but the creation of a Russian Communist Party was rejected<sup>218</sup>.

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<sup>216</sup>Yakovlev, interview.

<sup>217</sup>'Natsional'naya politika partii v sovremennykh usloviyakh (platforma KPSS). Proekt', *Pravda*, No. 229, August 17th, 1989, pp. 1-2; A. Kapto, 'Gumanizm i mezhnatsional'nye otnosheniya - obsuzhdaem proekt platformy KPSS po natsional'nomu voprosu', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 36, September 6th, 1989, p. 3.

<sup>218</sup>'Natsional'naya politika partii v sovremennykh usloviyakh (platforma KPSS). Prinyata Plenumom TsK KPSS 20 sentyabrya 1989 goda', *Pravda*, No. 267, September 24th, 1989, pp. 1-2.



Thirdly, Gorbachev was motivated by his desire to maintain some influence over nationalist opinion and prevent the 'Russian card' falling wholly into opposition hands. He saw continued patronage of the Russian nationalists, even radicals such as Kunyaev, as a means to achieve this. Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, the move was a concession by Gorbachev to his conservative opponents, and thereby an indication of his own weakness.

## Conclusions

At *Nash sovremennik*, both members of the Svininnikov-Kazintsev deputy editorial team represented strands - 'Red' and 'White' respectively - within the statist Russian nationalist tendency. In a first period, from June 1987 to March 1988, the journal gave rather amorphous expression to various ideological currents, as the nationalist and conservative communities reeled under the shock of Yakovlev's 'cultural offensive'.

In a second period, from March to November 1988, the 'Nina Andreeva letter' heralded a co-ordinated attempt by conservative political leaders to bring anti-reformists and Russian nationalists together on a neo-Stalinist ideological platform, with certain concessions to the conservative nationalists. This attempt to generate an effective ideology to oppose reform took the form, at *Nash sovremennik*, of a wager on 'Red' statist nationalist ideology, a position more compatible with conservative Communism than its White counterpart.

In a third period, from November 1988 to September 1989, in the wake of the failure of Ligachev's bid to increase his influence and of the success of reformist ideas in an increasingly open political arena, the conservative Communist project was doubly tarnished by its apparent inability to rein in Gorbachev and by its lack of popular appeal. In reaction, a 'White' statist nationalist mood gained in strength among Russian nationalists. An indication of this was Bondarev's decision to support Kunyaev's candidacy for the chief editor's post at *Nash sovremennik*. Nationalists hoped that such an anti-Communist stance would have popular appeal and be able to generate a successful challenge to the democratic movement.

Two chief factors influenced the development of Russian nationalist ideology at this time. Firstly, the new political climate of increased democracy meant political views could be tested in a new, practical way as an instrument for mobilisation. Secondly, the emerging political debate on statehood in the Soviet Union brought to the fore the strength of the statist nationalist commitment to the Soviet state. As Brudny has written of the leading Russian nationalist journals:

[...] as nationalist movements in the Baltics became stronger and more aggressive in their demands, Molodaya gvardiya and *Nash sovremennik* increasingly challenged these claims and called for strengthening the alliance with the anti-Reformist wing of the party.<sup>219</sup>

The ambiguity in the relationship of the popular nationalists to RSFSR institutions reflected the failure of

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<sup>219</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 187.



popular nationalist ideology in Soviet conditions to develop its 'own' views on the state. It also reflected the strength of the (USSR-oriented) statist nationalist tendency. The ambivalence also indicated an uncertainty among the elite sponsors of Russian nationalism about the potential of RSFSR institutions. As was to become clear in the subsequent period, both reformers (led by El'tsin) and conservatives (headed initially by Polozkov) saw RSFSR institutions as a potential counterbalance to the Gorbachev centre<sup>220</sup>.

Walter Laqueur has observed that the rapprochement between conservative nationalists and neo-Stalinists was one between groupings which 'had little in common, except common enemies'<sup>221</sup>. Dunlop has suggested a number of shared attitudes underlying this alliance: enmity towards the West, anti-Semitism, self-interest in preserving 'posts and perquisites', an adherence to statism, and ethnic solidarity<sup>222</sup>. Brudny has summarised the shared interests of the conservative nationalist *Nash sovremennik* and the neo-Stalinist *Molodaya gvardiya*:

Their editorial policies were aimed at: maintaining the unity of the Russian nationalist opposition to radical reforms; forging an alliance between this opposition and the opponents of radical reforms in the political elite; discrediting leading reformist intellectuals, their journals, and their causes; and convincing the party to limit, if not to reverse, Gorbachev's policies of cultural pluralism, economic reforms, and greater autonomy to the non-Russian republics.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>220</sup>See R. Szporluk, 'Dilemmas of Russian Nationalism', *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 38, No. 4, July-August, 1989, pp. 16-23.

<sup>221</sup>Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 68.

<sup>222</sup>Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, pp. 129-130.

<sup>223</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p.188.



From the evidence of *Nash sovremennik*, a fundamental element in this alliance was the existence within statist Russian nationalism of two currents: one 'White' (oppositionist), and one 'Red' (collaborationist). In this period, these two tendencies themselves drew closer to each other, and this enabled a more united Russian nationalist position to emerge, and one which was at the same time closer to conservative Communism and neo-Stalinism.

Valerii Solovei has argued that Yakovlev and Gorbachev engineered a campaign against Russian nationalist ideology, intended to discredit both the ideology itself and those leadership elements (including, in his view, Ligachev, Solomentsev and Chebrikov) tempted to make use of it. He has written:

The anti-nationalist campaign served as an ideological underpinning and was only a part - although a very important one - of a broad plan to neutralise and discredit potential or actual political opponents of the reformist faction in the Soviet leadership.<sup>224</sup>

In Solovei's view, a special element within this general anti-nationalist campaign was an organised campaign against the Pamyat' organisation:

The impression is gained that the whole anti-Pamyat' campaign had the goal of compromising and blackening not one particular organisation, but Russian nationalism as a whole, to create a negative image [of the organisation] in the eyes of both Russian and Western public opinion.<sup>225</sup>

This argument seems to ignore three factors. In the first place, nationalists of all hues were free to disassociate themselves from 'extremist elements' if they

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<sup>224</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>225</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53. On Pamyat', see Wishnevsky, 'The Origins of Pamyat'', pp. 79-91.

wished. Secondly, the debates were largely spontaneous and expressed views on Russian nationalism (and the Pamyat' organisation) prevalent in Soviet society, rather than handed down from above. Thirdly, Gorbachev himself persistently sought to break down the polarisation in Soviet intellectual life and bring nationalists 'on side' by promoting policies of which they approved.

Indeed, in reality, the Gorbachev centre did not pursue an 'anti-nationalist' campaign, but implemented a sophisticated, and possibly confusing, mix of policies towards Russian nationalism, striving simultaneously to divide and manipulate the nationalist movement by co-opting reform-minded nationalists, encouraging Orthodoxy and even patronising radical statist nationalists, such as Kunyaev.

Solovei's argument may have more force in terms of indicating a distinction between the attitudes of Gorbachev and Yakovlev towards the nationalists. Yakovlev, it would seem, in general was more hostile to Russian nationalism than Gorbachev. Elements of an 'anti-nationalist campaign' seem indeed to have been pursued by Yakovlev and his officials, albeit on a rather ad hoc basis. Yet the intended result of this policy was to create divisions within the nationalist movement, rather than drive all its representatives into the 'extremist camp'.

The role of Gorbachev in shaping political developments emerges as crucial. Having overcome the conservative challenge from Ligachev, the closing phase of the period considered in this chapter saw him preparing to give battle to a democratic opposition. In both instances, Gorbachev's

determination not to relinquish the 'Russian Card' to his opponents, but to continue himself to patronise the Russian nationalists, was a fundamental element of his strategy. His agreement to the appointment of the radical Kunyaev as chief editor at *Nash sovremennik* was one important consequence of this.



## 7. Chief Editor Kunyaev:

### From Gorbachev to El'tsin

(Editorial team: chief editor Kunyaev, deputy chief editors Il'in & Kazintsev.

Journal issues: October 1989 - November 1991).

#### Part One: Thematic Analysis

In this period, events challenged popular and statist nationalist tendencies alike over the issue of statehood. The RSFSR emerged, strongly influenced by pro-El'tsin democrats, as an institution to rival the USSR and its various organs. The abortive coup of August 1991, organised by conservative Communists against Gorbachev and intended to strengthen the USSR, was followed that December by what in effect was a El'tsin-led 'counter-coup', which resulted in the creation of the Russian Federation as an independent state.

## Imagining the Nation

There was little popular nationalist writing on the nation as a rural community, the focus being redirected towards the nation as an Orthodox religious community, while negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms maintained their high profile. In the discussion of both these latter themes, statist, rather than popular, nationalists predominated.

1) A Rural Community Collectivisation, as the root cause of the parlous state of the contemporary Russian village, was the chief theme of writing on the countryside<sup>1</sup>. Fatei Shipunov's work on the Russian peasantry, *The Great Hush-Up*, described the Golden Age of traditional peasant Russia in the following idealised terms:

Evidently, in the depths of this peasant world lay something such as cannot be seen by everyone even now, and which preserved Russia. If we look closely, we shall see that the predominant combination of free farming with organised brotherly justice gave the peasant commune [obshchina] its strength. Agricultural labour had a spiritual meaning and source, for at its foundation lay a spiritual perception of the world, flowing from Orthodoxy. [This was] because labour had not so much a material, social and public meaning, as a moral one - it was a manifestation of love, the carrying out of a duty and a discipline, a feeling of artistic creativity.<sup>2</sup>

Vladimir Vasil'ev, in a new article on Fedor Abramov, castigated collectivisation as a war unleashed by Stalin against the peasants, and rejected the view that this policy had been the only means to achieve effective

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<sup>1</sup>On collectivisation, see also S. Vikulov, 'Posev i zhatva', NS, No. 1, pp. 15-27; No. 2, pp. 50-61, 1991; V. Belov, 'Nezazhivayushchaya rana. Pis'ma Vasiliyu Belovu', NS, No. 11, 1989, pp. 111-131.

<sup>2</sup>F. Shipunov, 'Velikaya zamyatnya', NS, No. 10, 1989, p. 123.

industrialisation<sup>3</sup>. Vasil'ev argued that the 'feudal means', by which collectivisation had been implemented, reflected the mentality, not of the peasants, but of the country's leadership.

2) A Religious Community Kazintsev, Kozhinov and Rasputin stressed the important role of Orthodoxy in Russian life. Kazintsev argued that Orthodoxy was an essential element of the 'Russian Idea', with an important role as a unifying and inspirational factor for Russian society, able to bring about a spiritual renaissance<sup>4</sup>. Rasputin stressed the part religion played in providing a foundation for the contemporary morality of the nation, and emphasised the special contribution of Old Belief<sup>5</sup>. Kozhinov argued that the Church remained a tremendous force despite persecution<sup>6</sup>. In his view, persecution was a typical result of the revolutionary endeavour to create, using human reason, 'heaven on earth' (he drew a comparison with the French Revolution). It had shown, he suggested, the 'tragic greatness' and 'all-powerfulness' (vsesilie) of the undefeated church.

Yurii Borodai, Kazintsev and Antonov argued that Orthodoxy was relevant to economics. In Borodai's view, Orthodox Russian economic traditions differed fundamentally both from Western capitalism, founded on the Protestant ethic, and from Soviet socialism<sup>7</sup>. He called for the

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<sup>3</sup>V. Vasil'ev, 'Metamorfozy "novogo" myshleniya', NS, No. 2, 1990, pp. 155-169.

<sup>4</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Ne ustupat' dukhu veka', NS, No. 12, 1991, pp. 177-181.

<sup>5</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Iz glubin v glubiny', NS, No. 11, 1989, pp. 157-161; V. Rasputin, 'Smysl davnego proshlogo', *ibid.*, pp. 150-157.

<sup>6</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Posleslovie', NS, No. 4, 1990, pp. 170-173 (an afterword to the addresses by Patriarch Tikhon to Soviet authorities and believers ['Istoriya Otechestva: dokumenty i sud'by', NS, No. 4, 1990, pp. 157-173]).

<sup>7</sup>Yu. Borodai, 'Komu byt' vladel'tsam zemli', NS, No. 3, 1990, pp. 102-119; 'Pochemu pravoslavnym ne goditsya protestantskii kapitalizm', No. 10, 1990, pp. 3-16.



resurrection of pre-Revolutionary Russian business traditions which, he believed, were based on Orthodoxy and represented a 'third way'.

Kazintsev suggested that material self-interest should, as Orthodoxy (and Dostoevskii and Sergei Bulgakov) taught, be subordinated to moral interests<sup>8</sup>. He claimed such a view was embodied in a 'Great Russian Truth' (or Orthodox moral code for social and economic behaviour) which had its origins in Kievan Rus'<sup>9</sup>. Kazintsev argued that, according to traditional Orthodox belief, wealth itself was a sin<sup>10</sup>. This enabled him to defend the ideas of social equality and social justice<sup>11</sup>, yet somewhat conflicted with his view that the philanthropic traditions of Russian nineteenth-century capitalism should be revived<sup>12</sup>.

Antonov suggested that the economic philosophy so desperately needed by the country lay in a 'synthesis of the ideas of political economy, Christianity and Russian cosmism' developed by Sergei Bulgakov<sup>13</sup>. The Christian ethic, he suggested, endowed labour with moral value<sup>14</sup>. The economy, therefore, became 'one of the manifestations of the universal struggle [...] of Christ and Antichrist' - of which he saw evidence in the current 'scandalous mismanagement of the national economy, unprecedented in human history'. Antonov accepted the market, but believed it should be based on 'firm moral foundations', the

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<sup>8</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod', *NS*, No. 10, 1989, pp. 152-172.

<sup>9</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Russkaya pravda', *NS*, No. 12, 1990, p. 166.

<sup>10</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Sergiev klyuchi', *NS*, No. 4, 1991, pp. 181-186.

<sup>11</sup>Kazintsev, 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod'.

<sup>12</sup>Kazintsev, 'Sergiev klyuchi'.

<sup>13</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', *NS*, No. 7, 1991, pp. 128-130.

<sup>14</sup>M. Antonov, 'Etika zhivogo khristianstva', *NS*, No 12, 1990, pp, 154-159.

traditions of orderliness, responsibility, charity and God-fearing of 'Holy Russia'.

3) A Cultural Community Popular nationalist Rasputin seemed to lose some of his confidence in the Russian people, interpreting 'Russianness' less as something which Russians were, than as something they should *become*. He called on Russians to create a truly national culture<sup>15</sup>, quoting Dostoevskii's plea to 'become Russian in the first place and above all', and linking the decline in moral standards to a decline in culture and art (for which he partly blamed the state).

Statist nationalists Kazintsev and Kozhinov took an opposite view. Kazintsev argued that Russian culture, which had survived the greatest smuta of all (the two-hundred-year-long occupation by the Mongols), had the strength to overcome its current difficulties<sup>16</sup>. Elsewhere, he argued that the contemporary press suppressed Russian national consciousness, failing to defend Russians and their interests. The media, he argued, used Western methods of propaganda to mislead the public about the political and economic situation in the country<sup>17</sup>.

Kozhinov, remarkably for a statist nationalist, intimated that Russian culture could endure without the state, arguing that the break-up of Rus' after the reign of Yaroslav had allowed Russian culture to develop and flourish in numerous, hitherto provincial, centres rather than in one

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<sup>15</sup>V. Rasputin, "'Pravaya, levaya, gde storona?'" , NS, No. 11, 1989, pp. 140-149.

<sup>16</sup>Kazintsev, 'Sergiev klyuchi'.

<sup>17</sup>Kazintsev, 'Korolevstvo krivykh zerkal', NS, No. 1, 1991, pp. 183-90.



capital city<sup>18</sup>. This diversity, he claimed, gave rise to the 'astonishing richness and greatness of this [Russian] people'.

Both Antonov and Belov wrote of the necessity of restoring the Russian intellectual, in particular philosophical, heritage<sup>19</sup>. Antonov argued that the Soviet regime had destroyed a tradition of philosophic and economic thought which had originated with the early Russian and Byzantine thinkers, and had been developed by the Russian philosophers of the turn of the century.

Antonov also argued, in pessimistic vein, that the decline in spiritual and moral standards at the end of the twentieth century had important implications for technology<sup>20</sup>. With Chernobyl, he argued, a 'global crisis' and a new era in human history had begun: the tension of living with the threat of nuclear disaster would lead to a breakdown of morality in society. Nuclear power, he argued, should, therefore, be banned for all but the most limited medical and specialist peaceful uses.

4) A Nation Defined by 'the Other' For Nash *sovremennik's* 'White' statist nationalists, the Jews remained the main representatives of 'the Other'. Kazintsev claimed the Jews aimed at 'complete domination' of the world and called on all 'patriots', 'from monarchists to Communists, from former dissidents to former bigwigs', to unite against this threat<sup>21</sup>. He believed that an anti-

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<sup>18</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Yaroslav Mudryi', *NS*, No. 11, 1991, pp. 176-178.

<sup>19</sup>V. Belov, 'Iz pepla...', *NS*, No 4, 1991, pp. 4-9; Antonov, *op. cit.*, No. 1, 1990, pp. 140-143.

<sup>20</sup>M. Antonov, 'Nravstvennye uroki katastrofy', *NS*, No. 1, 1990, pp. 140-143.

<sup>21</sup>Kazintsev, 'Ne ustupat' dukhu veka'.



national, 'cosmopolitan' elite, concentrated in Moscow, opposed *Nash sovremennik*, its views, and the interests of the Russian people<sup>22</sup>. He described the émigré paper *Novoe russkoe slovo* as a propaganda instrument of Jews and the state of Israel<sup>23</sup>. He execrated what he called the 'Rothschild idea', the view that money and personal enrichment were ends in themselves, which he believed to be alien to Orthodoxy and rooted in Calvinism and Judaism<sup>24</sup>. This idea, he considered, was the motivating ideology of the new economic elite - the new 'co-operators'.

Kazintsev also attacked what he called Jewish 'exclusivity'. Jews, he claimed, considered Jewish victims of violence and injustice more important than those of other nationalities<sup>25</sup>. Jews should accept that the anti-Jewish pogroms of the Civil War were just one small part of the violence inflicted on a wide range of social groups. Indeed, Russians, he insisted, had suffered more than other national groups from the disasters of the twentieth-century, and Jews should recognise their share of guilt for these sufferings. He described the purges of 1937 as a 'wheel of vengeance' which had visited Jews for their actions in the Revolution and Civil War.

Nonetheless, Kazintsev distinguished between two types of Jew: those who had enthusiastically adopted Bolshevism (and were therefore harmful to Russia), and those, such as Pasternak and Mandel'shtam, who had 'identified themselves

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<sup>22</sup>Kazintsev, 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod'.

<sup>23</sup>A. Kazintsev, "'Dlya malen'koi takoi kompanii'", *NS*, No. 2, 1991, pp. 188-192.

<sup>24</sup>Kazintsev, 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod'.

<sup>25</sup>A. Kazintsev, "'Ya boryus' s pustotoi'", *NS*, No. 11, 1990, pp. 157-165.

with Russia' and were, in his view, hostile to both Zionism and Bolshevism<sup>26</sup>. A similar approach was adopted by Kozhinov, who distinguished between a 'Jewish nationalism', based on the Judaic religion and concerned with the development of a specifically national culture, and 'International Zionism'<sup>27</sup>. This latter was not based on any religious or cultural identity, but was a secularised international political movement, motivated by 'the idea of domination of the world'<sup>28</sup>, and deriving its strength from the control of 'immense economic might'<sup>29</sup>, operating on a world scale.

In the view of both Kazintsev and Kozhinov, then, if to be Jewish was, at the least, to be suspect, paradoxically, the most dangerous Jews were those <sup>Zionists (not Pasternak or Mandel'shtam)</sup> who had lost their Jewish culture. As Laqueur has pointed out, the worst aspect of Jews, in this kind of anti-Semitic thinking, was that they had rejected their Jewishness:

[Such authors] maintained that Zhidomasonstvo ("Jewmasonry", as it was called in Russia) was not even specifically Jewish, since the Jews belonging to it were *deraciné*, uprooted cosmopolitans.<sup>30</sup>

Kozhinov also laid special stress on the influence of Zionism on the mass media in the USA. He sought to show how Zionists manipulated the mass media to their own ends, for example by artificially creating an image of Albert Einstein as a Jew of unique genius<sup>31</sup>. In Kozhinov's view, Einstein was simply a rather gifted scientist.

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<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>27</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Sionizm Mikhaïla Agurskogo i internatsionalisticheski sionizm', *NS*, No. 6, 1990, pp. 136-154.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>30</sup>Laqueur, *Black Hundred: The Rise of the Extreme Right in Russia*, p. 38.

<sup>31</sup>Kozhinov, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-54; V. Kozhinov, 'Neobkhodimoe dopolnenie k nedavnei stat'e', *NS*, No. 9, 1990, pp. 155-56.



In the second part of *Russophobia*, Shafarevich sought to show that Communist ideology and the Revolution itself were the result of Jewish influence<sup>32</sup>. In *The Sixth Monarchy*, like Kozhinov, he argued that it was the Jewish minority which controlled the mass media in both Russia and the West<sup>33</sup>. He claimed that a people (narod) is instinctively guided by its own self-interest and, since all social forces are based on nationality, forces harmful to the Russian people must be foreign (inorodnyi) in origin. This was the point Fatei Shipunov pressed home in *The Great Hush Up*, in which he identified the causes of collectivisation in the Jewish ethnic origin of key officials<sup>34</sup>.

*Nash sovremennik* published a *Letter of the Writers of Russia* which was something of a summary of the anti-Semitic sentiment expressed elsewhere in the journal<sup>35</sup>. Jews, the *Letter* argued, were plotting to take over the world. They already dominated the mass media and propagated rusofobiya. Current events in Russia were the result of this Jewish-inspired conspiracy. The ideology of perestroika was essentially pro-fascist and pro-Zionist. The *Letter* accused the KGB of fabricating the idea of a Russian fascism and the 'threat' of anti-Jewish pogroms.

Some variety for *Nash sovremennik's* readers was provided by writing on other enemies, namely Freemasons, the West and Soviet power. For Kuz'min, for example, Freemasonry was a

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<sup>32</sup>I. Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya', *NS*, No. 11, 1989, pp. 162-172.

<sup>33</sup>I. Shafarevich, 'Shestaya monarkhiya', *NS*, No. 6, 1990, pp. 136-154.

<sup>34</sup>F. Shipunov, 'Velikaya zamyatnya', *NS*, No. 12, 1989, pp. 155-156; No. 3, 1990, p. 121-2.

<sup>35</sup>'Pis'mo pisatelei, kul'turnykh i nauchnykh deyatelei Rossii', *NS*, No. 4, 1990, pp. 136-145.



major foe of the Russian people and he pointed to the important role played by Freemasons in the Provisional Government as proof<sup>36</sup>. Whereas for the 'White' Kazintsev, the most harmful Jews were those who had supported the Bolsheviks, for the 'Red' Kuz'min all the Bolsheviks' political opponents were tarred with the brush of Freemasonry: 'Parties from Mensheviks to Oktyabrists were oriented towards organisations of a Masonic type'<sup>37</sup>.

The theme of the West as an enemy remained prominent. Rasputin linked the spiritual and ecological ills of Russia in the twentieth century with capitalism and the spirit of commercialism<sup>38</sup>. Antonov argued that alien, harmful values - a 'consumer psychosis', a 'trading', 'comprador' and 'pragmatic' mentality - had come in from the West<sup>39</sup>.

A new voice, that of popular nationalist Leonid Borodin, released from his second term in prison camp in August 1987 and soon to take over from Vladimir Krupin as chief editor of *Moskva*, cast Soviet power in the role of 'the Other' in his novel, *The Third Truth*<sup>40</sup>. The two chief characters in his novel had contrasting fates: Ryabinin, a conscientious Soviet citizen, spent twenty-five years in camps for arresting an important official for poaching; Selivanov, whose father was killed by the Reds in the Civil War, always pursued his own, independent path, and remained at liberty. Asked by Ryabinin whether he recognised the authorities, Selivanov characteristically replied: 'I take

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<sup>36</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 123-125.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>38</sup>V. Rasputin, 'Sumerki lyudei', *NS*, No. 9, 1990, pp. 111-117.

<sup>39</sup>Antonov, 'Nravstvennye uroki katastrofy'.

<sup>40</sup>L. Borodin, 'Tret'ya pravda', *NS*, No. 1, pp. 10-55; No. 2, pp. 19-56, 1990.

care of myself [sam po sebe] and the authorities take care of themselves!'<sup>41</sup>. Elsewhere he described his view as neither 'Red' nor 'White' but a 'third truth' - 'Everything for the ordinary man [vse dlya muzhika]'<sup>42</sup>. After Ryabinin's death, Selivanov went to the local KGB office and put 'the most important question in [his] life' to the officer in charge: 'You see, I've got to find out...this regime [vlast'] of ours, our very own Soviet regime, for how much longer is it going to rule us?'<sup>43</sup>.

### Legitimising the State

The 'Jewish question' aside, the journal's main theme was that of the Russian state and its future. While both 'White' and 'Red' statist tendencies were clearly expressed, two authors, Kazintsev and Prokhanov, showed signs of moving from 'White' to 'Red' positions.

1) A White Legitimation of the State A 'White' statist position was put forward by Dmitrii Il'in and Igor' Shafarevich. In *The 'Russian Idea' on the Testbed of Democracy*, Il'in argued that the essence of the 'Russian idea' was authoritarian political power underpinned by the Orthodox Church<sup>44</sup>. 'The nature of power', he wrote, 'excludes pluralism at the top of the pyramid'<sup>45</sup>. Orthodoxy, he claimed, had given identity and purpose to the young Russian state as it 'gathered together' other states and peoples into a political unit. Only authoritarian state

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<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 1, 1990, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>44</sup>D. Il'in, "'Russkaya ideya" na poligone "demokratii"', *NS*, No. 3, 1991, pp. 15-28.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 6.



power and Orthodoxy could now prevent 'rebellion and anarchy' of the kind that had occurred in February and October 1917. The Soviet attempt to create a 'cosmopolitan "Soviet nation"' could only result in the destruction of the Russian state and its ability to withstand the West.

Shafarevich, like Il'in, also rejected the Communist idea outright<sup>46</sup>. Some argue, he opined, that socialism in the USSR, China, Vietnam, Cambodia and eastern Europe was a distortion of real socialism. 'But', he rhetorically asked, 'if the ideal is unsuccessfully put into practice so systematically, then what is the probability that the next realisation will be more successful?'<sup>47</sup>.

More simply, Kazintsev put forward the argument that the real opposition to the Communist regime in the 1970s and 1980s had not been the dissident movement, but had consisted of the adherents of the Russian Idea<sup>48</sup>. *Nash sovremennik* under Vikulov and Seleznev, he claimed, had, at the beginning of the 1980s, been the 'single legally existing opposition journal'. Aleksandr Prokhanov argued that the country was undergoing a crisis of centralism, from which it could be saved only by an 'ideology of national salvation' in which the Orthodox Church, the Russian people, Russian values and, above all, the army played the key roles<sup>49</sup>.

2) A 'Red' Legitimation of the State A contrasting 'Red' view was advocated by Antonov and Kuz'min. Antonov

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<sup>46</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 128-130.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>48</sup>A. Kazintsev, 'Pridvornye dissidenty i "pogibshee pokolenie"', *NS*, No. 3, 1991, pp. 171-176.

<sup>49</sup>A. Prokhanov, 'Zametki konservatora', *NS*, No. 5, 1990, pp. 85-98.



argued that while Orthodoxy and socialism were incompatible 'in logic', in history the two had existed side by side and would continue to do so<sup>50</sup>. Socialism was the ineradicable 'ideal of social justice' of the Russian people which, as soon as the market showed its true face, would gain 'millions of new supporters'. Yet Antonov argued that a purely socialist ideology was insufficient, what was needed was a 'national-patriotism', such as had replaced 'non-national internationalism' during the Great Patriotic War. The Russian people were both a 'people with a strong state-consciousness' (narod-gosudarstvennik) who, at great sacrifice, had created a Great Power over more than a thousand years, and a people faithful to a 'popular-socialist' (narodno-sotsialisticheskii) choice, based on the Orthodox understanding of brotherhood, the traditions of communal life and love of the fatherland.

Kuz'min stressed the role of socialism in the maintenance of a strong state structure<sup>51</sup>. On the one hand, he argued that socialism was 'a scientific regulation of social relations' (social planning) - a 'great achievement' which was itself the essence of statehood (gosudarstvennost'). On the other, socialism was the principle of social justice, giving social guarantees and equality to all ethnic groups. Social justice was derived from Russian national traditions which, based on a collectivist way of life and thought, were intimately linked with Russian Orthodoxy and its teachings.

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<sup>50</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 132-133.  
<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 123-125.

Kuz'min argued that, under perestroika, an anarchy similar to that of 1917 had developed: society had 'gone wild' and ended up in a 'total crisis'; planning had ceased to be scientific, while the introduction of the market had put an end to social justice, divorcing social relations from morality<sup>52</sup>. He warned that if this continued, the establishment of a new order might result in fascism. The fundamental cause of the crisis of legitimacy, he argued, was the destruction, in the course of the 1920s and 1930s, of those national traditions which had enabled Russians to accept socialism; and to the widening of the gulf, traditional in Russian society, between leaders and led. In Kuz'min's view, Lenin and Stalin were 'statesmen', 'patriots' promoting 'Socialism in One Country', who had perceived 1917 as a chance of 'realising the enormous potential' of Russia and were prepared to take the necessary severe measures. In practice, however, these measures had been implemented by 'Cosmopolitans', or 'Bolshevik Westernisers', such as Bukharin, Trotskii, Zinov'ev and Bogdanov, proponents of the Proletkult and World Revolution who were hostile to patriotism and 'deeply alien to the idea of Russian statehood'<sup>53</sup>.

In a second article, Aleksandr Prokhanov argued that the only hope of preserving Russia's historical statehood lay in 'an ideology of national survival', the chief instrument of which, in a change of emphasis from 'White' to 'Red',

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<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>A. Kuz'min & A. Vinogradov, 'Pis'mo bez avtografy', NS, No. 8, 1990, pp. 148-151 (introduction to I. Britan, 'Ibo ya - bol'shevik! Ili neizvestnoe pis'mo N. Bukharina(?)', NS, No. 8, 1990, pp. 152-159).



was the newly-created Russian Communist Party<sup>54</sup>. Kazintsev, also drawing closer to a 'Red' position, now expressed his support for the creation of a Russian Communist Party, which would act, in his words, as a 'powerful centre for the consolidation of patriotic forces'<sup>55</sup>. He also wrote that, in his view, any kind of social order was better than chaos (*smuta*), in an implicit justification of the Bolshevik seizure of power<sup>56</sup>. He argued that it was a 'lack of will' which had brought about the collapse of the Tsarist state: no social groups had been prepared to defend the state at the time of the Revolution.

Kazintsev argued that the will to create order in contemporary Russia was also lacking<sup>57</sup>. He called on readers to support the opposition Soyuz group of USSR Congress deputies, led by Alksnis, the main aim of which was preservation of the Soviet state<sup>58</sup>. He defended the USSR's Great Power status, expressing contempt for the abandonment of eastern Europe and Gorbachev's support for US action in the Gulf<sup>59</sup>. He criticised economic reform, condemning capitalist privatisation<sup>60</sup>. He predicted the authorities would resort to force to suppress social discontent<sup>61</sup>, the systems of social security and free education would collapse, and the social position of the intelligentsia would decline<sup>62</sup>.

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<sup>54</sup>A. Prokhanov, 'Ideologiya vyzhivaniya', *NS*, No. 6, 1990, pp. 3-9. See Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-177.

<sup>55</sup>B. Gidasov (interview by A. Kazintsev), 'U nas khvatit voli', *NS*, No. 5, 1990, pp. 3-5.

<sup>56</sup>Kazintsev, 'Obshchestvo, lishennoe voli'.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*; Kazintsev, 'Za pravo imet' dom na zemle'.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.* On Soyuz, founded in February 1990, see Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-51.

<sup>59</sup>Kazintsev, 'Za pravo imet' dom na zemle'.

<sup>60</sup>Kazintsev, 'Korolevstvo krivykh zerkal'.

<sup>61</sup>A. Kazintsev, '12 iyunya, do i posle' *Nash sovremennik*, No. 8, 1991, pp. 171-175.

<sup>62</sup>Kazintsev, 'Obiraly i rotozei'.



3) A 'Red' Statist Reformism Antonov's opposition to reform now became more strident. Nevertheless, he continued to be a rare voice in putting forward reformist counter-proposals<sup>63</sup>. Antonov argued that the leaders of perestroika were encouraging the penetration of foreign capital into the country, a course designed to benefit only the wealthy few, while the economy was destroyed by crime. The 'minority' (Antonov used Shafarevich's terminology of the 'small people [Malyi narod]'), however, had to be forced to serve the interests of the 'majority' (Bol'shoi narod). This meant the country had to ensure its economic independence, which neither the patriotic nor the democratic opposition saw the need for at present. The administrative-command system should be preserved, while there should be wide communal self-government at local level.

4) A State Defined by the 'Other' Western states were defined as enemies; Western political institutions were rejected as models. Kazintsev argued that Western states were permanent enemies of Russia and would take advantage of the current 'time of troubles' to further their own ends<sup>64</sup>. He viewed the introduction of elections as merely a symptom of the gradual break-up of the Soviet state<sup>65</sup>.

Il'in dismissed the Western ideal of democracy as nothing more than a struggle for power which destroyed the fabric of society<sup>66</sup>. Antonov argued that Western democratic

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<sup>63</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 132-3.

<sup>64</sup>Kazintsev, 'Obshchestvo, lishennoe voli'.

<sup>65</sup>Kazintsev: '12 iyunya, do i posle'; 'Obshchestvo, lishennoe voli'.

<sup>66</sup>Il'in, "'Russkaya ideya" na poligone "demokratii"', p. 10.

and economic models, including the 'legal state in the Western understanding of the term' and other 'abstract concepts', would not take root in the USSR<sup>67</sup>. Antonov also argued that 'the temptations of the flourishing West' might hinder Russia from achieving her 'high historical calling', which was 'to overcome all difficulties and crises and find her own path of development'<sup>68</sup>:

In a sketch of Yaroslav the Wise, Kozhinov dwelt on what he considered to be the superiority of Rus', ruled by Yaroslav at the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh centuries, over every other contemporary state (including those of the West), with the exception of Byzantium<sup>69</sup>. Russian history was not 'only dark and shameful pages', as some historians conveyed, he insisted. The Russia over which Yaroslav ruled, Kozhinov argued, was immensely impressive in terms of both military might and social, cultural, religious and legal development: 'There was not in Europe or Asia a country which could compare at that time with Russia'.

Kozhinov also suggested the historical state of the Khazars, which adopted Judaism, was the chief enemy of ancient Rus'<sup>70</sup>. He argued that it was under the influence of the Jewish Khazars, who hated Christianity, that the Russian princes Oleg and Igor' were drawn to fight against Byzantium. Princess Ol'ga is portrayed as a good and strong-willed

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<sup>67</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 132-133.

<sup>68</sup>Antonov, 'Etika zhivogo khristianstva'.

<sup>69</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Yaroslav Mudryi', NS, 1991, No 11, pp. 176-178.

<sup>70</sup>V. Kozhinov, 'Ob epokhe svyatoi Ol'gi', NS, No 6, 1991, pp. 160-163. Kozhinov based his argument on the historian Gumilev (L. Gumilev, *Drevnyaya Rus' i Velikaya step'*, Moscow, 1989, pp. 194-195).



princess who opposed the Khazars, sought alliances with Byzantium and herself became a Christian.

5) RSFSR - A Potential Popular Nationalist State? 'White' statist nationalist Kazintsev expressed mixed feelings about the potential for RSFSR institutions in the political fight against reform. He expressed support for the founding of a Russian Communist Party, avowedly to strengthen the position of the RSFSR within the Soviet Union (a position, Kazintsev stressed, weakened by the traditional practice of subsidising other republics at the RSFSR's expense)<sup>71</sup>. Elsewhere he dismissed the idea of RSFSR 'sovereignty' as just one more such symptom of the break-up of the Soviet Union, and no substitute for USSR-statehood<sup>72</sup>. He believed there was a slight chance, however, that appeals to Russian sovereignty might finally awake the Russian national spirit. Popular nationalist, Vasilii Belov, by contrast, was more sanguine about the RSFSR, highlighting the importance of the Russian republic as an embodiment of Russian ethnic aspirations<sup>73</sup>. He insisted on the need to defend ethnic identities, speaking out against the 'fusion' of different peoples.

### Conclusions on Themes

In this period, 'Red' and 'White' statist nationalist tendencies, while not abandoning their distinctive features, were drawn together by the one central feature of their ideology: the legitimisation of the state. 'White' writing

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<sup>71</sup>Gidasov, 'U nas khvatit voli'.

<sup>72</sup>Kazintsev, '12 iyunya, do i posle'.

<sup>73</sup>V. Belov, 'Vystuplenie V. I. Belova na pervoi sessii Verkhovnogo soveta SSSR 3 avgusta 1989 g', NS, No. 10, 1989, pp. 4-5.



was characterised by an attempt to co-opt the Orthodox Church as a state-building institution. 'Red' views were based on a commitment to socialism, and to the strong state which socialism could provide. The views of the 'Red', idiosyncratic Antonov were something of an exception, seeking to achieve an ideological unity of Communism and Orthodoxy. Yet in this he was also something of a trail-blazer, to be followed in this period by such as Kazintsev and Prokhanov.

As Walter Laqueur has observed, 'Conspiracy theories of history have been for a long time part of Russian political psychology'<sup>74</sup>. The continuing success of the reforms, and the persistent failure of nationalist and conservative ideologies to compete with democratic alternatives, provided fertile ground for these theories to flourish. Again, as in earlier periods, however, this type of writing was dominated by statist nationalists.

The *Letter of the Writers of Russia* is an excellent example of what Hosking has described, à propos Arkhimandrit Fotii's 1824 denunciation of the Bible Society, as 'a characteristic Russian genre':

[It was a denunciation] evoking in melodramatic terms the apocalyptic dangers facing the country from a mixture of international godless conspiracy and subversion sown by irresponsible and evil-minded people at home'.<sup>75</sup>

Such denunciations, according to Hosking, were motivated by a sense of external vulnerability, a feeling of internal weakness, secrecy and the lack of public discussion of difficult issues<sup>76</sup>. All these factors would

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<sup>74</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>75</sup>G. Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*, p. 141.

<sup>76</sup>*Ibid.*

seem to have been operative among Russian nationalists in the late twentieth century.

Yanov has argued that Russian nationalism would develop into a type of fascism<sup>77</sup>. Dunlop has observed that: 'A number of the markings of pre-Second World War fascism began to be observable among elements of the Russian conservative coalition during 1990 and 1991'<sup>78</sup>. He has identified six elements of a proto-fascism. Four of these would seem, indeed, to be present in *Nash sovremennik*: 1) a hatred of pluralist democracy and a desire for a strong authoritarian state; 2) the singling out of people engaged in making money as 'particularly invidious enemies'; 3) a typically fascist xenophobia against other peoples and international enemies; and 4) a situation of economic crisis and national humiliation. Crucially for a proto-fascist ideology, however, two elements are missing: 1) the elitist and heroic character of Russian proto-fascists, deeming themselves called upon to save and lead their nations; 2) echoes of fascist myths of the nation, race and the Leader. In general terms, therefore, the predominant political ideology in *Nash sovremennik* at this period may be described as a statist Russian nationalism, but not as fascism. Moreover, despite the impact of Gorbachev's reforms and the mounting political and economic crisis, this statist nationalist ideology was essentially the same as that which could have been read in the journal in 1981.

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<sup>77</sup>Yanov, *The Russian Challenge and the Year 2000*, p. 9.

<sup>78</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

## Part Two: Political Analysis

### Chief Editor Kunyaev

The appointment of a radical 'White' statist nationalist such as Stanislav Kunyaev as chief editor of *Nash sovremennik* marked an important moment in the perestroika of the Soviet system of the administration of literature. It indicated that Gorbachev was continuing to relax, and dismantle, the system of party and state controls. Glavlit, for example, which by mid-1989 confined itself to giving consultation and advice, rather than instructions, within a year ceased to function<sup>79</sup>. When Kunyaev appointed his deputy chief editors, he did not need to secure Central Committee confirmation<sup>80</sup>.

Kunyaev's appointment is also evidence to indicate that what Dunlop has called 'Gorbachev's first "shift to the right"'<sup>81</sup>, which took place between October and December 1989, had been planned in advance. In October, the month in which the first issue of Kunyaev's *Nash sovremennik* came out, Gorbachev attacked the liberal press, calling on Starkov, chief editor of *Argumenty i fakty*, to resign, at a meeting with editors in the Kremlin<sup>82</sup>. In November, Evgenii Averin, liberal editor of *Knizhnoe obozrenie*, whom Kunyaev had attacked in *Nash sovremennik* the previous January<sup>83</sup>, was told to resign by the chair of Goskomizdat, the paper's

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<sup>79</sup>The last issue of *NS* to bear a censor's number was that for August, 1990 ('Podpisano k pechatu 31.7.90').

<sup>80</sup>Kunyaev, interview.

<sup>81</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>83</sup>Kunyaev, 'A. Shchipov i ego mal'chiki'.



parent organisation<sup>84</sup>. However, in the event, neither Starkov nor Averin lost their jobs, and the reformers succeeded in retaining the liberal draft of the new law on the press<sup>85</sup>.

Clearly, in moving to the political right, Gorbachev was acting under pressure from his conservative opponents. Yet to what extent Gorbachev was voluntarily seeking allies against his 'democratic' adversaries remains an open question.

### Kunyaev's Views

Kunyaev believed that *Nash sovremennik*, under Vikulov, had failed to fulfil its potential in the conditions of *glasnost*'. As befitted a 'man of the 1960s' (*shestidesyatnik*), he harboured the ambition of creating a journal to match Tvardovskii's *Novyi mir*<sup>86</sup>. Yet Tvardovskii's relatively liberal world view was not Kunyaev's. Moreover, Tvardovskii's coalition-building approach, encompassing a wide range of writers and views, was not to Kunyaev's taste. The new chief editor saw a more attractive role model in the radical statist nationalist, Yurii Seleznev<sup>87</sup>. Indeed, on the fiftieth anniversary of Seleznev's birth, Kunyaev showed his admiration by publishing in *Nash sovremennik* a photograph of the former deputy chief editor, above a poem by Kunyaev dedicated to Seleznev<sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>84</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

<sup>85</sup>See 'Zakon SSSR o pechaty i drugikh sredstvakh massovoi informatsii', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 50, December 13th, 1989, p. 7.

<sup>86</sup>Kunyaev, interview.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup>S. Kunyaev, 'Vyzyvayu ogon' na sebya', *NS*, No. 12, 1989 (inside front cover).

Kunyaev's early public statements on literature, as on politics, gave mixed signals as to which path he would follow. In the first issue of the journal to appear under his name, Kunyaev pledged to 'carefully preserve and develop the traditions' of the journal nurtured by Vikulov during his twenty years as chief editor<sup>89</sup>. In early October, Kunyaev told a public meeting, jointly organised by *Nash sovremennik* and the All-Russian Bureau for the Propaganda of Literature (a body of the RSFSR Writers' Union), 'We are seeking means of dialogue with our opponents'<sup>90</sup>.

However, in an interview given immediately after his appointment, Kunyaev stressed a distinction between *Russian* (*russskaya*) literature, written by ethnic Russians, and *Russian-language* (*russskoyazychnaya*) literature, written by non-Russians<sup>91</sup>. This begged the question as to who was to be defined as 'Russian', but reflected the view, widely held among radical nationalists, that writers of Jewish origin should be excluded from the ranks of Russian writers. In October, Kunyaev identified the journal with Gorbachev's opponents, involving *Nash sovremennik* in the organisation of 'Rossiya', a club for People's Deputies of the RSFSR and USSR congresses of a nationalist orientation, in which other participants included the RSFSR Writers' Union and the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*<sup>92</sup>. By late November, Kunyaev was denouncing the political leadership, before

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<sup>89</sup>Redkollegiya zhurnala, 'Obrashchenie k chitatelyu', NS, No. 10, 1989, p. 192.

<sup>90</sup>'Rossiya - den' nyneshnii, poiski budushchego', Literaturnaya gazeta, No. 40, October 4th, 1989, p. 7.

<sup>91</sup>S. Kunyaev (interview by A. Pisarev), 'Ideya i stikhiya', Literaturnaya Rossiya, No. 33, August 18th, 1989, p. 5.

<sup>92</sup>'Sostoyalos' uchreditel'noe sobranie - 'Deputatskii klub "Rossiya"', Sovetskaya Rossiya, No. 246, October 25th, 1989, p. 2.



Gorbachev in person, for failing to control what he called the 'anarchy' sweeping the country<sup>93</sup>.

### A New Publication Policy

The new thrust of Kunyaev's publication policy was felt immediately, in the first three months from October to December 1989, with a series of anti-Semitic articles, including the second part of Shafarevich's *Russophobia* and Kazintsev's peroration on the 'Rothschild Idea'<sup>94</sup>. Traditional publitsistika lost out (neither I. Vasil'ev nor Sinitsyn was published), and certain themes were either dropped (the anti-alcohol campaign) or reduced in prominence (ecological issues). The journal therefore lost something of its traditional rural focus under the new chief editor, and became more a publication for the contemporary urban reader<sup>95</sup>.

If Kunyaev's innovations indicated, in part, his 'factional' - 'White' statist nationalist - interests, there were also signs of an attempt to reduce any potential for conflict with his popular nationalist allies. Popular nationalists Belov and Rasputin were confirmed as leading contributors to the journal<sup>96</sup>. In particular, the statist nationalist Kunyaev made a concession to Belov's views on the importance of the RSFSR, as an embodiment of Russian ethnic aspirations, by printing the latter's speech on this

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<sup>93</sup>'Trevogi obshchestva - trevogi kul'tury', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 48, December 1st, 1990, p. 4.

<sup>94</sup>Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya'; Kazintsev, 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod'.

<sup>95</sup>See Brudny, 'The Heralds of Opposition to Perestroyka', p. 191.

<sup>96</sup>See Belov, 'Nezazhivayushchaya rana. Pis'ma Vasiliyu Belovu'; Rasputin, "'Pravaya, levaya gde storona?'. Smysl davnego proshlogo. Iz glubin v glubiny'.



theme to the USSR Supreme Soviet<sup>97</sup>. Belov believed the speech had been boycotted by other media<sup>98</sup>.

### Deputy Chief Editor Dmitrii Il'in

Kunyaev's choice as first deputy chief editor, to replace Svininnikov, was Dmitrii Il'in (b. 1938), an army officer turned literary editor and critic, latterly working at the *Sovremennik* publishing house (headed by former *Nash sovremennik* deputy chief editor Anatolii Frolov). Il'in also had links with the Gor'kii Institute of World Literature (Institut mirovoi literatury imeni Gor'kogo [IMLI]). Il'in's appointment can be interpreted as a move to strengthen the journal's links with the military<sup>99</sup>. It also had an ideological motivation, since Il'in's 'White' statist nationalist views were more in tune with those of Kunyaev than those of Svininnikov had been. The creation of the Il'in-Kazintsev combination, therefore, broke with the Red-White coalition of the preceding period and established a 'Whiter' journal.

### A 'White' Journal: January - December, 1990

To emphasise the break with the past and the new ideological direction, the January 1990 issue came out with a new cover, symbolically white, displaying the statue of Minin and Pozharskii, the two 'provincials' from Nizhnii

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<sup>97</sup>Belov, 'Vystuplenie V. I. Belova na pervoi sessii Verkhovnogo soveta SSSR 3 avgusta 1989 g'.

<sup>98</sup>See V. Belov, 'Slovo Rossii', *NS*, No. -10, 1989, pp. 3-5; 'Takaya vot glasnost'', *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>99</sup>See D. Il'in & V. Provotorov: 'Kto vy, Doktor Timofeev-Resovskii?', *NS*, No. 11, 1989, pp. 173-188; 'Kinopromyvanie mozgov. Pis'mo v redaktsiyu', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No 57, 20th March, 1991, pp. 1-2. V. Provotorov was a major-general and a senior aide to the Chief Military Prosecutor, a confirmation of Il'in's links with the military.

Novgorod who saved Russia from foreigners in the seventeenth century, which stands in Red Square.

Yet paradoxically, this 'oppositionist' journal now received strong official support. On Kunyaev's appointment *Nash sovremennik's* print-run had surged from 250,685 to 313,000 copies (the highest level since 1982). In January 1990, the print-run rose by 54% (to 482,000), the only journal to experience such a major up-turn<sup>100</sup>. Since the journal's publisher, *Krasnaya zvezda*, belonged to the Ministry of Defence, it might be hypothesised that the increase in print-run was directly owing to support from the military.

The struggle for paper showed statist nationalist Kunyaev taking cognisance of the importance of RSFSR institutions. In a published appeal to paper producers, the journal complained that, although the RSFSR produced 80% of paper in the USSR, *Nash sovremennik*, a 'voice of Russian [rossiiskoi] glasnost'', was unable to obtain sufficient paper<sup>101</sup>. The editors noted that appeals to the Central Committee, Gosplan, the Councils of Ministers of the USSR and the RSFSR and the Ministry of Forestry and Paper had gone unheeded<sup>102</sup>. This is despite the fact that Vitalii Vorotnikov, then chair of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, has claimed that he persistently pressed the Central Committee during 1989 to raise the quality and quantity of RSFSR print and electronic media.

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<sup>100</sup>Il'in attributed the rise to the publication of Solzhenitsyn (Il'in, interview). The out-going deputy chief editor, Svininnikov, believed, on the contrary, that at this time some subscribers cancelled their subscriptions in protest (Svininnikov, interview).

<sup>101</sup>'Dorogie druz'ya', *NS*, No. 3, 1990 (inside front cover).

<sup>102</sup>V. Vorotnikov, *A bylo eto tak...*, *Sovet veteranov knigoizdaniya*, Moscow, 1995, pp. 269 & 290.



The Solzhenitsyn 'litmus test' clearly divided 'Whites' from 'Reds'. As publication of *October 1916* began, Kunyaev replaced 'Red' statist nationalist members of the editorial board (all close to Vikulov) - Svininnikov, Frolov, Khvatov, Shundik and (popular nationalist) Fokina - with new 'White' members - Kozhinov, Soloukhin, Shafarevich, Sorokin and Yurii Kuznetsov. In particular, the appointment of Kozhinov was important. Kunyaev's close associate from his days at Moscow University was one of the most active and influential of statist nationalist publicists. He was to bring writers<sup>103</sup>, for example the poet Yurii Kuznetsov, and editors (in the form of a new team of young 'White' editors) to the journal<sup>104</sup>.

Kunyaev had been keen to publish Solzhenitsyn's *Oktyabr' 1916*, in particular the fragment 'Lenin in Zurich' which stressed the influence the Jew Parvus (Helphand) exercised over Lenin<sup>105</sup>. There were also historical parallels to be drawn between the Congress of People's Deputies and the Duma described in the novel<sup>106</sup>. For his part, Solzhenitsyn perhaps agreed to the publication in *Nash sovremennik* because of the journal's association with Belov, Rasputin and Astaf'ev, writers he was known to favour<sup>107</sup>. Shafarevich had been instrumental in enabling Kunyaev to enter into a correspondence with Solzhenitsyn<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>103</sup>Yu. Kuznetsov, 'Dukh ili veter', *NS*, No. 10, 1989, pp. 73-75; 'Svecha', *NS*, No. 6, 1990, pp. 3-6; 'Zov', *NS*, No. 11, pp. 11-13.

<sup>104</sup>A. Pozdnyakov, interview 22/9/94.

<sup>105</sup>Kunyaev, interview. See A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Oktyabr' shestnadtsatogo', *NS*, No. 8, pp. 67-78; No. 9, pp. 24-43, 64-87; No. 10, pp. 21-28, No. 11, pp. 36-65, 1990.

<sup>106</sup>Kunyaev, interview. See A. Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, No. 8, pp. 102-120; No. 11, pp. 19-36, 83-96; No. 12, pp. 76-99, 1990.

<sup>107</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, "'Istoricheski i mirovospriyatno pravoslavie dlya nas na pervom meste', *Moskva*, No. 9, 1995, p. 161.

<sup>108</sup>A. Segen', interview 24/6/93.



As publication began, supporters of Solzhenitsyn identified themselves by contributing to appreciations of the writer which accompanied the first instalment. They included Soloukhin, Shafarevich, Rasputin, Borodin and Krupin<sup>109</sup>.

In addition to Solzhenitsyn, popular nationalist authors published at this time were Borodin, Astaf'ev and Rasputin<sup>110</sup>. There was a new interest in émigré and pre-Revolutionary writers<sup>111</sup>. 'White' tendencies also predominated in criticism and publitsistika, characterised by appeals to the Orthodox essence of the Russian nation, anti-Semitism, and a hostility to reformers and the reformist regime<sup>112</sup>. The 'White' Borodai became the journal's leading writer on economics<sup>113</sup>.

It needs to be noted, however, that this enthusiasm for 'White' positions masked a deep divide between statist and popular nationalist tendencies. Solzhenitsyn was a 'White' popular nationalist who believed in the necessity for a Russian 'ethnic state', as he made clear in his September 1990 article on the future of the Russian state<sup>114</sup>. Kunyaev,

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<sup>109</sup>'Slovo o Solzhenitsyne', *NS*, No. 1, 1990, pp. 58-67.

<sup>110</sup>See V. Astaf'ev, 'Ne khvataet serdtsa', *NS*, No. 8, 1990, pp. 3-30 (a previously unpublished chapter from *Tsar Fish*, which told of the tragic death of a Christian in a Stalinist labour camp); Borodin, 'Tret'ya pravda'; Rasputin, 'Sumerki lyudei'.

<sup>111</sup>See A. Belyi, 'Shtempelevannaya kul'tura', *NS*, No. 8, 1990, pp. 184-187; I. Bunin, 'Vospominaniya', *NS*, No. 11, 1990, pp. 179-189; K. Leont'ev, 'Natsional'naya politika kak orudie vsemirnoi revolyutsii. O vsemirnoi lyubvi', *NS*, No. 7, 1990, pp. 155-170; A. Remizov, 'Slovo o gibeli Russkoi zemli', *NS*, No. 10, 1990, pp. 183-185; V. Rozanov: "'Opavshie list'ya. Korob vtoroi', *NS*, No. 10, 1990, pp. 122-131; I. Shmelev, 'Inorodnoe telo', *NS*, No. 11, 1990, pp. 103-110; I. Solonevich, 'Dukh naroda', *NS*, No. 5, 1990, pp. 144-179.

<sup>112</sup>See Kazintsev: "'Ya boryus' s pustotoi"; 'Chetyre protsenta i nash narod'; 'Russkaya pravda'; Kozhinov: 'Neobkhodimoe dopolnenie k nedavnei stat'e'; 'Istoriya Otechestva: dokumenty i sud'by'; 'Sionizm Mikhaila Agurskogo i internatsionalisticheskii sionizm'; Lobanov, 'V srazhen'e i lyubvi'; V. Vasil'ev, 'Metamorfozy "novogo" myshleniya'; Shafarevich: 'Shestaya monarkhiya'; 'Posleslovie', *NS*, No. 11, 1990, pp. 144-147; Kuz'min (with A. Vinogradov), 'Pis'mo bez avtografa'; Antonov: 'Etika zhivogo khristianstva'; 'Nravstvennye uroki katastrofy'.

<sup>113</sup>Borodai, 'Komu byt' vladel'tsem zemli'; 'Pochemu pravoslavnyam ne goditsya protestantskii kapitalizm'.

<sup>114</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Kak nam obustroit' Rossiya?', *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 38, September 18th, 1990, pp. 3-6.

and his statist 'White' colleagues, were adherents of the idea of an imperial Russian state.

### Nationalists and Communists in Alliance

Kunyaev had set himself upon an oppositionist 'White' course, yet he nevertheless had to deal with Communist political authorities which were either reformist or conservative. This dilemma was highlighted when, following the repeal in March by the Congress of People's Deputies of Article VI of the USSR Constitution, which gave a privileged position to the CPSU, *Nash sovremennik* had to decide which groupings to support in the elections to the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies. In the event, the statist element of Kunyaev's nationalist ideology proved decisive, and the journal supported the newly formed Bloc of Social-Political Organisations of Russia<sup>115</sup>. The Bloc's programme was 'Red' statist nationalist in political colouring (Solovei has characterised it as 'imperial nationalism'<sup>116</sup>), uniting a socialist ideology with a confusing mixture of both 'RSFSR patriotism' and defence of the USSR<sup>117</sup>. It called for the strengthening of RSFSR institutions and demanded the RSFSR declare its sovereignty. The people, the programme declared, had rejected capitalism (the market economy) in 1917, but the West now wanted, through economic reform, to make a colony of Russia.

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<sup>115</sup>'Rossiya zhivet khuzhe, chem rabotaet - RSFSR nakanune vyborov', *NS*, No. 2, 1990, pp. 3-14.

<sup>116</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>117</sup>'Za politiku narodnogo soglasiya i rossiiskogo vozrozhdeniya', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 52, December 29th, 1989, pp. 2-3; J. Dunlop, 'The Return of Russian Nationalism', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 3, Summer 1990, pp. 114-122.

The Bloc's candidates in Moscow electoral districts included chief editor Kunyaev and deputy chief editor Kazintsev (also future 'third' deputy chief editor Pozdnyakov)<sup>118</sup>. At the beginning of March, *Literaturnaya Rossiya* carried a *Letter of the Writers of Russia*, addressed to the Supreme Soviets of the RSFSR and USSR, and the Central Committee of the CPSU, which broadly restated the aims of the Bloc's election programme. The seventy-six signatories included *Nash sovremennik* associates Kunyaev, Vikulov, Rasputin, Kuz'min, Shafarevich and Kozhinov<sup>119</sup>.

This nationalist-Communist alliance indicated the first 'close organisational and political-ideological co-operation by Russian nationalists with Communist organisations and with the part of the political elite in opposition to Gorbachev'<sup>120</sup>. A section of the party elite, Solovei has argued, was 'beginning intuitively to work out a qualitatively new strategy' in relation to Russian nationalism<sup>121</sup>. This was 'a strategy of alliance, where Russian nationalism was not simply used as an additional source of ideological legitimacy, but played the role of a junior partner in a coalition'<sup>122</sup>.

Despite administrative and logistical support from the party apparatus, however, including from the Moscow City party committee<sup>123</sup>, all sixty-two candidates of the Bloc

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<sup>118</sup>*Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 8, February 23rd, 1990, p. 5. Former first deputy editor, Svininnikov, and the journal's publitsist on economic themes, Anatolii Salutskii, were also candidates from the Bloc.

<sup>119</sup>'Pis'mo pisatelei Rossii', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 9, March 2nd, 1990, pp. 2-4. For a liberal response (from the *Aprél'* writers' grouping), see 'Natsional'naya gordost', *no ne imperskoe chvanstvo*, *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 10, March 7th, 1990, p. 2.

<sup>120</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>121</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>122</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 61-2.



were defeated, not one receiving more than 50% on the first ballot. Kunyaev (and the nationalist painter Il'ya Glazunov) were among sixteen of the Bloc's candidates to reach the second round. This was a severe blow to the 'Red' ideology the Bloc had espoused, and a blow to the emerging co-operation between the Russian nationalists and elements in the Communist party. Peter Duncan has commented:

It seems that the appeal to chauvinism was unpopular; the Russian nationalists had discredited themselves by coming too close to the party apparatus, and, lacking traditional levers of patronage, they did even worse than the apparatchiki themselves.<sup>124</sup>

### **Responses to the Conservative-Nationalist Alliance**

In response to the new conservative-nationalist alliance, Gorbachev co-opted leading nationalists onto the newly-created Presidential Council (which included the arch-reformer, Aleksandr Yakovlev). In March, he invited Rasputin to become a member, and Rasputin consented, by his own account unwillingly. Rasputin soon became disillusioned, however, both with the Council, which was ineffectual, and with Gorbachev, who in his view was playing a double game<sup>125</sup>. Yet Rasputin's apparent inability to refuse such invitations (in December, he became a member of a new Commission on Public Morality<sup>126</sup>) reflected on an individual level the ambiguous relation of nationalists to Gorbachev. This, it might be said, was, for Gorbachev, a

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<sup>124</sup>Duncan, 'The Rebirth of Politics in Russia', p. 88.

<sup>125</sup>Rasputin, interview 12/12/93.

<sup>126</sup>Rasputin subsequently made a much-quoted speech at the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in which he called for a 'moral censorship' and a 'moral police' (V. Rasputin, 'Nel'zya, no mozhno?', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 16, April 20th, 1991, p. 6).

successful outcome of his policy towards the Russian nationalists.

The electoral failure of the Communists and Russian nationalists in the RSFSR Congress elections had three main consequences for the writers and editors of *Nash sovremennik*. Firstly, it made them aware of their distance from the real levers of political power. Secondly, it made clear that 'Red' statist nationalist views enjoyed only limited popular support.

Thirdly, Russian nationalists of various tendencies - popular, statist, 'White' and 'Red' - seem to have reacted by seeking for a scapegoat. Following the electoral defeat, the *Letter of the Writers of Russia* was not forgotten: more nationalist writers, including Belov, Loshchits, Lyubomudrov and Svininnikov, added their names to it<sup>127</sup>. Moreover, *Nash sovremennik* published a new version, distinguished by its anti-Semitism<sup>128</sup>. Both popular nationalists (for example Belov and Ivan Vasil'ev) and statist nationalists (Bondarev, Fed', Il'in, Kazintsev and Lyubomudrov) were prominent among writers who signed this version of the *Letter*, and thus blamed the Jews for the ongoing crisis and the electoral failure of the Bloc. The fact that past and current chief editors of *Nash sovremennik* - Vikulov and Kunyaev - signed only the more moderate, *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, version of the *Letter* may indicate a recognition on their part that anti-Semitism still lacked public respectability.

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<sup>127</sup>*Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 12, March 23rd, 1990, p. 14.

<sup>128</sup>'Pis'mo pisatelei, kul'turnykh i nauchnykh deyatelei Rossii', *NS*, No. 4, 1990, pp. 136-145. See above.

Fourthly, the journal now sought to strengthen its links with the army, an institution in which, particularly, statist nationalists of both 'Red' and 'White' persuasions could place their loyalty. Deputy chief editor Il'in began to organise meetings at military bases to promote the journal and propagate its ideas (most of these took place at army bases; one was held at the Black Sea Fleet)<sup>129</sup>. The May issue of the journal, prepared by Il'in and dedicated to the armed forces, celebrated victory in the Great Patriotic War and included articles stressing the important place of the army in Russian life - one by Aleksandr Prokhanov, the 'Nightingale of the General Staff'<sup>130</sup>. Il'in in person received the congratulations of <sup>the</sup> Minister of Defence, Yazov, on the success of the issue<sup>131</sup>.

Fifthly, Kunyaev and others at the journal became increasingly dissatisfied with 'Red' statist nationalism. There was evidence of this in June, when Yurii Bondarev set up a new patriotic organisation, 'Edinenie', with himself as chairman<sup>132</sup>, with a marked lack of support from *Nash sovremennik* (only the 'Red' statist nationalist, Apollon Kuz'min, a close Vikulov associate, spoke at the founding meeting). In its October issue, the journal urged readers to set up a network of 'Nash sovremennik clubs' to strengthen ties with the journal and promote 'patriotic work'<sup>133</sup>. This might be construed as an expression of

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<sup>129</sup>Il'in, interview. Other public meetings continued to be held, see 'Priglasheet NS', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 21, May 25th, 1990, p. 7.

<sup>130</sup>Prokhanov, 'Zametki konservatora'. See also K. Rash, 'Armiya i kul'tura', NS, No. 5, 1990, pp. 99-114.

<sup>131</sup>Il'in, interview.

<sup>132</sup>Yu. Bondarev, 'Sud'ba Rossii', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, June 22nd, 1990, p. 5.

<sup>133</sup>'Dorogie chitateli', published on the inside cover of the journal, NS, No. 10, 1990.



discontent, on the part of the journal, with its parent organisation, the RSFSR Writers' Union (which itself organised events to promote 'patriotism' in the provinces). It might be hypothesised that some of the radicals at the journal, especially those of a 'White' orientation, such as Kozhinov, proposed making use of the new law on the press to establish *Nash sovremennik* as a journal independent of the RSFSR Writers' Union, as other journals were doing at this time.

Sixthly, before the end of 1990, Kunyaev appointed Aleksandr Pozdnyakov (b. 1951), a young army officer who was Kozhinov's protégé and an instinctive 'White' in politics, to the new post of 'third' deputy <sup>chief</sup> editor at the journal<sup>134</sup>. The appointment freed another 'White', Aleksandr Kazintsev, from organisational matters to become the journal's regular columnist on social and political affairs.

Pozdnyakov arrived at the journal full of plans, with which at least Kunyaev, Kozhinov, and presumably Kazintsev, were in full agreement, to develop *Nash sovremennik* in a 'White' direction. In *publitsistika* these plans included the desire to see *Nash sovremennik* accept the basic elements of modern market economics and educate readers in the ways of the new economic system, for example by introducing a section 'The Ethics of Entrepreneurship' (*Etika predprinimatel'stva*) in which to publish economists and bankers<sup>135</sup>. These ideas showed a desire to 'modernise'

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<sup>134</sup>Pozdnyakov, interview. Pozdnyakov's appointment was formally announced in the December 1990 issue, although he had joined the journal in the early autumn.

<sup>135</sup>Pozdnyakov, interview.

nationalist thinking by freeing it from 'Red', Communist approaches to these questions.

### **RSFSR Institutions: Democrats & a Nationalist Idea**

Meanwhile, the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies (which in June elected the leading reformer El'tsin as chair and declared Russian sovereignty) was evoking mixed reactions at the journal. In 1989, the journal had printed popular nationalist Belov's call for a greater satisfaction of Russian ethnic interests<sup>136</sup>. However, the logic of political struggle was leading statist Russian nationalists, and those popular nationalists allied with them, to be sceptical of the role of RSFSR institutions in relation to nationalist goals. The democrats, led by El'tsin, had succeeded in seizing the initiative by adopting a wide range of 'nationalist' demands, including RSFSR sovereignty, a new RSFSR constitution, the return of churches to believers and the creation of a Russian Academy of Sciences and Russian mass media (both radio and television)<sup>137</sup>. Solovei has written, 'The idea of Russian [rossiiskogo] sovereignty "took possession of the masses", and the "democrats" took possession of the idea'<sup>138</sup>.

That September, the publication of Solzhenitsyn's major popular nationalist article, *How Should We Rebuild Russia?*, challenged ethnic Russians and Russian nationalists alike

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<sup>136</sup>Belov, 'Vystuplenie V. I. Belova na pervoi sessii Verkhovnogo soveta SSSR 3 avgusta 1989 g'.

<sup>137</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 64-5.

<sup>138</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 65.



to reject the imperial polity and choose to create a Russian ethnic state<sup>139</sup>:

We must choose firmly between an empire that first of all destroys us ourselves, and the spiritual and bodily salvation of our people.<sup>140</sup>

The Russian nationalists of *Nash sovremennik*, popular and statist, however, adhered to the statist, imperial view of the state, and surrendered the idea of RSFSR sovereignty to the democrats. Perhaps symptomatic of the failure of many popular nationalists to seize upon the potential significance of RSFSR sovereignty was a speech by Vasilii Belov<sup>141</sup>. In one of the few direct nationalist responses to Solzhenitsyn, instead of discussing the major issues of Russian statehood, and possibly elaborating his own, popular nationalist, vision on this question, Belov defended the writer from some accusations that he was an imperialist.

In reaction to the strength of the democrats in the RSFSR Congress, *Nash sovremennik's* ideologists gave their support to the founding of a Russian Communist Party<sup>142</sup>. Rather paradoxically, Aleksandr Prokhanov argued that only the Russian Communist Party could secure the survival of the Soviet state<sup>143</sup>. Indeed, following its founding, the Russian Communist Party set about creating a 'right bloc', in which statist Russian nationalists and their popular

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<sup>139</sup>A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Kak nam obustroit' Rossiya'. See Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-146.

<sup>140</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 144 (the translation is Dunlop's).

<sup>141</sup>V. Belov, 'U kogo zhe vlast'?', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 40, October 5th, 1990, pp. 2-3.

<sup>142</sup>See 'Uchreditel'nyi s'ezd kommunisticheskoi partii RSFSR', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Nos. 145-146, June 21st, 1990, p. 1; Gidasov, 'U nas khvatit voli'. Gidasov, first secretary of the Leningrad city and oblast party committees and a leading figure in the recently created Russian Bureau, expressed 'the greatest respect' for the journal and its authors.

<sup>143</sup>Prokhanov, 'Ideologiya vyzhivaniya'; Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-177.



allies would be included<sup>144</sup>. This marked a new degree of co-operation between Communists and nationalists. Solovei, however, may underestimate the degree to which Communist politicians continued to manipulate nationalist ideology, when he writes:

[...] the group within the political elite in opposition to Gorbachev definitively, although to a considerable degree as a result of having been forced to do so, moved from a strategy of instrumentalism [ispol'zovaniya] in relation to the Russian nationalists, to one of co-operation.<sup>145</sup>

### A Return to the 'Red': January - December 1991

From October 1990 until April 1991, Gorbachev again shifted to the 'Right'. This seems to have given rise to a new mood of compromise among nationalist groupings, possibly a result of their revived optimism that the President might yet be made to serve their political ends. Such a mood was no doubt reinforced by the generally conservative and nationalist personnel Gorbachev and Valerii Boldin, head of the presidential apparatus, were recruiting into that organisation<sup>146</sup>.

In an October 1990 interview, Il'in signalled a reconciliation between *Nash sovremennik* and the RSFSR Writers' Union when he stated that the journal intended to remain an organ of the RSFSR Writers' Union<sup>147</sup>. At the 7th Congress of the RSFSR Writers' Union that December,

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<sup>144</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>145</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup>These included V. Egorov, who became an advisor on culture to the President (Egorov, interview); I. Zhukov, who was put in charge of the apparatus's publishing operation (Zhukov, interview); and V. Mussalitin, who became prospective editor-in-chief of a journal, *Forum*, to be published by the apparatus (Mussalitin, interview). Observers noted the high proportion of KGB personnel moving into Gorbachev's apparatus (A. Kichikhin, 'Pyatoe upravlenie: anatomicheskii portret', *Novoe vremya*, No. 11, 1992, p. 93).

<sup>147</sup>D. Il'in (interview by I. Starkov), 'Nasledovat' i otkryvat' - zhurnal *Nash sovremennik* v budushchem godu', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 244, October 23rd, 1990, p. 4.

Bondarev succeeded Mikhalkov as chair and Kunyaev was formally confirmed as chief editor of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>148</sup>. Kunyaev put an end to plans to bring young 'White' writers and literary critics into the editorial office. The appointment of Pozdnyakov as 'third' deputy <sup>chief</sup> editor was cut short (having lasted, formally, one month) and thereafter the group of young, 'White' editors left the journal also<sup>149</sup>.

Bondarev and Kunyaev thereupon engaged in a number of joint enterprises. Both were members of a delegation which lobbied Khasbulatov at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet for help on publishing matters and criticised the 'unfriendly attitude' of El'tsin's RSFSR press minister, Poltoranin<sup>150</sup>. The two men were among the signatories of the so-called *Letter of the 53*, an open letter to Gorbachev, whom the text called the 'deserved [zasluzhennyi] leader of the nation [natsii]', published in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* in late December. The *Letter* called for the Fatherland to be saved, and emergency, presidential rule imposed in the Soviet Union<sup>151</sup>. In fervid statist nationalist tones, it announced:

Our Fatherland, to the creation of which the whole potential of the people's life [narodnoi zhizni] has been devoted, that which is most valuable to us, which we have inherited from a thousand years of history, is under threat.<sup>152</sup>

The *Letter*, which in retrospect could be seen as having 'helped prepare the way' for the January 1991 attempted

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<sup>148</sup>'VII s'ezd pisatelei RSFSR', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 51, December 21st, 1990, p. 1.

<sup>149</sup>Pozdnyakov, interview. Those who left included Andrei Pisarev, Igor' Stepanov and Dmitrii Galkovskii.

<sup>150</sup>'Vstrecha v Verkhovnom sovete RSFSR', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 1, January 4th, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>151</sup>'S nadezhdoi i veroi', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 294, December 23rd, 1990, p. 1; Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

<sup>152</sup>'S nadezhdoi i veroi', p. 1.



coup in the Baltic<sup>153</sup>, was also signed by patriarch Aleksii and by future participants in the GKChP (Gosudarstvennyi komitet po chrezvychainomu polozheniyu - State Committee for the State of Emergency) Oleg Baklanov, Aleksandr Tizyakov and Valentin Varennikov (head of the ground forces of the Soviet army), as well as Mikhail Moiseev (chief of the army General Staff), Yurii Shatalin (commander of the USSR MVD ground troops) and Aleksandr Prokhanov. In line with the direction taken by Prokhanov's own recent articles, the text declared the pillars of the projected rebuilding of the country to be both the Communist Party and the Orthodox Church.

The new-found spirit of co-operation was not limited to Bondarev and Kunyaev. From the start of 1991, *Nash sovremennik's* writers and editors of various persuasions showed a united front in a series of open letters in which they aligned themselves with conservative Communist elements in protest against El'tsin's policies, the war in the Gulf, and other issues<sup>154</sup>. The failure of the journal's writers to unite behind a single candidate in the June 1991 RSFSR presidential elections, however, betrayed the fragility of this ideological unity. While Rasputin campaigned on behalf of Nikolai Ryzhkov (whom he claimed stood for 'conscience against power'<sup>155</sup>), for example, Kazintsev wrote that Zhirinovskii 'appeared highly

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<sup>153</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>154</sup>See, for example, 'Chto est' chest', a chto beschest'e. Otkrytoe pis'mo pisatelei B. N. El'tsinu. Reshitel'nyi protest', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 14, January 19th, 1991, p. 1; 'Dorogie rossiyanе, sootchestvenniki, grazhdane Soyuzа sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublik', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 54, March 16th, 1991, p. 3; 'General'nomu prokuroru SSSR tov. Trubinu N. S.', *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, No. 25, June 21st, 1991, p. 10.

<sup>155</sup>V. Rasputin (interview), 'K prezidentskim vyboram Rossii - Ot doverennogo litsa', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 111, 6th June, 1991, p. 3.



attractive', while making no secret of his preference for General Makashov, 'a hero of another order'<sup>156</sup>.

### Third Deputy Chief Editor Maksimov

In October 1990 Il'in had claimed that *Nash sovremennik* would continue its best traditions, while adding new authors<sup>157</sup>. In fact, in 1991 very few new authors were published, a symptom of the change in ideological direction - a return from the 'White' of Kunyaev's first year to 'Red'<sup>158</sup>. Plans to publish widely from nineteenth-century authors and the emigration, as a result, came to little<sup>159</sup>.

At the start of 1991, *Nash sovremennik* published two works which symbolically marked a reconciliation both with the RSFSR Writers' Union and with the journal's own recent past. These were the latest novel, *The Temptation*, by Yurii Bondarev, the newly appointed chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, and *Sowing and Reaping*, a new poem, on the tragedy of collectivisation, by Vikulov, prefaced by a laudatory editorial note on the latter's role as chief editor of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>160</sup>. This did not prevent a strongly 'White' article on Russian statehood by Il'in himself, a work clearly written somewhat earlier<sup>161</sup>, being published soon afterwards<sup>162</sup>. Nor did it prevent the need to support the

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<sup>156</sup>Kazintsev, 'Ne ustupat' dukhu veka'.

<sup>157</sup>D. Il'in (interview with I Starkov), 'Nasledovat' i otkryvat' - zhurnal NS v budushchem godu', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 244, October 23rd, 1990, p. 4.

<sup>158</sup>The most significant new name in the journal was Dmitrii Balashov, an anti-Communist nationalist whose works Vikulov had never published (D. Balashov: 'Pokhvala Sergiyu', *NS*, No. 9, pp. 6-46; No. 10, pp. 67-114, 1991; 'Soyuz ravnykh narodov', *NS*, No. 7, 1991, pp. 134-141).

<sup>159</sup>But see I. Il'in, 'Poyushchee serdtse', *NS*, No. 6, pp. 164-180; No. 7, pp. 166-182, 1991; V. Rozanov, 'Istoricheskaya rol' Stolypina', *NS*, No. 3, 1991, pp. 152-155.

<sup>160</sup>Yu. Bondarev, 'Iskushenie', *NS*, No. 1, pp. 28-119; No. 2, pp. 62-155, 1991 (Pozdnyakov had opposed publication); S. Vikulov, 'Posev i zhatva', *NS*, No. 1, pp. 15-27; No. 2, pp. 50-61, 1991. See Redkollegiya, 'Russkii pisatel' i grazhdanin', *NS*, No. 1, 1991, p. 14.

<sup>161</sup>Il'in, interview.

<sup>162</sup>Il'in, "'Russkaya ideya" na poligone "demokratii"'.  
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journal's subscription level having an important influence on publication policy. Indeed, the print-run remained a prime cause for concern, peaking in December 1990 (at 488,000) and, from January 1991, sharing in the precipitous decline which affected all central journals that year<sup>163</sup>. In response, according to the head of the prose department of the time, Kunyaev published a novel on the Great Patriotic War by the ever-popular Pikul', *Barbarossa*, as the journal's leading work of prose<sup>164</sup>.

The appointment of Yurii Maksimov (b. 1947) as 'third' deputy chief editor, in place of Pozdnyakov, from the April issue, confirmed the new ideological direction. Maksimov, an individual of 'Red' statist views<sup>165</sup>, unlike Pozdnyakov, knew neither Kunyaev nor Kozhinov, but came to the journal on the recommendation of the former chief editor, Vikulov<sup>166</sup>, and presumably with the approval of Bondarev. Maksimov had worked for many years in the censorship office, Glavlit, as a deputy to deputy chief censor Vladimir Solodin, and had had professional contacts with Vikulov. The appointment showed Kunyaev's preference for representatives of institutions of state control and continued to leave Kazintsev free to concentrate on his regular column, *The Diary of a Contemporary*<sup>167</sup>.

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<sup>163</sup>By December, 1991, *Nash sovremennik's* print-run had fallen to 311,697 (by 36%, from December 1990; although at January 1991 the level had been 275,000). The print-run levels of nationalist journals *Molodaya gvardiya* and *Moskva* fell, over the same period, by 43% and 66%, respectively. Those of leading liberal journals also declined sharply: *Druzhba narodov* (by 76%), *Novyi mir* (by 66%) and *Znamya* (by 58%).

<sup>164</sup>A. Segen', interview 24/6/93. See V. Pikul', 'Barbarossa', NS, No. 2, pp. 13-49; No. 3, pp. 79-121; No. 4, pp. 63-126; No. 5, pp. 11-63; No. 6, pp. 51-112; No. 7, pp. 41-93; No. 8, pp. 7-59, 1991.

<sup>165</sup>Yu. Maksimov, interviews 10/6/93; 23/9/94.

<sup>166</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup>See Kazintsev: 'Korolevstvo krivykh zerkal'; "'Dlya malen'koi takoi kompanii"; 'Ne ustupat' dukhu veka'; 'Pridvornye dissidenty i "pogibshee pokolenie"'; 'Sergiev klyuchi'; 'Obshchestvo, lishennoe voli'; 'Za pravo imet' dom na zemle'; '12 iyunya, do i posle'; 'Obiraly i rotozei'.



The new 'Red' line of the journal was best demonstrated by the round table on the future of socialism<sup>168</sup>. Of the five participants, only Shafarevich rejected the socialist idea outright. The other authors, to varying degrees, accepted socialism as the idea of social justice, while recognising it had been deformed in Soviet conditions. To judge from the round table, a 'White' position which completely rejected Soviet socialism was losing favour.

Il'in had promised in his October 1990 interview that the journal would present a 'united [economic] programme' accepting the necessity of the market and centred around the writings of Yurii Borodai. However, in the new 'Red' mood, a writer far better disposed to socialism, Anatolii Salutskii, was published more frequently than Borodai<sup>169</sup>. The publication of Salutskii, an ethnic Jew<sup>170</sup>, was also an indication of a new aspect of policy: the down-toning of anti-Semitism in the journal. In striking contrast with the previous year, there was little material on the 'Jewish question'<sup>171</sup>. This, it might be hypothesised, was a result of pressure from the journal's conservative Communist allies, concerned about their international image at a time when, as they conceived, they might soon be in power.

### ***Nash sovremennik and the Attempted August Coup***

According to some accounts, the 'Right bloc' planned to seize power in the late autumn of 1991. by removing

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<sup>168</sup>'Est' li budushchee u sotsializma?', pp. 122-133.

<sup>169</sup>Borodai, 'Tretii put''; A. Salutskii: 'Nachalo kontsa ili konets nachala?', NS, No. 2, pp. 178-187; No. 3, pp. 139-150, 1991; 'Kochuyushchaya nomenklatura', NS, No. 8, 1991, pp. 150-161; 'Zavtra ili pozavchera?', NS, No. 10, 1989, pp. 102-109.

<sup>170</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>171</sup>An exception was I. Shafarevich, 'Rusofobiya: desyat' let spustya', NS, No. 12, 1991, pp. 124-139. The author summarised his arguments from his earlier article, 'Rusofobiya'.



Gorbachev at the Party Congress scheduled for that time<sup>172</sup>. Yet certainly *Nash sovremennik* gives evidence that the 'rightists' were already looking to the military to support their cause. The army had an especially high profile in the journal at this time<sup>173</sup>. Il'in's article on Russian statehood had effectively justified the imposition of a 'state of emergency' and, hence, a major political role for the military<sup>174</sup>. Viktor Eremin, who went furthest in indicting the effects of perestroika on the army, ridiculed what he called the 'provocative idea' that the military should not intervene in domestic politics<sup>175</sup>. Eremin insisted that the army 'not only has the right, but in an emergency is obliged, to intervene in internal affairs'. *Sovetskaya kul'tura* denounced Eremin's call for what the paper described as 'a patriotic dictatorship with the participation of the army'<sup>176</sup>.

The USSR Minister of Defence, Dmitrii Yazov, clearly welcomed the line taken by *Nash sovremennik*. At the beginning of July, Yazov issued an order to increase subscriptions to *Nash sovremennik* at military bases, enterprises and colleges, and to use the journal's materials in educational work. Yazov praised the journal as one which 'consistently carries out a line of preserving and strengthening the defence consciousness of the Soviet

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<sup>172</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>173</sup>See A. Kazintsev, 'Za pravo imet' dom na zemle'; K. Rash, 'Derzajte, Rossy!', *NS*, No. 5, 1991, pp. 3-10; Yu. Seleznev, "'Chtoby starye rasskazyvali, a molodye pomnili!'", *NS*, No. 5, 1991, pp. 120-122 (under the rubric 'Armiya i Otechestvo v poezii russkikh klassikov'; first published in *NS*, No. 3, 1980, pp. 176-184).

<sup>174</sup>Il'in, "'Russkaya ideya" na poligone "demokratii"'.  
<sup>175</sup>V. Eremin, "'I bezdny mrachnoi na krayu...'", *NS*, No. 6, 1991, pp. 144-151.

<sup>176</sup>I. Zaramenskii, 'Vpered - nazad? O pozitsii radikal'no-konservativnogo techeniya v KPSS', *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, No. 31, August 3rd, 1991, p. 3.

people'<sup>177</sup>. Given that *Nash sovremennik* was printed on the military press, *Krasnaya zvezda*, it seemed the journal was on the way to becoming a house-publication of the Ministry of Defence. The military also made a parallel approach to nationalists at this time, when the Chief Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Fleet founded a new patriotic organisation, <sup>the</sup> 'All-Russian Patriotic Movement "Fatherland"' (*Vserossiiskoe patrioticheskoe dvizhenie, "Otchizna"*)<sup>178</sup>.

At the end of July, Bondarev and Rasputin were among the signatories of *A Word to the People*, a public declaration calling for the Soviet populace, the army and the Orthodox Church to support the introduction of emergency rule to 'save' the Soviet state and stop further reform. *A Word to the People*, written chiefly by Prokhanov, was an expression of Russian statist nationalist ideology, equating the Soviet Union ('our home and our bulwark') with Russia ('unique and beloved')<sup>179</sup>. Other signatories of the appeal, which was also printed in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* and Prokhanov's *Den'*<sup>180</sup>, included Varennikov, Boris Gromov and Gennadii Zyuganov<sup>181</sup>. *Nash sovremennik* was thus the only 'thick' journal to be associated with the document, one which many, with hindsight, linked directly with the attempted coup of August.

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<sup>177</sup>D. Yazov (USSR minister of defence), 'Ob organizatsii dopolnitel'noi podpiski na zhurnal *NS'*, *Moskovskii komsomolets*, No. 175, September, 13th, 1991, p. 1. The July issue, which went to press on 11th July, had a print-run of 314,909 copies, up on the June issue's print run (which went to press on 17th June) of 279,275 copies.

<sup>178</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>179</sup>Translation used is from: Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

<sup>180</sup>'Slovo k narodu', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 142, July 23rd, 1991, p. 1; 'Slovo k narodu', *Den'*, No. 15, 1991, p. 1.

<sup>181</sup>See Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-164.



Early in August Il'in met Varennikov, a leading member of the August coup, to arrange a meeting between representatives of the journal and army units. As a result of the coup's failure, this meeting never took place. *Nash sovremennik* was the only central journal whose printing (on the military press, *Krasnaya zvezda*) was not disrupted by the coup<sup>182</sup>.

After the coup, the journal's editorial staff and board expected reprisals, including closure of the journal<sup>183</sup>. It was also feared that, if the journal's parent body, the RSFSR Writers' Union, was taken over by the democrats, the journal would not survive as a nationalist organ<sup>184</sup>. Several nights in a row nationalist activists, including *Nash sovremennik* staff members, slept at the offices of the Union<sup>185</sup>. Calls by the leaders of the Union to prevent 'political terror' against them were published in the press<sup>186</sup>. In the event, despite demands by radical democrats, such as Evtushenko<sup>187</sup>, *Nash sovremennik* remained in nationalist hands, and no sanctions were applied against it. Even the high level of the journal's print-run, boosted by Yazov in July, was maintained.

Immediately following the coup, first deputy editor Il'in left the journal (with effect from the December 1991 issue, the last to be published in the Soviet period and, given the time-scale of production, the first wholly

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<sup>182</sup>Ogryzko, interview.

<sup>183</sup>*Ibid.*; Maksimov, interview 23/9/94. For a summary of events, see R. Pittman, 'Writers and the coup: the chronology of events in summer 1991', *Rusistika*, No. 4, December 1991, pp. 22-25.

<sup>184</sup>See R. Marsh, 'The Death of Soviet Literature: Can Russian Literature Survive?', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 1, 1993, p. 126.

<sup>185</sup>Ogryzko, interview; Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>186</sup>'Trebovanie pisatelei Rossii', *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, No. 165, September 3rd, 1991, p. 4.

<sup>187</sup>Marsh, *loc. cit.*



produced in the post-coup period). The reasons for his departure may have been various, including ideological disputes and personal disagreements<sup>188</sup>. Yet the fundamental cause was, probably, a recognition by Kunyaev that Il'in's close relations with the military and the coup plotters made his departure a political sacrifice in the circumstances. Thus, on a rather grander scale, the fate of Seleznev in 1981-2 was repeated by Il'in: a deputy chief editor was sacrificed to enable the chief editor to remain in his post.

Solovei has suggested two reasons why El'tsin failed to act against the nationalists, including those at *Nash sovremennik*, in the immediate post-coup period. Firstly, El'tsin and his supporters, he believes, considered Russian nationalists 'an insignificant and demoralised political opponent, not worth any serious attention'<sup>189</sup>. Secondly, and more importantly, the task of forcing the growth of a Russian (*rossiiskaya*) statehood, in the conditions of an ideological vacuum, produced the 'seductive thought of substituting the undermined and compromised Marxist legitimacy by an East Slav, or even Russian [*russkuyu*], legitimacy'<sup>190</sup>. In the aftermath of the coup, the former reason was probably the more important. As the months went by, the second, no doubt, began to figure larger in the minds of El'tsin and his colleagues.

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<sup>188</sup>Il'in, interview.

<sup>189</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>190</sup>*Ibid.*

## Conclusions

By 1989 the traditional Soviet literary-political system had broken down and journals were obtaining their 'freedom' from their political masters. Kunyaev, as chief editor of *Nash sovremennik*, was freed, not only from the tutelage of party and state bodies, including the censor, but also largely from that of the RSFSR Writers' Union. The personal influence of the chief editor and his close associates (Kozhinov and Prokhanov) over the journal now outweighed that of the Union, or its top officials (in particular, Bondarev). Henceforth the journal was far more Kunyaev's than it had ever been Vikulov's. At the same time, the intimate links, both formal and informal, between the political elite and the intelligentsia were being lost. As the 'thick' journal gained its freedom, therefore, it also lost much of its immediate political significance.

From Gorbachev's point of view, the appointment of Kunyaev was intended, firstly, to generate support from Russian nationalists against the democrats, secondly, to increase the divisions among conservatives over the role of RSFSR institutions as a counterbalance to the centre, and, thirdly, as a concession to those conservatives in the political elite who backed the appointment.

With Gorbachev's consent, then, in the person of Kunyaev, the 'White', oppositionist nationalist trend took over at *Nash sovremennik*. In the first year of Kunyaev's stewardship, Il'in joined Kazintsev in the new deputy-editorial team (the two were later joined by a third deputy

chief editor - Pozdnyakov). In the grip of the anti-Communist fever of the times, *Nash sovremennik's* publication policy moved sharply in a 'White' direction. Yet, even at this time, as the elections to the RSFSR Congress showed, the journal's political allies were the conservative Communists.

In his second year in office, Kunyaev's response to the need to find political patronage, in a world of greater independence, was twofold: 1) to ally, in the absence of any realistic alternative, with conservative Communist ('Red') political forces, in particular the newly created Russian Communist Party, despite the electoral defeat of 1990; and 2) to seek the patronage of the military.

Both these developments were indications of a more fundamental 'sea-change' in Soviet ideological perceptions. Traditionally, 'Red' nationalist tendencies had been collaborationist; 'White' tendencies had been in opposition. Now, as the Gorbachev period began to draw to a close, both 'Red' and 'White' tendencies found themselves in opposition, and, as a result, were drawn closer together.

The perception of a growing threat to Soviet statehood inspired a growing conviction that only the traditional Soviet institutions of state power - which included the Communist Party as well as the Soviet army and the Orthodox church (but not, or at least, not often in public admission, the KGB) - could provide a mechanism for holding the USSR together as a political state. The opposition to reform by the Russian nationalists, at this point,



therefore, was determined less by their anti-Westernism or their opposition to economic change, as by their attitude towards the state. Solzhenitsyn's call to surrender the empire and build a nation found little resonance among the popular nationalists at *Nash sovremennik*.

*Nash sovremennik* had traditionally been an exponent of Russian ethnic interests. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, it was the democrats who enjoyed success in taking up RSFSR-oriented demands and controlling RSFSR institutions. In Solovei's view, the nationalists 'found themselves in a trap of their own making, the idea of Russian sovereignty to which they had given birth turned out to be for the good of their worst enemies, the "democrats"'<sup>191</sup>.

Such a view, however, overestimates the extent to which Russian nationalists, as represented in *Nash sovremennik*, were able to adopt RSFSR demands. The idea of the state, in Russian nationalist ideology (1981-1991), had fallen under the hegemony of statist nationalists, for whom the state was the historical imperial state. In Soviet conditions, Russian popular nationalist ideology had failed to develop an appropriate idea of an ethnic state. Consequently, as the Soviet state came under threat and the need to articulate a vision of Russian statehood arose, the popular nationalists, by and large, adopted the statist view of the state. This failing of popular nationalists to develop a coherent view of Russian statehood - and to ignore one when *it* was presented to them by Solzhenitsyn - was made good by the democrats, and with astounding success.

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<sup>191</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 65-6.

If *Nash sovremennik's* Russian nationalists proved profoundly conservative in their attitude to the state, in other areas of policy they were more open to new ideas. Russian nationalism remained deeply divided over the question of Communism. For some nationalists, as the tide of Westernisation rose, Communist ideology seemed one of the few havens offering some potential for refuge and resistance. When economic reform came on the agenda it appeared to these nationalists that the Communist bureaucracy and the command economy, for all their faults, were among the few forces able to oppose a capitalist Westernisation. The Communist ethos of social equality emerged as a favoured principle of *Nash sovremennik's* nationalist thinking<sup>192</sup>. Yet there was an alternative 'White' element in Russian nationalist thinking which was ready to adapt to the market and the new economic system. For these 'White' nationalists, the attraction of 'Red' ideas was that it enabled them to ally with politically powerful Communists. 'Redness' was a matter of expedience. The crucial issue was the survival of the 'Russian' Soviet state.

Conservatives and Russian nationalists alike met with a resounding defeat in August 1991. The institutions which the journal backed proved unable to prevent the tide of political change. With the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991, Russian nationalists urgently needed to rethink their policies and develop a new strategy for the future. Yet for outside observers of the scene, the paradox

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<sup>192</sup>See Arkhangel'skii, 'Mezhdú svobodoi i ravenstvom'.

was that while 'nationalists' had lost, the prerequisites for a powerful nationalist ideology had been created - in the form of a powerful RSFSR, with Russian ethnic and territorial boundaries far more congruent than those of the USSR, and with pretensions to statehood (to be realised as early as December 1991). As Gellner has warned students of nationalism:

In the case of nationalism [...] the actual formulation of the idea or ideas, the question concerning who said or wrote precisely what, doesn't matter much [...] What matters is whether the conditions of life are such as to make the idea seem compelling, rather than, as it is in most other situations, absurd.<sup>193</sup>

The force of Gellner's observation lies in the suggestion that, as the case of Russian nationalist ideology in this period might show, while individual nationalists and their ideas may meet with defeat, 'the conditions of life' might generate a new arena far more suited to the development of nationalist ideology than that, paradoxically, so ardently defended by the nationalists themselves.

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<sup>193</sup>Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 126.



## 8. Conclusions

### The 'thick' journal as a Nationalist Medium

Chapters *Two* to *Seven* have shown that Russian nationalist ideology was a potent presence in both Russian culture and politics in the period 1981-1991. In large part, this was made possible by the very nature of the 'thick' journal. Anderson has pointed out that the novel and the newspaper were genres which 'provided the technical means for "re-presenting" the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation'<sup>1</sup>. He described the newspaper as 'merely an "extreme form" of the book, a book sold on a colossal scale, but of ephemeral popularity'<sup>2</sup>. The monthly 'thick' journal, with something of the features of both the newspaper and the book, therefore, fits well into this conception of a medium appropriate for the creation of the national 'imagined community'.

In the context of the Soviet administration of literature, the 'thick' journal provided an organised focus

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<sup>1</sup>Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 31.

for the activity of intellectuals'. In the case of *Nash sovremennik*, these were Russian nationalist-minded writers, literary critics, historians and journalists who, as Hroch, Hutchinson and Smith, among others, have pointed out, play a key role in the origins of nationalism'. Smith has argued the intellectuals play this role as a result of their pursuit of a resolution to an 'identity crisis' brought on by the modernisation of traditional societies':

The identity crisis of the intellectuals springs ultimately from the challenges posed to traditional religion and society by the 'scientific state' and the Western 'revolutions' that it promotes wherever its influence is felt. [...] It is this profound challenge to the traditional cosmic images, symbols and theodices, a challenge felt first and most acutely by those exposed to rationalist and scientific thought and activity, that propels many intellectuals to discover alternative principles and concepts, and a new mythology and symbolism, to legitimate and ground human thought and action.'

To resolve this 'crisis of identity', the intellectuals seek a way of thinking which 'sinks or "realises" individual identity within the new collective cultural identity of the nation'. This is the essence of the popular nationalist tendency. Consequently, the 'thick' journal *Nash sovremennik*, as a forum for Russian nationalist intellectuals, facilitated the articulation of popular Russian nationalist ideology (see *Hypothesis 1* of this study').

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter One and Appendix.

<sup>2</sup>Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, p. 22; Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*, p. 3; Smith: *National Identity*, pp. 93-6; *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup>Smith, *National Identity*, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>See p. 5.

## The Golden Age

Smith has noted that, in traditional society, 'there was little need to yearn for a past that was being continued':

[...] as long as the community was seen as a vessel and embodiment of a religious way of life, linked to the attainment of salvation (usually in the next world), nostalgia for an ethnic past only surfaced in periods of acute crisis, when the values and life-style of the religious community were under threat.<sup>10</sup>

In this sense, nostalgia for an ethnic past, a 'response to the erosion of traditional entities and status orders by the modernisation process'<sup>11</sup>, becomes, as ethnic (popular) nationalism, a "surrogate" religion'<sup>12</sup>. Hosking has described this process in nineteenth-century Russia:

It is almost as if there were a church-shaped vacuum in that culture, waiting to be filled by any ideology or institution which could satisfy Russians' aspiration to join with others in order to be of service to their fellow men.<sup>13</sup>

Nostalgia for an ethnic past embodies a 'yearning for the spiritual wholeness represented by the countryside and the "natural" life, as an antidote to the materialism and competitive individualism of city existence'<sup>14</sup>. As Clark has observed of the rural theme in Soviet literature:

The 'village' [...] is not so much a real village with all its cow dung and mud, or even its bathhouses and churches. Rather, it is a kind of imaginative space in which to examine certain perennial moral and practical problems concerning not farmers, but intellectuals, to look at the great questions about the past and the way forward to the future.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, p. 176.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>12</sup>Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, p. 176. See also Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>14</sup>Hosking, 'Homo Sovieticus or Homo sapiens?', p. 6.

<sup>15</sup>Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 190. See also Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>16</sup>K. Clark, 'The Centrality of Rural Themes in Post-war Soviet Fiction', in G. Hosking & G. Cushing (eds.), *Perspectives on Literature and Society in Eastern and Western Europe*, Macmillan, Basingstoke & London, 1989, pp. 77-8.



Yet this 'imaginative space' derives its emotional resonance from the context of a perceived relationship between the Russian village and an ethnic Golden Age. The 'boundary mechanisms' defining this ideal, Golden-Age, vision of the Russian *ethnie* included: a rural way of life, collectivism, patriarchalism, Orthodoxy, the Russian language, Russian (*ruskii*) ethnicity, a predominant territorial location in the non-black-earth zone of European Russia and Siberia, and the moral traditions embodied in classical Russian literature.

In the Russian case, the origins of this ethnic Golden Age myth lie in the 'identity crisis' of intellectuals brought on by the peculiarly rapid Soviet modernisation - the forced processes of urbanisation, collectivisation and the destruction of traditional beliefs and ways of life<sup>14</sup>. *Nash sovremennik's* 'village prose', therefore, is an imaginative 're-presentation' and interpretation of the historically recent social changes of the Communist era, mediated by the Golden Age myth. Clark has written:

[...] a hallmark of 'village prose' is its major theme of how the 'machine' as, variously, urbanisation, Sovietisation, as the sense of alienation and the loss of the old values and standards which comes with the erosion of the *Gemeinschaft* world, is destroying 'the rural garden'.<sup>15</sup>

### Popular Nationalism and the Nation-State

Hroch has described what he believes to be the 'first stage' of a nationalist revival in 'a passionate concern' for the study of the language, culture and history of an

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<sup>14</sup>For a summary of these changes, see M. Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1988.  
<sup>15</sup>Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

'oppressed nationality'<sup>18</sup>. The ethnic Golden Age myth is inextricably linked with the perception that the ethnic group is under threat, and can be seen as a defensive response. As Smith has noted, 'in order to survive, *ethnies* must take on some of the attributes of nationhood'<sup>19</sup>. One key aspect of nationhood is a sense of continuity:

The 'golden age' myth was part of an elaborate nationalist mythology, which sought to reconstruct out of received motifs a complete "national trajectory" in which continuity and identity with a distant past were the main characteristics.<sup>20</sup>

A Golden Age myth, therefore, constitutes a claim that a given *ethnie* belongs with other *ethnies* which have achieved recognition as 'nations'. Hutchinson argues that the Golden Age myth presents 'a novel historicist cosmology of a humanity naturally divided into unique, autonomous and integrated territorial communities, each with its peculiar laws of growth and decay'<sup>21</sup>. Smith has summed up the political implications of this ethnic (popular nationalist) ideology:

If there was no model of past ethnicity and no pre-existent *ethnie*, there could be neither nations nor nationalism. There would only be states and *étatisme* imposed from above, a very different phenomenon. [...] Modern conditions and trends have undoubtedly been responsible for spreading the idea and model of the nation as the sole legitimate political unit, but they needed the general inspiration of ethnicity as a model of socio-cultural organisation and particular instances of strategic *ethnie*, to bring nations and nationalism into existence.<sup>22</sup>

It needs to be noted that, as discussed in Chapter One, since the modernisation of traditional societies occurred first in western Europe, the models of ethnicity and the

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<sup>18</sup>Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, p. 22.

<sup>19</sup>Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>21</sup>Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, p. 214.



nation developed by Russian nationalists were, in large measure, an imported product of Western social thought: their local adaptation was, simultaneously, a reaction to domestic modernisation and to Western influence. The 'identity crisis' of the Russian intellectuals, therefore, had a 'dual' quality. As Russian intellectuals, to use Smith's term, 'realised' their individual identity within the collective identity of the nation, they also, perforce, forged an attitude towards the West.

### The Old & the New

Implicit in the popular nationalist tendency, then, is a 'theory of political legitimacy'<sup>23</sup>. In the modern world, the prime attribute of nationhood, which enables the *ethnie* to survive, is statehood. The popular nationalist ethnic Golden Age myth, therefore, is a functional part of a political ideology, oriented towards the creation of a 'nation-state'.

Ernest Gellner has drawn attention to this paradox of nationalism, which, in his view, 'preaches and defends continuity, but owes everything to a decisive and unutterably profound break in human history'<sup>24</sup>:

Nationalism is not what it seems and above all not what it seems to itself. The cultures it claims to defend and revive are often its own inventions, or are modified out of all recognition.<sup>25</sup>

A consequence of this 'pervasive false consciousness'<sup>26</sup> is, naturally, that the adherents of nationalism themselves may not be aware of the *political* implications and

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<sup>23</sup>See also Gellner, *Nations & Nationalism*, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 124.



consequences of their ideas. Nationalists may, indeed, perceive, in Gellner's words, the 'awakening of an old, latent, dominant force', and be unaware of the development of 'a new form of social organisation, based on deeply internalised, education-dependent high cultures, each protected by its own state'<sup>27</sup>. In this context, *Nash sovremennik*, in drawing a portrait of an ethnic past, can be seen as creating something new, namely, a popular nationalist myth, the natural development of which would be the generation of the ideal of a nation-state. And indeed, it follows from the above argument<sup>that</sup> popular Russian nationalists associated with *Nash sovremennik* need not have conceived of themselves as 'nation-builders' in order to be such.

### **A Critique of 'Cultural Nationalism'**

This view of the political implications of popular nationalist ideology is disputed by some commentators. Hutchinson, for example, has argued:

There are two quite different types of nationalism - cultural and political - that must not be conflated, for they articulate different, even competing conceptions of the nation, form their own distinctive organisations, and have sharply diverging political strategies.<sup>28</sup>

'Cultural nationalism', he argues, aims at 'the moral regeneration of the national community rather than the achievement of an autonomous state'<sup>29</sup>. In his view, 'the cultural nationalist perceives the state as an accidental, for the essence of a nation is its distinctive

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<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>28</sup>Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

civilisation, which is the product of its unique history, culture and geographical profile'<sup>30</sup>. Anderson gives some support to Hutchinson's position:

[...] nationalism has to be understood, by aligning it not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which - as well as against which - it came into being.<sup>31</sup>

Yet, as Anderson has himself argued, as noted in *Chapter One*, the 'imagined community' is above all an 'imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'<sup>32</sup>. Moreover, as Breuilly has remarked, 'To focus upon culture, ideology, identity, class or modernisation is to neglect the fundamental point that nationalism is, above and beyond all else, about politics and that politics is about power'<sup>33</sup>.

Somewhat paradoxically, Hutchinson himself insists that cultural nationalism is a 'political movement'<sup>34</sup>. If this is the case, then cultural nationalism must be a participant in the competitive struggle for power in society which, in the modern world, necessarily involves the question of state legitimacy<sup>35</sup>. Popular nationalism, therefore, cannot be divided into a 'cultural nationalism', unconcerned with questions of state power, and a 'political nationalism', directly related to them.

In Hutchinson's interpretation, such 'cultural nationalism', it might be argued, was to be found in the positions taken in the 1980s by such popular nationalists

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<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>31</sup>Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 19.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>33</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>34</sup>Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>35</sup>Breuilly, *loc. cit.*

as Dmitrii Likhachev and Sergei Zalygin. As argued in *Chapter Three*, however, these individuals can perhaps best be characterised, in the earlier years of this period, as 'self-denying' nationalists, in that they adopted a stance, according to which their brand of nationalism, self-professedly, lacked political consequences. Other commentators, for example Brudny, have classified Likhachev and Zalygin as 'liberal nationalists', largely in view of the reformist views they expressed in the Gorbachev period<sup>36</sup>. Brudny has written:

In sum, between March 1985 and May 1989, the Russian nationalist movement split between the reform-supporting minority and the reform-opposing majority.<sup>37</sup>

The defining feature, then, of 'liberal nationalists' (exemplified by Likhachev and Zalygin) was that they supported reform.

Moreover, as I have argued, the political import of nationalist ideology is not directly related to the particular self-evaluations of individual nationalists. Popular nationalists may always express diverse views on 'politics', including the view that they are 'a-political'. Indeed, Hutchinson himself has observed that 'the effects of ideas, when they break against economic, military, political and religious interests, are rarely those envisaged by their progenitors'<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup>Brudny, 'The Heralds of Perestroika', p. 165.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>38</sup>Hutchinson, *ibid.*, p. 3.



## Popular Nationalist Ideology in Russia: A 'Truncated' Ideology

The above argument sets out a model of popular Russian nationalist ideology and its political significance. In practice, the popular nationalist impulse will not always be fully developed, or realised. In the Soviet Union (1981-1991), the Russian popular nationalist tendency did not exist in an already-formed nation-state, but, as discussed in *Chapter One*, in the relatively hostile environment of an imperial polity. In this polity, in Smith's words, there was 'a state and *étatisme*', but a relatively weak popular nationalist ideology, subject, at different times and to varying degrees, to official manipulation and persecution.

While popular nationalist ideology, as such, would tend to promote the formation of a state in which at least the great majority of the inhabitants were ethnic Russians, the variant of the ideology articulated by *Nash sovremennik* (1981-1991) appears in an 'undeveloped' or 'truncated' form. The vision of a popular nationalist state is missing (though, as discussed in chapters *Six* and *Seven*, it made a partial appearance in the late Gorbachev period).

There would seem to be five chief reasons why this was the case. Firstly, until the latter years of the Gorbachev period, censorship prohibited popular nationalist writing on the state. Popular nationalist ideology was permitted as a limited expression of the interests of ethnic Russians within the Soviet cultural and institutional context, but the authorities did not tolerate the notion of a break-away 'ethnic Russian state'. Secondly, there was no support within the Soviet political elite for an ethnic Russian

state, although there was support for a transfer of a greater share of resources to the RSFSR, and for an increase in that republic's status. Thirdly, the project of promoting a popular Russian nationalist state was complicated by the manner in which the Russian population was dispersed throughout the Soviet Union, and by the fact that, consequently, the administrative boundaries of the RSFSR were only very approximately those of the Russian *ethnie* (although historical heartlands could be easily identified, for example, in the non-black earth regions of European Russia and Siberia). Fourthly, the RSFSR as a potential state had never existed as a state in its own right: it therefore had no state traditions. In so far as Russian territorial borders, endowed with 'symbolic significance' as ethnic boundary mechanisms<sup>39</sup>, existed, they tended to be those of the empire-state, not the ethnic state. The symbolic strength of the imperial borders was, therefore, a restraining factor on the development of alternative, ethnic Russian, ones. Fifthly, the existence of an alternative, influential, statist nationalist tendency, the main objective of which was legitimisation of the historical empire-state, was a further obstacle inhibiting the development of a *popular nationalist* model of statehood.

### **Popular Nationalist Self-Definitions: Negative & Positive**

According to Fredrik Barth, 'ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors

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<sup>39</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

themselves'<sup>40</sup>. These categories operate by means of 'boundary mechanisms'<sup>41</sup>, which, I have argued, are open to 'positive' and 'negative' interpretation (see *Chapter One*). An important feature of *Nash sovremennik's* evocation of the ethnic Golden Age in the 1980s was the largely *negative* manner in which this was accomplished. *Positive* portrayals of the characteristic features of the Russian people, such as Belov's *Harmony*<sup>42</sup>, were relatively rare. Much more typical was Rasputin's *The Fire*, which portrayed a rural world in decline<sup>43</sup>. In such works, the Golden Age was depicted by 'negation': it was evoked as an intangible positive vision of the past, against which the negative features of the present were evident. Rasputin's oeuvre, almost wholly published in *Nash sovremennik*, shows this movement towards a greater negativity in interpretations of Russian ethnicity. In contrast to *Farewell to Matera* (of the 1970s), in which Rasputin had described a community destroyed by outside forces, *The Fire* (of the 1980s) showed the villagers themselves as responsible for the disaster which befell them<sup>44</sup>. Yet, beyond a certain point, this no longer represented an increase in self-criticism. In such works, the Russian ethnic group was being increasingly defined in terms of characteristics which were not observable in reality. The portrayal of negative features of Russian life, therefore, heightened the separation between popular nationalist thinking and contemporary realities, since the popular nationalist writers believed

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<sup>40</sup>Barth, 'Introduction', p. 10.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 4-8.

<sup>42</sup>See *Chapter Two*.

<sup>43</sup>See *Chapter Four*.

<sup>44</sup>See Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-97.



that the Russians were *not really like* the individuals they portrayed in their fiction. From a work such as *The Fire*, then, it is, perhaps, a short step to conceiving that social ills are really not the doing of Russians. In *Everything Lies Ahead*, Belov, author of the positive vision of Russian ethnicity of *Harmony*, took this step<sup>45</sup>. The novel combines an extreme form of the 'negative' portrayal of contemporary life with the view that to blame for social problems are, in particular, Jews and, in general, Western influences. While the writer is inspired by a vision of a rural, ethnic Golden Age, the interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms are no longer positive, as they were in *Harmony*, but wholly negative.

I have argued, according to my model of popular nationalist ideology, that the Russian version of this tendency was denied, in Soviet conditions, the 'natural' defence mechanism of the concept of the ethnic state. One consequence of this 'defencelessness', of the Russian popular nationalist vision of the nation, has been an extreme sensitivity, on the part of Russian popular nationalists, to perceived threats to the *ethnie*<sup>46</sup>. I would suggest that this accounts, to a considerable degree, for the susceptibility of popular Russian nationalists to 'negative' interpretations of boundary mechanisms, interpretations which have had their strongest expression in anti-Westernism, anti-Semitism and various forms of conspiracy theory<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup>See Chapter Five.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup>On Russian tendencies to xenophobia and conspiracy theory, see for example Pipes, 'The Historical Evolution of Russian National Identity', p. 134.

## Regime Responses to Russian Nationalist Ideology: 1 Manipulation of

### Popular Nationalist Ideology

As I have argued, the Soviet 'thick' journal was an important location for interaction between the regime and intellectuals which, as Clark has noted, were not 'autonomous and free systems' but, on the contrary, 'implicated with each other more closely than in most other cultures'<sup>48</sup>. In this context, Clark has argued, the 'major function' of the Soviet novel was 'to serve as the official repository of state myths'<sup>49</sup>. The Soviet authorities conspicuously used myths to promote Communism as a form of state-oriented, surrogate religion. Hosking, comparing Tsarist with Soviet Russia, has written of 'the transition from an avowedly religious polity using secular means to an aggressively secular polity which before long adopted the outward forms of religion'<sup>50</sup>. Yet the intellectuals did possess some countervailing force. Hosking has noted of Soviet literature (writing in 1987):

Because of the legitimate, indeed honoured status which literature enjoys, it often acts as the vessel for other and older forms of collective identity, those associated with religion and nationality.<sup>51</sup>

However, as Armstrong has pointed out, most identity themes are 'systematically manipulated by elites'<sup>52</sup>, and popular Russian nationalist ideology was no exception. Given the complexities of the Soviet literary process, the appearance of 'village prose' (and the corresponding Golden Age myth) indicated a degree of official sponsorship. Nash

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<sup>48</sup>Clark, *The Soviet Novel as Ritual*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. XII.

<sup>50</sup>Hosking, 'Homo Sovieticus or Homo sapiens', p. 8.

<sup>51</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>52</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

*sovremennik*, in this regard, was a vehicle chosen by the authorities in its attempt to co-opt popular nationalist ideology.

The authorities' motivation was the sense that Marxist-Leninist mythology tout court failed to legitimise the political system. As Armstrong has suggested, the appearance of the myth of a rural Golden Age may indicate that a ruling elite is experiencing a loss of confidence to rule<sup>53</sup>. He has also noted the 'fragility of any identity myth resting on a claim to a superior way of life', since 'a series of reverses can completely undermine the basis of loyalty', and this is especially so if the ideology rests on the claim of economic success, as Communism did<sup>54</sup>. This, in sum, is what happened to Soviet Communism as rapid economic and technological development in the post-war West, showing Soviet modernisation to be failing in all but the military sphere, progressively undermined the basis of the regime's ideological support. The loss of confidence of the ruling elite, and the 'defenceless' nature of the popular nationalist tendency to which that elite turned, as one strategy to reinforce its legitimacy, was a potent mixture, pregnant with the prospect of political instability. Simultaneously, economic difficulties exacerbated tensions within the USSR between republican administrations competing for scarce resources, producing a regionalism at the institutional level.

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<sup>53</sup>Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 135.



Tendency

In this situation, promotion of a *statist* Russian nationalist tendency proved attractive to elites. Such a policy of strengthening state legitimacy, by adopting the myths and symbols of the historical Russian state, had two implications: a policy of cultural Russification, and a stress on external threats to generate effective 'boundary mechanisms' to bind the heterogeneous population. The potential efficacy of the latter has been shown in Colley's study of the origins of British identity<sup>55</sup>. In the Soviet context, 'the Other', against which nation and state were to be contrasted, was chiefly the West, reinforced, as Mikhail Agurskii has pointed out, by the manipulation of anti-Semitism, in the post-war period under the guidance of Mikhail Suslov<sup>56</sup>. Jews, to the extent that they tended to be Westernised, could be conceived of, by statist ideologists, as something of a 'fifth column' of the West within Soviet-Russian society. The activity of Jewish dissidents, and the importance of Soviet treatment of the Jews in relations with the West, raised the political profile of the 'Jewish question' further<sup>57</sup>. Another factor in this puzzle was the tendency to philo-Semitism of 'liberal', 'Westernising' elements in the intelligentsia<sup>58</sup>. Anti-Semitism, therefore, became a means for the regime to exploit the antipathies

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<sup>55</sup>Colley, *Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, p. 6.

<sup>56</sup>Agurskii, 'Suslov i russkii natsionalizm', pp. 30-33.

<sup>57</sup>T. Sawyer, *The Jewish Minority in the Soviet Union*, Westview Press, Boulder Colorado, & Folkestone, 1979, p. 162.

<sup>58</sup>Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, p. 567.

between the Westernising and nationalist elements within the intelligentsia.

In general, then, as Agurskii has argued, the Soviet ideological apparatus 'did much work in order to falsify Russian nationalism and imperceptibly impart to it the [...] desired appearance'<sup>59</sup>. This falsification of Russian nationalist ideology had its counterpart in falsified projections of the West. As Hosking has pointed out, the Russian reaction to the West 'long ago lost contact with the "really existing" countries that make up western Europe and North America'<sup>60</sup>. The same may be said of some Russian perceptions of Jews. Demonisations of the West and the Jew became mythological elements, and key ethnic boundary mechanisms, of statist Russian nationalist thinking.

As argued above, a 'stateless', and hence 'defenceless' popular Russian nationalist ideology proved, particularly when under pressure, fertile ground for views of this type and, therefore, highly susceptible to the manipulation by statist nationalists of negative boundary mechanisms. Russian history provides much evidence of this. As Billington, Hosking, Laqueur, Pipes and others have pointed out, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and conspiracy theory are old features of Russian society, dating back at least to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries<sup>61</sup>.

Russian statist nationalism, however, as suggested in *Chapter One*, held its own difficulties for the regime. The advantages for the political elite of strengthening regime

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<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>60</sup>Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*, p. 276.

<sup>61</sup>Billington, *The Icon and the Axe*, pp. 72, 106; Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 141; Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 43; Pipes, 'The Historical Evolution of Russian National Identity', pp. 133-8.

legitimisation among the ethnic Russian population were counterbalanced by the disadvantage of alienating non-Russian republics and minorities. The radical division between popular and statist tendencies within Russian nationalist ideology was itself an indication that the Soviet polity was unsuitable for nationalist ideology to be employed by elites as a 'ruling idea'. Elites were able to manipulate both popular and statist tendencies to a limited degree. Yet both tendencies lacked the efficacy as a political instrument which nationalist ideology acquires in more appropriate polities, where a closer congruence between state and nation, and hence between popular and statist nationalist tendencies, prevails.

Indeed, a reduction in the tensions between nationalist tendencies, which would have made Russian nationalism a more powerful ideology, could have been achieved only on two conditions: 1) a wholesale adoption of a policy of Russification in the Soviet Union; or 2) the dismemberment of the empire to create an ethnic Russian state. The first may, in any case, have brought about the end of the state, and the second, until late in 1991, was unthinkable for Soviet elites. As a result, I would argue, in *Nash sovremennik* (1981-1991) the statist nationalist tendency, like the popular, appears in 'truncated' form. In other words, a full-blown statist programme to create a Russian nation-state, via Russification, was lacking. Statist nationalists themselves were pulled between two poles. On the one hand they strove to co-opt the popular nationalists. At the same time, they needed to find means



to generate cohesion within the ethnically disparate population of the USSR. Negative interpretations of boundary mechanisms were employed as a response to this dilemma.

### *Nash sovremennik* and the Politics of Nationalism

Studies by Frankel and Spechler have shown the key role played by the chief editor of a 'thick' journal. Vikulov, like Tvardovskii, had, within party guidelines and under the influence of the RSFSR Writers' Union and other bodies<sup>62</sup>, considerable personal control over what *Nash sovremennik* printed<sup>63</sup>. *Nash sovremennik*, like *Novyi mir*, played a crucial role in 'encouraging and aggregating' opinion<sup>64</sup>. Like Tvardovskii, Vikulov, in tandem with Bondarev, gathered around his journal a cluster of like-minded authors<sup>65</sup>. In sum, like *Novyi mir* in the 1960s, *Nash sovremennik* in the 1980s constituted 'a distinct political interest and opinion group'<sup>66</sup>. In the case of *Nash sovremennik*, this was nationalist (popular and statist) interest and opinion.

The preceding chapters have shown, for the period 1981-1991, a relatively strong relationship between the leading editorial, three-person, team (of chief editor and deputy chief editors) at *Nash sovremennik*, and both the political ideas expressed in the journal and the chief phases of Soviet political history (see *Hypothesis 2*<sup>67</sup>).

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<sup>62</sup>For a summary of these influences, see *Appendix*.

<sup>63</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

<sup>64</sup>According to Spechler, *Novyi mir* played 'a crucial role in encouraging and aggregating dissent' (Spechler, *op. cit.*, p. 243).

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup>See p. 5.

The importance of the post of deputy chief editor, as has been shown, lay in its role as a mechanism for the chief editor, and power-holders outside the journal, to influence publication policy. Influencing publication policy in this way had two advantages for chief editor and power-holders alike. In the first place it allowed the chief editor to remain, when he wished, 'above the fray', and survive successive teams of deputy chief editors. Secondly, since each deputy chief editor brought to the journal his own views and connections within the intellectual community, his appointment allowed policy-makers to encourage, restrain, and generally manipulate, ideological groupings within the intellectual community. As a result, these appointments were sensitive indicators of political influences on the journal and, I argue, illustrative of the wider politics within the Soviet polity. Their periodisation has provided the starting point for this study, the aim of which, in Breuilly's words, has been to 'relate nationalism to the objectives of obtaining and using state power'<sup>68</sup>.

#### **1. Chief Editor Vikulov; Deputy Chief Editors Seleznev & Ustinov: February 1981 - April 1982**

In the late Brezhnev period (1981-1982), the main function of Russian nationalist ideology seems to have been to co-ordinate conservative elite opposition to the Marxist-Leninist reformism promoted by the Andropov leadership faction. To some degree, this function could be considered, in Breuilly's terms, as 'inter-elite co-

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<sup>68</sup>Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, p. 1.

ordination'<sup>69</sup>. Yet it was not the co-ordination which Breuilly has described as 'required where a heterogeneous set of political elites seek to act in common to challenge the state'<sup>70</sup>. The challenge to Andropov by the 'Russian party', consisting of officials and ideologists who identified with the Kirilenko-Suslov faction, did not 'challenge the state', but challenged a limited range of policy goals.

In the conditions of inter-group rivalry which prevailed as a result of the lack of clear leadership from the political centre, officials at all levels were, to some degree, able to choose with which leaders to identify as they made their careers. The struggle between political leaders at the top, which involved three major groupings around Andropov, Kirilenko-Suslov and Chernenko, engendered a series of struggles at various levels of the bureaucracy. Ideology was used instrumentally to identify political groupings, and ideological tendencies, within limits, flourished. This presupposed the existence of intellectuals organised in such a manner as to generate the 'ideological integument' which any leadership faction required. It is this role which *Nash sovremennik*, as a journal of Russian nationalist orientation, was called upon to play.

The new Seleznev-Ustinov team of deputy chief editors, in which Seleznev was the leading party, was brought to the journal as the leadership contest intensified. The move, it can be hypothesised, was initiated by the Suslov-Kirilenko group, to strengthen its links with radical 'White'

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<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 382.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*



(opponentist) statist nationalist elements among the intelligentsia. Vikulov and Bondarev played a supporting, facilitating, role.

The Russian nationalist writing in the journal was thenceforth characterised by a wide spread of popular and statist tendencies. The opponentist stance in publication policy seems to have prompted an increase in 'negative' interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms, predominantly by statist nationalists. The 'enemies' included liberals, Westernisers, foreign enemies, Jews and Freemasons. The existence of an informal alliance between popular and statist nationalist tendencies was clear, for example, from the mutual encouragement and support which the statist nationalists (in particular, Seleznev) and the popular nationalists (including Belov and Rasputin) gave each other.

The Kirilenko-Suslov faction, with which *Nash sovremennik* was identified, seems, however, to have been the weakest, in good measure because of the declining health of its two chief leaders. In opposition to this faction, both Andropov and Chernenko took an anti-nationalist line. When the leadership contest reached a partial resolution, and the Kirilenko-Suslov group was defeated, the Andropov faction emerged as the strongest.

*Nash sovremennik's* initial reaction, having been forced to abandon its 'White' opponentist stance, was to adopt a 'Red' statist position in an attempt at compromise. However, Seleznev and Ustinov were removed and the 'alliance' between nationalists, popular and statist, and

officials of the Kirilenko-Suslov 'Russian party', nurtured at the journal by Yurii Bondarev and Sergei Vikulov, was broken up.

Andropov then sought to suppress Russian nationalist ideology, associated with the Kirilenko-Suslov grouping, and promote a limited type of Soviet reformism, oriented towards 'international Marxism-Leninism'. This represented a sharp break with accepted practice under Brezhnev, a break Brudny has characterised as the 'end of the "political contract"' between the political leadership and Russian nationalists<sup>71</sup>. Significantly, however, the Andropov faction proved more hostile to the statist nationalist tendency, which suffered severe reprisals, than to its popular counterpart, whose representatives escaped comparatively lightly. This indicates that Andropov did not wish to wholly abandon the attempt to co-opt popular Russian nationalist ideology into Soviet official mythology, although he did reject the statist nationalist tendency and its policy implications.

## **2. Chief Editor Vikulov; Deputy Chief Editors Krivtsov & Vasil'ev: May 1982 - February 1984**

First as 'Ideological Secretary', and then as General Secretary, Andropov sought to impose an ideological uniformity, based on Marxist-Leninist 'internationalism', and involving a suppression of Russian nationalist tendencies. This twin policy was designed, in the short term, to enable Andropov to overcome the three dangers,

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<sup>71</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.* p. 168.

implicit in Breuilly's analysis of nationalist ideology, for a Soviet leader<sup>72</sup>: as a potential co-ordinator of opposition among dissatisfied Soviet elites; as an obstacle to popular mobilisation of the multi-ethnic population; and as an inappropriate means to legitimate the Soviet Union on the world arena, since it would damage the USSR's role as the leading Communist state<sup>73</sup>, while exposing it to criticism as an empire.

In the longer term, Andropov's policies were intended to avoid what Smith has called the 'grave dangers', for a multi-ethnic polity such as the Soviet Union, presented by 'a one-sided recourse to the traditions and personnel of the dominant ethnic community'<sup>74</sup>. Andropov's preferred alternative, of promoting a loyalty to the Soviet state based on Marxist-Leninist ideology, meant, in Smith's words:

[to] construct a new 'political culture' out of the various ethnic traditions within the territorial state, by combining myths and symbols, seeking common denominators in the past [...] and even inventing a distant common origin or 'age of heroism' such as other nationalisms have admired.<sup>75</sup>

However, the problem of Marxism-Leninism, as Soviet leaders from Lenin to Brezhnev had been aware, was the limited range of cultural and historical symbolism on which it could draw, and its inability to break down ethnic particularism.

At the elite level, nonetheless, Andropov was successful in securing the support of Kirilenko's former

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<sup>72</sup>Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, pp. 181-190.

<sup>73</sup>D. Jacobs & T. Hill, 'Soviet Ethnic Policy in the 1980s: Theoretical Consistency and Political Reality', in J. Noguee (ed.), *Soviet Politics: Russia after Brezhnev*, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1985, p. 181.

<sup>74</sup>Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, p. 149.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*



clients"<sup>6</sup>. The alacrity these 'new' Andropov clients showed, in abandoning the Russian nationalist ideological integument of the Kirilenko-Suslov grouping, is strong evidence for the instrumental role ideology played in Soviet elite politics. Under pressure from Andropov, *Nash sovremennik* published a very limited range of nationalist writing, largely shorn of statist themes, and almost entirely reformist in orientation (a reformist nationalism probably encouraged by Andropov's heir apparent, Gorbachev).

The appointment of Andropov's chief political rival, Chernenko, as 'Ideological Secretary', although designed in part to prevent the latter playing the 'Russian Card' by forcing him to implement Andropov's anti-nationalist policy, was, however, a partial admission of weakness by the General Secretary. An underlying factor, in this weakness, was that Andropov's ideological policy entailed a breach with the Soviet tradition of promoting Russian nationalist tendencies at times of isolation in foreign policy"<sup>7</sup>. Andropov took the potentially dangerous course, while relations with the international community remained extremely tense, of proceeding to challenge domestic conservative elites by pushing ahead with (limited) reform. Gorbachev may well have learned from his mentor's experience, since he was to choose a radically different course once he came to power, easing international relations while introducing domestic reform.

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<sup>6</sup>Solov'ev & Klepikova, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130; Volkogonov, *Sem' vozhdai, Kniga 2*, p. 115.  
<sup>7</sup>See Chapter One.

As Andropov's health began to fail, inter-group rivalry acquired fresh force. As a result, towards the end of the Andropov period, Russian nationalist writing in *Nash sovremennik* revived. However, this minor 'revival' was not the rise in Russian nationalism which Dunlop had predicted for the immediate post-Brezhnev period<sup>78</sup>. It was, instead, the result of the tactical manipulation by Chernenko of nationalist ideology, falling back on the Kirilenko-Suslov model to co-ordinate opposition to Andropov. In sum, the Andropov period provided an example of a confident and powerful Soviet ruler, able to stamp out inter-factional rivalry, who was not tempted to employ Russian nationalism as an official ideology, or, to adapt Anderson's words, to 'stretch the short, tight skin of the [Russian] nation over the gigantic body of the [Soviet] empire'<sup>79</sup>.

### **3. Chief Editor Vkulov; Deputy Chief Editors Korobov & Mussalin: February 1984-April 1986**

In some respects, the Chernenko period saw a reversion to the politics of 1981-1982, when there was a lack of strong central leadership and rival factions challenged each another. In a revival of the 'political contract' of the Brezhnev era, Chernenko patronised Russian nationalists, both popular and statist. However, the General Secretary's inability to impose his ideological line, as Andropov had done, indicated his faction's weakness: 'Andropovite' - now 'Gorbachevite' - views continued to appear in the press.

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<sup>78</sup>Dunlop, *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism*, p. 61.  
<sup>79</sup>See Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

This duality was also evident in *Nash sovremennik*. In the newly-favourable ideological climate for Russian nationalism, Korobov was appointed deputy chief editor and the statist nationalist tendency (represented, for example, by Kunyaev and Kuz'min) was given a new, high profile in the journal. In reaction, a Gorbachevite faction in the Department of Culture secured the appointment of Mussalitin as deputy chief editor. Thereafter, the rival deputy chief editors competed for control of publication policy.

Gorbachev's accession was an ambiguous event for the nationalists. This was apparent, in the first year of his term in office, when the new General Secretary implemented a somewhat more sophisticated version of Andropov's policy towards Russian nationalism, which distinguished clearly between popular and statist trends. In line with this policy, Gorbachev's appointee, Yakovlev, heading the Propaganda Department, encouraged popular nationalist views oriented towards reform, while suppressing statist nationalist ideology. This policy was based on the view, to be tested severely in the succeeding periods, that the *negative* aspects of Russian nationalist ideology - and foremost here, anti-Semitism, but including anti-Westernism and xenophobia - were linked with the *statist* rather than the *popular* nationalist tendency.



1987

In 1986, in Tatyana Zaslavskaya's phrase, Gorbachev 'uncorked' the bottle of social change<sup>80</sup>. Gorbachev and Yakovlev invited public opinion to play a role in influencing policy-making, thereby bringing about a sea-change in Soviet political life.

Solovei has argued that, in the first two years of his rule, Gorbachev's fundamental attitude to Russian nationalist ideology was that of 'manipulation' (*funktsional'noe ispol'zovanie*), and was therefore similar to that of his predecessors<sup>81</sup>. This may apply to Gorbachev's first year in office (see above), yet 'manipulation', a very broad term, obscures at least one crucial difference between Gorbachev's policy towards Russian nationalist ideology, in his second year as General Secretary, and those policies of his immediate predecessors. Brezhnev and Chernenko had used Russian nationalism as a force to maintain the status quo; Andropov had sought to suppress it to increase his authority and impose limited reform. From the summer of 1986, Gorbachev showed he had recognised the potential of popular nationalist ideology as a force to *mobilise* support for reform.

Gorbachev's policy, put into practice in the 'cultural offensive', was nonetheless highly selective. It represented, to a considerable degree, a wager on the

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<sup>80</sup>Cited by M. Malyutin, 'Neformaly v perestroike: opyt i perspektivy', in Y. Afanas'ev (ed.), *Inogo ne dano*, Progress, Moscow, 1988, p. 227. See Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>81</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

'democrats', a political grouping new in Soviet experience, which Dunlop has described as a 'heterogeneous collection of activists advocating a "Western" course for the USSR and [later] for the Russian Republic - that is, a multi-party democracy and market economy'<sup>82</sup>. From the appearance of the 'democrats' on the political stage, Westernisation became a crucial issue in Soviet political debates, and one around which polarisation took place. In these circumstances, writers, with their traditional authority in Russian culture, became leading spokespeople for competing positions.

The threat of Westernisation revealed the intrinsic weakness and vulnerability of the Russian popular nationalist tendency, denied, in Soviet conditions, the 'natural' aspiration to ethnic statehood. Popular nationalists perceived Yakovlev and his allies in the intelligentsia as Westernising, and a threat to Russian national values. The level of their anxiety, over what has been denoted here as 'ethnic survival', increased dramatically, with, at that stage, little effective institutional outlet. This brought to the surface Greenfeld's *ressentiment*, compounded by the release of anxieties and frustrations inherited from the pre-glasnost' era. In reaction, in the first place, popular nationalists tended to exaggerate the threats posed to the Russian *ethnie* by various non-Russian and Westernising elements. A second response was to seek allies among statist nationalists (including, later, non-nationalist statist).

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<sup>82</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Yet, as Brudny has observed, from this time onwards, the ability of *Nash sovremennik* to 'set the agenda for socio-political debate', always severely limited, progressively diminished<sup>83</sup>. Instead, the journal was now having to react all the time to the 'cultural offensive'.

By early 1987, an opposition to the democrats, led by conservative Communists and neo-Stalinists, began to coalesce, and sought, just as Gorbachev was doing, to court the popular nationalists. Led by Ligachev, these conservatives were aware that Marxism-Leninism was a largely uncompetitive ideological force in the new conditions of glasnost'. Popular and statist nationalists alike, therefore, found natural allies in this opposition grouping, opposed to Westernising reformism. The alliance was expressed in an increasingly open articulation of 'negative' interpretations of ethnic identity. In particular, as Brudny has written, 'Anti-Semitism was to serve as the 'glue' of the nationalist opposition to the reforms'<sup>84</sup>.

Nonetheless, in 1986-7, the future of this conservative-nationalist alliance was uncertain. Popular nationalist ideology had not yet cast its lot, either with Gorbachev, or with the conservatives. Gorbachev persistently sought to break down the developing ideological polarisation, and prevent his opponents from 'playing the Russian card', by himself patronising Russian nationalists (including *Nash sovremennik*). Many aspects of his policies remained attractive to popular nationalists

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<sup>83</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, p. 171.  
<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 179.



and could, potentially, disrupt their emerging alliance with conservatives. These included the new freedom of speech, support for the Orthodox religion, attention to ecological concerns, for example by abandoning the Northern Rivers' diversion project, and the campaign against alcohol.

The popular nationalists who responded most eagerly to these policy initiatives were those who, in Soviet conditions, had declared that their brand of nationalism had no political implications. These 'self-denying' popular nationalists were best exemplified by Likhachev and Zalygin, who now assumed the role of 'pro-reform' or 'liberal' nationalists<sup>85</sup>. Gorbachev hoped, no doubt, that these leading cultural figures would bring other popular nationalists with them into the reform camp.

These developments were reflected in *Nash sovremennik*. From the evidence of the journal, Gorbachev encouraged popular nationalists (particularly those of a reformist orientation), but continued to suppress statist nationalists. The polarisation within society therefore could be observed *within* the journal, now personified by the contrasting positions taken by *deputy chief* editors Mussalitin and Svininnikov.

##### **5. Chief Editor Vukob; Deputy Chief Editors Svininnikov & Kazintsev: June 1987 - September 1989**

The unity of the Soviet Union, threatened by separatist sentiment in the Baltic and elsewhere, emerged as a leading political issue. For conservatives of all hues, 'the

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<sup>85</sup>Solovei calls them 'fellow travellers' of the Russian nationalist establishment' (Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 57).

oneness of the Soviet state became their principal, and even obsessive, concern'<sup>86</sup>. At the same time, increasing democratisation, including multi-candidate elections, made mobilisation an ever more important function of nationalist ideology. The popular resonance of alternative ideologies played a significant part in determining their attractiveness to political elites. Conservative elements within the Soviet elite increasingly found Marxist-Leninist ideology an inadequate instrument in the new proto-democratic conditions, and sought to co-opt Russian nationalist support for the Soviet empire-state. This support, combined with the nationalists' antipathy to Westernisation, was used by conservatives to help portray the ideological struggle as one between democrat-Westernisers, willing to contemplate the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and patriotic Russian nationalists in alliance with statist Communists, on the other.

The issue of Russian statehood proved decisive for the political orientation of the nationalists of *Nash sovremennik*. The statist nationalists, 'Red' and 'White', given their commitment to the 'imperial' state, were natural allies of the conservative statist camp. Many popular nationalists, already attracted to the conservatives because of the Westernising tendencies of the democrats, were now drawn more firmly towards the statist. This development was underlain by the fact that the popular

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<sup>86</sup>Dunlop, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

Russian nationalist tendency lacked its own - ethnic - theory of statehood.

The ambiguity in the attitudes of most popular nationalists to the RSFSR reflected the strength of the (USSR-oriented) statist tendency in nationalist thinking. It was also a result of the ambivalence, among the elite sponsors of Russian nationalist ideology, about the potential of RSFSR institutions. Nonetheless, the emergence of the RSFSR as a possible focus for popular nationalist sentiment did represent a potential threat to the alliance between popular and statist nationalists.

At *Nash sovremennik*, the emergence of the preservation of the Soviet state as an issue brought about a reconciliation between the 'White' and the 'Red' variants within the statist nationalist tendency (personified by deputy chief editors Kazintsev and Svininnikov respectively). This, in turn, cleared the way for an ideological rapprochement between Russian nationalists, whose symbolic leader had become Yurii Bondarev, on the one hand, and conservative Communists and neo-Stalinists, led by Ligachev, on the other. Once this had occurred, the divide between nationalists and democrats increased. In turn, the more neo-Stalinists and nationalists found they had common enemies in the democrats, the closer they drew together.

This reconciliation was very much on the basis of a 'Red' statist nationalist ideology, compatible with the line taken by the Nina Andreeva Letter. It was evident in an increasing co-ordination of publication policy between



*Nash sovremennik* and *Molodaya gvardiya*, an organ traditionally associated with neo-Stalinist views. Yet, both Communist and nationalist conservatives seem to have overestimated the appeal of a 'Red' nationalist ideology (Brudny, for example, has stressed the 'relatively low readership of *Molodaya gvardiya*'<sup>87</sup>). The rapprochement between the Ligachev-led conservatives and the Russian nationalists tended to discredit both groupings in the public eye. In the same way, Communists and nationalists seem to have miscalculated with regard to public perceptions of the Pamyat' organisation. Solovei's view, that Communists and nationalists were the victims of a campaign by Gorbachev and Yakovlev to discredit them, misses these important points<sup>88</sup>.

Ligachev's failure in his bid to increase his power meant that this 'Red' ideological project was tarnished in the eyes of Communists and nationalists alike. Moreover, in an increasingly open political arena, the 'Red' ideology's lack of popular appeal lessened its attraction for elites. In reaction to this failure, at *Nash sovremennik* a 'White' statist nationalist tendency gained in strength. Gorbachev, meanwhile, seems to have continued to patronise Russian nationalists in line with his long-term strategy of attempting to prevent the 'Russian card' falling irrevocably into the hands of the conservatives.

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<sup>87</sup>Brudny, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.  
<sup>88</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

1991

By the end of 1989 the traditional Soviet literary-political system no longer existed and 'thick' journals were obtaining their 'freedom' from political masters. Kunyaev, chief editor of *Nash sovremennik* from the October 1989 issue, was freed from the tutelage of party and state bodies, including the censor. Relations with the RSFSR Writers' Union were re-established on a largely voluntary basis.

From Gorbachev's point of view, the appointment of the 'White' statist nationalist Kunyaev was a concession to conservative forces which, at the same time, offered the prospect of securing support for him from Russian statist (and popular) nationalists against the democrats. Yet Gorbachev's calculation also involved the fact that the intimate links, both formal and informal, between political elites and the cultural intelligentsia were diminishing. As formal party and state controls were removed, or disintegrated, the 'thick' journals not only gained their freedom, <sup>but</sup> also lost much of their political significance. This development reflected the fact that much of the basis of the journals' support had lain in organisations whose power and influence had been eroded by political change, in particular the RSFSR Writers' Union, the Komsomol and the Department of Culture.

The 'take-over' of *Nash sovremennik* by the 'Whites' was not only 'ideological', but also 'generational'. Kunyaev's appointment as chief editor consummated the long-standing

desire by 'men of the 'sixties' (shestidesyatniki) to formally assume a leadership role among Russian nationalists, taking over from the veterans of the Great Patriotic War (frontoviki), such as Vikulov and Bondarev. Gorbachev had, therefore, in a sense, created an emasculating trap for the ambitious Kunyaev, who found himself in a political vacuum on taking over at *Nash sovremennik*. Reluctant to accept this state of affairs, Kunyaev set about finding new political patrons, notably among conservative Communist ('Red') political forces, in particular the newly created Russian Communist Party; and the military.

Notwithstanding this, in his first year as chief editor, Kunyaev, in the grip of the anti-Communist fever of the times, moved sharply in a 'White' ideological direction. In a new 'White' team of deputy chief editors, Il'in joined Kazintsev, while 'Red' members of the editorial board were replaced by 'White'. The failure of the patriotic Bloc, in the elections to the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, seemed to show the weakness of 'Red' ideology, and confirm the need for a 'White' ideology.

Nevertheless, the need for political support forced the journal to continue to make 'Red' allies. Indeed, a profound change was taking place in Soviet ideological perceptions, of which Kunyaev may at first have been unaware. Traditionally, 'Red' nationalist tendencies had been collaborationist; 'White' tendencies had been in opposition. In the previous period, the 'Red'-'White' alliance, under the banner of Nina Andreeva, had been a



conscious effort to create political solidarity between diverse ideological trends. In this period, the perception of a growing threat to Soviet statehood inspired the conviction, among 'Red' and 'White' statist nationalists alike (not to mention many popular nationalists, conservative Communists and neo-Stalinists), that only the traditional Soviet institutions of state power - which included the Communist Party as well as the Soviet army and the Orthodox church - could hold the USSR together as a single state. As both 'Red' and 'White' tendencies found themselves in opposition, they drew closer together. In his second year in office, Kunyaev recognised this fact by moving his hitherto 'White' journal in a 'Red' ideological direction.

The success of the democrats in taking up RSFSR-oriented demands, and controlling RSFSR institutions, was a further factor pushing the nationalists to look to the conservative Russian Communist Party in particular, and USSR institutions more generally, for support. As Solovei has pointed out, the democrats seized upon slogans which had been initially put forward by nationalists<sup>89</sup>:

The skilful playing of the Russian [rossiiskoi] card became [for the democrats] and for El'tsin that magical "Sesame", which opened the way to the summits of political power in Russia.<sup>90</sup>

However, Russian nationalist thinking, as exemplified in *Nash sovremennik*, dominated as it was by a statist commitment to the USSR, was unable and unwilling to re-orient itself towards the RSFSR. Popular nationalists,

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<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.  
<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 65.

naturally inclined to support RSFSR-oriented demands, yet with no developed popular theory of statehood, adopted the statist nationalist view of the Russian state when the 'imperial' state came under threat. Solzhenitsyn's call for Russians to dismantle the empire and effectively establish an ethnic Russian state was unwelcome to those nationalists, statist and popular alike, associated with *Nash sovremennik*. The democrats, consequently, therefore had little competition in their championing of RSFSR statehood.

## Conclusions

This six-part summary analysis of '*Nash sovremennik* and the Politics of Nationalism' shows how conservative political elites consistently sought to use Russian nationalist ideology to control and limit reform in the period 1981-1991 (see *Hypothesis 3*<sup>91</sup>). This seems to confirm some of the views put forward by Yanov. 'The ideology of Russian nationalism', Yanov wrote, 'is antagonistic to all the main principles on which modern democracy is based'<sup>92</sup>. Yanov has argued that Russian nationalism would, in the long run, prove a fundamental support for the Communist system:

The weight of the historical evidence suggests that in the event of the collapse of reform, the system would be forced to turn to the Russian idea simply to survive - because it would have nowhere else to go by the end of the twentieth century.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>See p. 5.

<sup>92</sup>Yanov, *The Russian Challenge and the Year 2000*, p. xii. See also A. Yanov, *The New Russian Right: Right-wing Ideologies in the Contemporary USSR*, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, 1978.

<sup>93</sup>Yanov, *The Russian Challenge and the Year 2000*, p. 261.

The above analysis has shown, however, that the political significance of Russian nationalist ideology in the Soviet Union depended on its bifurcation into statist and popular tendencies (see *Hypothesis 4*<sup>94</sup>). The conservative political position of Russian nationalist ideology, at the end of the Gorbachev period, was primarily determined by the statist tendency. The popular nationalist tendency, for all its anti-Westernism, remained, to a considerable extent, indigestible for Soviet conservative elites. In general, the difficulties, which Soviet elites encountered in manipulating Russian nationalist ideology derived from the imperial, and ethnically heterogeneous, nature of the USSR (see *Hypothesis 5*<sup>95</sup>).

Nevertheless, on the evidence of *Nash sovremennik*, Russian nationalist ideology, in both popular and statist forms, was a sufficiently diverse ideological current to contain both reformist and conservative elements. Russian nationalists, for example, were deeply divided over the question of Communism. Some nationalists, as the tide of Westernisation rose, perceived Communist ideology, the Communist bureaucracy and the 'command economy as forces capable of opposing Western capitalism. The Communist ethos of social equality emerged as a favoured principle of Russian nationalist thinking<sup>96</sup>. Yet there was, nonetheless, an alternative 'White' element in Russian nationalist thinking which was ready to adapt to the market and the new economic system<sup>97</sup>. For these 'White' nationalists, the

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<sup>94</sup>See p. 5.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup>See Arkhangel'skii, 'Mezhdu svobodoi i ravenstvom'.

<sup>97</sup>See *Chapter Seven*.



attraction of 'Red' ideas was that they facilitated the creation of alliances with politically powerful Communists in an attempt to ensure the survival of the 'Russian' Soviet state. 'Redness' was, fundamentally, a matter of expedience.

In general, in this period of wholesale political change, as Laqueur has pointed out, the emergence of proto-fascist currents could have been predicted:

[...] experience in other countries has shown that at a time of political and economic crisis, marginal fascists or para-fascist groups may suddenly assume a role of considerable importance; sometimes they may emerge as a decisive force in politics.<sup>98</sup>

Indeed, proto-fascist tendencies can be detected, but are not dominant, on the pages of *Nash sovremennik* 1981-1991<sup>99</sup>. The chief characteristics of Russian nationalism in this period were the 'truncated' nature of the popular nationalist tendency and the imperial nature of its statist counterpart.

It was, essentially, because of these characteristics that the leading representatives of both tendencies, among the nationalists associated with *Nash sovremennik*, identified themselves with conservative political forces, which were on the 'losing side' in the political conflict over the future of the Soviet Union. In this sense, the history of Russian nationalism 1981-1991. is the history of a failure. Hosking, for example, has graphically described the consequences of this failure, in that the Russian Federation, which resulted from the dismemberment of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, was 'more a bleeding hulk

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<sup>98</sup>Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 102.  
<sup>99</sup>See Chapter Seven.

of empire [than a nation-state]: what happened to be left over when the other republics broke away'<sup>100</sup>.

Yet, somewhat paradoxically, the collapse of the Soviet Union, by producing a relatively ethnically homogeneous 'Russian' state with democratic pretensions, in which territory and ethnicity are more congruent than hitherto (81.5% of the population are ethnic Russians; and 86% claim Russian as their mother tongue<sup>101</sup>), has created the political and social pre-conditions for a new, and more powerful, nationalist ideology. Pipes has observed that, for the first time since the sixteenth century:

[...] the Russians now have their own national state and the traditional confusion between nation-state and empire, one of the major obstacles to the emergence of nationalism, no longer obtains.<sup>102</sup>

In such a Russian 'national state', tensions between popular and statist nationalist ideological tendencies could, predictably, decline, and, consequently, nationalist ideology could become far more attractive to political elites. In addition to these 'domestic' strengths, the new conditions mean that, for the first time, Russian nationalist ideology has become capable of performing the third function of such an ideology, identified by Breuilly, that of legitimising the state in the eyes of the international community<sup>103</sup>.

If the Russian Federation is to flourish as a state, there are grounds for arguing that a popular, ethnic nationalist ideology will play an important rôle. Pipes,

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<sup>100</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 484-485.

<sup>101</sup>Solovei, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>102</sup>Pipes, 'The Historical Evolution of Russian National Identity', p. 144.

<sup>103</sup>Breuilly, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-90.

for example, has stressed the importance of ethnic ties in nation-building:

Community loyalty is a *sine qua non* of proper functioning of the modern state - with its integrated society and interdependent economy. During the past two centuries, this loyalty has largely centred on ethnic identification. All successful states [...] have been distinguished by strongly developed ethnic loyalties.<sup>104</sup>

Solovei, in turn, has argued that, in the post-1991 Russian Federation, 'Russian nationalism could become a most important factor of political stability'<sup>105</sup>. Hosking has suggested that nationalist ideologies could provide crucial solutions to problems facing Russians living in their new state:

Russians are closer today to nationhood than they have ever been, but the question still remains open whether they can decide who should belong to that nation and what its boundaries should be, and whether a political system can be created which gives all or most of them a feeling of having some stake in it.<sup>106</sup>

The utilisation of Russian nationalist ideology to help build a Russian national state, and mobilise the population for socio-economic and political development, would, nevertheless, require major ideological adaptations. As this study has shown, the popular and statist nationalist tendencies would, in particular, need to undergo fundamental change to achieve a greater degree of congruence: the popular tendency would need to develop a concept of statehood; and the statist tendency would need to refocus, from the territory of the Soviet Union, to that of the Russian Federation. It might be hypothesised that,

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<sup>104</sup>Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-148.

<sup>105</sup>Solovei, *loc. cit.*

<sup>106</sup>Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 486.



since de facto the Russian ethnic population and the territorial state have been brought into greater congruence with one another, the ideological rapprochement of the two tendencies would naturally follow. Yet the traditions of Russian nationalist ideology under the Soviet regime may prove to be powerful, inhibiting factors. Nonetheless, such adaptations may be possible, given the malleability of nationalist ideology in the hands of political elites. As Smith has argued:

There has, in fact, never been a single version of nationalism, and it is vain to search for some 'genuine' doctrine or 'true' movement to act as a criterion for all subsequent ones.<sup>107</sup>

If greater congruence between the two tendencies were achieved, a Russian popular nationalist ideology would result, which had its own model of an essentially ethnic statehood. Consequently, Russian popular nationalist ideology would no longer be 'defenceless', and, as a result, in time its susceptibility to negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms would diminish. Negative features of Russian nationalist ideology, such as strident anti-Westernism and anti-Semitism, would be moderated.

One manner in which such ideological adaptations might come about has been suggested by Pipes, who has pointed to the important role of civil rights in generating ethnic and national solidarities in the modern era:

Members of a community - and a nation is a community - must feel that they receive the same treatment from justice, that they can be as confident of the security of their person and belonging as the mightiest and richest - or else they are without a bond to hold them together. Inequalities in this

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<sup>107</sup>Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 12-13.

respect create a gulf among members of a society which renders coalescence into a community impossible.<sup>108</sup>

In this interpretation, if the Russian Federation is able to develop a cohesive civil society, based on a wide acceptance of common, and effectively defended, civil rights, then a popular nationalist ideology, able to bind community members and legitimise the state, could be generated. Such a line of argument brings to the fore the traditional question of the relationship between Russia and the West. Risto Alapuro has recently posed this anew:

Will the present juncture bring Russia into the Western mainstream, with a 'normal society', 'normal historical process', or 'normal market economy', and with the dominance of 'universal human values', as so many Democratic Russian commentators like to put it today? Or will Russia follow a different line of development, as it did in the past and up to our own time?<sup>109</sup>

Alapuro, unlike Pipes, sees a future Russian nationalism (in my interpretation, a statist nationalist ideology, largely based on elite manipulation of negative interpretations of ethnic boundary mechanisms) as disruptive of civil society, and ideally suited to manipulation by unscrupulous leaders:

Nationalism, based on cultural identification, on the role of culture as the marker of collective boundaries, on a direct linkage between the leader(s) and the followers, and frequently on political messianism, does not require painstaking institution-building, but it can be activated quickly, not least in conditions of increasing economic misery and deepening feelings of national humiliation.<sup>110</sup>

These two suggestions, by Pipes and Alapuro, of possible future directions which Russian nationalist

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<sup>108</sup>Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>109</sup>Alapuro, 'Civil Society in Russia?', p. 211.

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 213-214.

ideology might take, indicate that the Russian Federation, in the immediate future, will be faced with a choice between popular and statist forms of nationalist ideology. The current study would suggest that, to understand these tendencies, and their possible variants, *Nash sovremennik* (1981-1991) is essential reading.



## Appendix:

### Editorial Structures & Policy-making

#### Inside the Soviet 'Thick' Journal<sup>1</sup>

At any one time, a group of approximately thirty people was directly involved in the monthly production of *Nash sovremennik* (1981-1991). These were divided among two bodies with overlapping membership, the editorial board (*redaktsionnaya kollegiya*, or *redkollegiya*) and the editorial staff or office (*redaktsiya*). As Frankel has noted of *Novyi mir*, 'the editorial board and staff [...] did form a more or less homogeneous group, and one which attracted its own "circle" of writers, advisors, friends'<sup>2</sup>. These individuals had in

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<sup>1</sup>The following account of the 'thick' journal and the publication process is based, unless indicated otherwise, on information provided by interviews with chief editors S. Kunyaev (31/8/93) and S. Vikulov (8/4/92, 10/12/92); deputy chief editors L. Frolov (16/6/93); D. Il'in (7/6/94), A. Kazintsev (16/12/92, 10/6/93), V. Korobov (25/8/93), V. Krivtsov (12/8/93, 20/3/94), Yu. Maksimov (10/6/93, 23/9/94), V. Mussalitin (20/7/93), N. Pozdnyakov (22/9/94), V. Svininnikov (17/12/92, 24/5/93), V. Ustinov (19/8/93) and V. Vasil'ev (7/6/93); responsible secretaries S. Lukonin (18/6/93), V. Ogryzko (25/7/94) and V. Pal'chikov (27/8/93); department heads V. Grachev (22/6/93), A. Segen' (24/6/93) and B. Sporov (9/7/93). See also E. Frankel, *Novyi Mir: A Case Study in the Politics of Literature, 1952-1958*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981 (especially pp. 122-141); D. Spechler, *Permitted Dissent in the USSR: Novyi mir and the Soviet Regime*, Praeger, New York, 1982.

<sup>2</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

common 'a framework of mutually held goals and characteristics'<sup>3</sup>. Frankel has compared the journal to Merle Fainsod's 'family circle', 'a kind of fraternal grouping'<sup>4</sup>. Among writers, as Hosking has observed, the 'family circle' could promote autonomous values<sup>5</sup> and enable them 'to behave with perhaps greater boldness than any other professional group in society'<sup>6</sup>. The 'thick' journal, Hosking writes, was the 'natural integument for such a "family circle"'.<sup>7</sup>

### The Redaktsiya

The redaktsiya, which carried out the day-to-day work of preparing each issue of *Nash sovremennik*, consisted of the editor-in-chief, the deputy chief editors, the responsible secretary, the heads of department (usually four in number - of prose, poetry, criticism and publitsistika) and the junior staff members (*literaturnye sotrudniki*), one or two in each department. In addition, there were a staff member to deal with readers' letters, a technical editor, one or two proof readers, a typist and a secretary. When the work-load of the journal became especially onerous, 'ad hoc readers' from outside the journal could be called upon to help with the work of the editorial office<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 145. See M. Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled*, revised edition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1970, pp. 213, 235-7, 240, 338-9, 412, 418, 575.

<sup>5</sup>Hosking, 'Homo Sovieticus or Homo sapiens?', p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-4.

## The Chief Editor

Executive power within the journal was concentrated in the hands of the chief editor. The chief editorship was a nomenklatura post to which appointment was made by the Central Committee<sup>9</sup>. If the chief editor came from outside Moscow, he would be granted a propiska (Moscow living permit) and an apartment. The RSFSR Writers' Union played an advisory and consultative role in making this appointment.

The chief editor was held responsible by higher instances for the content of each issue of the journal: final decisions on publication policy were always formally his. The chief editor was endowed with wide-ranging powers, including those of appointment, and relations at the journal were authoritarian. Adherence to the established hierarchy of relationships was strict. Each level of authority and responsibility - deputy chief editors, responsible secretary, heads of department, sotrudniki - was well defined.

The personal views and style of work of the chief editor had an enormous impact on the journal<sup>10</sup>. The chief editor was able to take decisions without consulting his colleagues, or against their better judgement. The editor-in-chief's voice was one to be reckoned with in the discussions with the Central Committee departments and the censorship if disagreements arose<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup>See S. Vikulov, 'Chto napisano perom...', NS, No. 12, 1996, p. 8; N. Loshkareva, interview 14/4/94.

<sup>10</sup>See Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 125; D. Spechler, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>11</sup>Loshkareva, interview.



## Deputy Chief Editors

In the running of the journal, the deputy chief editors were the chief editor's main aides. Together with the chief editor they took the most important decisions on publication policy, in so far as these were made at the journal itself. Together with the chief editor, they were also the journal's most important representatives in dealing with outside institutions - the Writers' Union, the censorship, the Central Committee departments, ministries and other bodies. The post of deputy chief editor was demanding and time-consuming, requiring a combination of literary talent and organisational skill. The restrictions placed on the deputy chief editor by the hierarchical nature of the journal's organisation, and a chief editor's reluctance to delegate, limited the scope for creativity.

Deputy chief editors were responsible for co-ordinating the work of the redaktsiya in line with the instructions of the chief editor. Of the two, one would be nominated *first* deputy chief editor. Each deputy chief editor oversaw two of the departments in the journal. The *first* deputy chief editor would normally oversee the departments of prose and criticism, and the *second* deputy chief editor the departments of publitsistika and poetry. Deputy chief editors took responsibility for overseeing the production of alternate numbers of the journal<sup>12</sup>.

Appointments to the two posts of deputy chief editor were a key means by which political influence could be brought to bear on *Nash sovremennik*, and the ideological

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<sup>12</sup>S. Semanov, interview 21/9/94.

and institutional ties of the journal variously established, strengthened, weakened or broken altogether. The chief editor, the leadership of the journal's parent body, the RSFSR Writers' Union, and the Central Committee Department of Culture played the most immediately influential roles in determining appointments to the posts of deputy chief editor. Formally, these appointments were made by the chief editor in association with the RSFSR Writers' Union, and required confirmation by the Cultural Department of the Central Committee. Since these were not nomenklatura positions, the Central Committee would not arrange a Moscow propiska and apartment for a deputy chief editor. The deputy chief editors (and other members of the editorial staff) had therefore to be drawn from the capital city.

The need for the 'team' of deputy chief editors to satisfy the various personal and institutional influences upon the journal meant that the changes to these appointments closely reflected wider changes in the Soviet political system. The periodisation of Soviet political history 1981-1991 is reflected in the changes in 'teams' of deputy chief editors at *Nash sovremennik*. Periods when an established team worked together would be followed by a 'transitional' period until a new team of deputy chief editors was formed.

### **The Responsible Secretary**

Appointment to the post of responsible editor was made by a process similar to that for deputy chief editor. The

duty of the responsible editor was to act as a 'chief of staff', co-ordinating the work of all departments in accordance with instructions from the chief and deputy chief editors<sup>13</sup>. The responsible secretary ensured that all procedures in the production of each issue were carried out on time. The responsible secretary was the official who conducted the initial and regular contacts with the censorship in the course of the production of each issue. Their functions included dealing with the printers, in the case of *Nash sovremennik Krasnaya zvezda* (a Ministry of Defence printing press), and preparing the meetings of the editorial board.

### The Departments

The four 'heads of department' at the journal could be appointed by the chief editor without prior consultation with any other bodies. They were frequently made on the advice of the deputy chief editors. The prose department was the most important and therefore had the largest staff of two or three *literaturnye sotrudniki*. The departments of criticism, *publitsistika* and poetry had usually only one *sotrudnik*. The head of the poetry department, given the interest the chief editors took in the poetry published (both Vikulov and Kunyaev were poets), was at once on closer terms with the chief editor and more directly subordinated to his wishes than were his colleagues<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup>Frolov, interview.

<sup>14</sup>According to former staff members, this was the case under Vikulov (Krivtsov, interview 20/3/94; Pal'chikov, interview). Since Kunyaev is also a poet, it may be supposed the same has been the case in his period in office.



## The Party Organisation<sup>15</sup>

By tradition, the party secretary was usually the head of one of the more minor departments less burdened with work, frequently the head of the poetry department. The small Communist party organisation at the journal was a rather anomalous institution in which one of the members - the editor-in-chief - was a nomenklatura appointee of the Central Committee. As well as the chief editor, deputy chief editors had normally to be party members (in 1987 Aleksandr Kazintsev became the first non-party deputy chief editor). For the responsible secretary and the heads of department, party membership was the norm, but exceptions were more frequent. It was not usual for literaturnye sotrudniki or the technical staff to be party members. As a rule, the party organisation would play a significant role in the life of the journal <sup>only</sup> on the rare occasions when there arose a serious conflict between the chief editor and higher party bodies. Even then, the etiquette of party behaviour was such that the chief editor was spared humiliation by his subordinates. The journal's party secretary would visit the party district committee (raikom) at least once a month to report to an official in that committee's department of propaganda responsible for overseeing the work of the journal, one of the numerous official 'overseers' (kuratory) of the journal at different levels of the party.

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<sup>15</sup>There was also, as in every Soviet work place, a trade union organisation, concerned with employees' affairs, including vacations and various social matters. One member of staff would have been the trade union representative.

## The redkollegiya

The redkollegiya consisted of the editor-in-chief, the deputy chief editors, the responsible secretary, usually the heads of departments and a selected number (between ten and fifteen) of well-known writers. Non-staff members of the redkollegiya were usually party members, but this was not obligatory. Members of the redkollegiya were listed on the title page of the journal each month.

Non-executive members of the redkollegiya were also appointed by the chief editor in consultation with the RSFSR Writers' Union, and confirmed by the Department of Culture (on occasion by the Department of Propaganda). The redkollegiya played a consultative role in determining overall publication policy. Plenary sessions of this body were held usually twice a year to discuss both the past work of the journal and plans for the future<sup>16</sup>.

Individual members of the redkollegiya varied greatly in the personal interest they took in the journal. Some, commonly referred to as the avtorskii aktiv, regularly contributed their own work. Some actively sought out new publications which they forwarded to the chief editor (for example, Viktor Astaf'ev). Others were 'sleeping' members, who took only the barest, formal part in the life of the journal<sup>17</sup>. Unlike members of the redaktsiya, members of the redkollegiya were not obliged to live in Moscow. It was much easier, for those who did, to play an active part in the journal's life. In the case of *Nash sovremennik*, a

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<sup>16</sup>For a humorous account of such meetings at NS, see Yu. Nagibin, *T'ma v kontse tunnelya*, *Nezavisimoe izdatel'stvo PIK*, Moscow, 1996, pp. 138-139.

<sup>17</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

number of non-staff members of the *redkollegiya* lived a long way from Moscow, a factor which tended to reduce their influence on publication policy.

The *redkollegiya* played a special role when the journal was considering publication of controversial works. The opinion of established writers was taken into consideration by the Central Committee and could be used by the journal to support a case for publication. This process of consultation might take place by post or telephone. In special cases, members of the *redkollegiya* might be asked to provide written opinions on a particular work proposed for publication, or a special meeting of the *redkollegiya* might be called to discuss it<sup>18</sup>.

### Beyond the Journal

Like every 'thick' journal, *Nash sovremennik* existed in a web of institutions with supervisory or advisory functions. The most important elements in this network were the Writers' Union, in particular the RSFSR Writers' Union of which *Nash sovremennik* was an organ, the Central Committee departments, notably the departments of Culture and Propaganda, the censorship (Glavlit) and the party leadership in the Central Committee Secretariat and Politburo.

### The RSFSR Writers' Union

The RSFSR Writers' Union was the formal overlord of *Nash sovremennik*. As noted above, the Union's secretariat

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<sup>18</sup>See N. Shundik, *Olen' u poroga*, *Sovremennik*, Moscow, 1989, pp. 313-315.



formally appointed the chief editor and confirmed the appointments of members of the *redkollegiya*, deputy chief editors and the responsible secretary. The Union also exercised a general function of supervision (*kontrol'*) of the journal through the secretariat. The deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Yurii Bondarev, was the Union's 'overseer' (*kurator*) of the journal (Bondarev was also a board member of the journal and a frequent contributor)<sup>19</sup>. The RSFSR Writers' Union held regular meetings of its secretariat at which the work of its journals - *Moskva*, *Oktyabr'*, *Neva* and *Nash sovremennik* - was discussed. The chief editors of these journals had to account for their publication policy to the Union's secretariat.

The RSFSR Writers' Union was formally a sub-division of the USSR Union. However, the RSFSR Writers' Union was in important respects autonomous, and dealt largely independently with the supervisory party bodies. The RSFSR Writers' Union consisted of a veritable empire of journals, newspapers and publishing houses. While the chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, Sergei Mikhalkov, seems to have remained distant from the day-to-day running of *Nash sovremennik*<sup>20</sup>, the deputy chair of the Union, Yurii Bondarev, played a special role in the journal's affairs (see above) and, on occasion, directly influenced the 'operational decisions' of publication policy<sup>21</sup>.

The five 'working secretaries' of the RSFSR Writers' Union could also influence appointments to the journal and

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<sup>19</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*, No. 11, p. 39; No. 12, pp. 9-10, 1996.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, *NS*, No. 10, 1996, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, *NS*, No. 11, p. 39; No. 12, pp. 9-10, 1996.

publication policy. One oversaw the Russian regional literary organisations; another the publishing houses and journals; a third the literatures of the national republics within the RSFSR; and a fourth, literary criticism<sup>22</sup>. The fifth, the organisational secretary, was perhaps the most important and had close ties with party bodies and the KGB.

Several members of the *redkollegiya* were conjointly members of the RSFSR Writers' Union secretariat and played an important role in effecting liaison between the two bodies. In cases of conflict between the journal and party authorities the support of the secretariat of the Union was all the more certain and swift as a result of this joint membership. The increase in representation of *Nash sovremennik's* board members on the secretariat of the RSFSR Writers' Union during the 1980s indicated the increasing importance of the journal for the Union<sup>23</sup>.

### The Central Committee Departments

In practice, the RSFSR Writers' Union would often be acting on instructions from the two Central Committee departments which supervised literary life, the Department of Propaganda and the Department of Culture. The dual supervision of the literary process exercised by these two key Central Committee departments gave rise to a certain competition, and on occasion antagonism, between the two.

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<sup>22</sup>N. Shundik, interview 24/8/93.

<sup>23</sup>At the fifth congress (1980) of the RSFSR Writers' Union, members of the elected secretariat included *Nash sovremennik* board members S. Vikulov and E. Nosov, as well as N. Shundik, soon to become a member (*Pyatyi s'ezd pisatelei RSFSR. Stenograficheskii otchet, Sovremennik, Moscow, 1982*). At the sixth congress (1985), these three were joined by V. Astaf'ev, V. Belov and V. Rasputin (*Shestoi s'ezd pisatelei RSFSR. Stenograficheskii otchet, Sovremennik, Moscow, 1987*).

In such conflicts the Department of Propaganda could invariably impose its will.

### The Department of Propaganda

The heart of the Soviet system of literary administration was the Department of Propaganda. This organisation took all the most important decisions affecting the life of the journal<sup>24</sup>. It was responsible for the general ideological line of Soviet publications, had the final say in all senior appointments and controlled the distribution of material resources to the journals<sup>25</sup>. This department determined the number of staff working on the journal, the number of deputy chief editors, the levels of pay, the number of pages of the journal and the size of the print-run<sup>26</sup>. Print-run levels were set taking into account the existing print-run, the change in demand for subscriptions, the availability of paper and political considerations<sup>27</sup>.

This work of the Department was conducted through a Sector on Journals<sup>28</sup>. Within the Sector on Journals were a small number of officials known as 'overseers' (kuratory)<sup>29</sup>. Each overseer was responsible for reading and reporting on a selected group of three or four journals, and had the duty of influencing publication policy in line with the Department's on-going policy and the latest party directives. Once in every two or four weeks chief editors

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<sup>24</sup>See, for example, *TsKhSD, fond 5, opis' 60, delo 33, rolik 9697*.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*; Loshkareva, interview.

<sup>26</sup>The Central Committee confirms the limit on paper [for printing], and also the [sizes of the] print-runs of the journals (Vikulov, *op. cit.*, No. 9, 1996, p. 7); Loshkareva, interview; Frolov, interview.

<sup>27</sup>Loshkareva, interview.

<sup>28</sup>N. Bikkenen, interviews 16/8/93, 26/9/94; A. Gavrilov, interviews 14/7/94, 8/8/94.

<sup>29</sup>Gavrilov, interview 14/7/94.



would be called to attend meetings in the Department at which the work of the journals would be reviewed and future direction discussed.

The Department of Propaganda oversaw all publications, but had a special responsibility for central newspapers and the publications of the Komsomol, including the journal *Molodaya gvardiya*<sup>30</sup>.

### **The Department of Culture**

The Department of Culture, the 'junior' ideological department, acted as something of a 'buffer' between the authority of the party, represented by the Department of Propaganda, and the intelligentsia<sup>31</sup>. Among the Department's responsibilities was supervision of the literary newspapers and journals. Within the Department, a Sector on Literature (*khudozhestvennaya literatura*) carried out this function on a day-to-day basis. The Department of Culture also confirmed appointments to the posts of chief editor, deputy chief editor and responsible secretary at the 'thick' journals. The Department was also concerned with the supervision of the ideological content of publications.

The Department oversaw the monthly publication of the journals and engaged in meetings with chief editors to discuss particular publications where controversy arose. It played a role in the resolution of conflicts arising either within the journal or between the journal and other institutions, in particular the censorship. Within the Sector on Literature was also an 'overseer' with direct

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<sup>30</sup>Semanov, interview.

<sup>31</sup>V. Egorov, interview 9/6/94.

responsibility for the journal<sup>32</sup>. The overseer had functions similar to those of the corresponding official in the Department of Propaganda.

### Other Central Committee Departments

The Central Committee Department of Science and Higher Educational Establishments had responsibility for overseeing the publication of numerous journals, including the influential *Voprosy literatury*, *Voprosy istorii* and *Voprosy filosofii*, and therefore also had an interest in the mutual relations between 'thick' journals in general<sup>33</sup>. The International Department and the Department of International Information had special interests in ideological questions because of the role they played in external propaganda and relations with other socialist countries<sup>34</sup>. The important Department of Administrative Organs which oversaw the KGB, the army, the Procuracy, the courts, the Ministry of Justice and the MVD was also an important influence on literary life and the 'thick' journals<sup>35</sup>.

In addition to these influential departments, others had special interests related to the subject matter of publication. They might also seek to get works into print espousing their point of view. The Central Committee Department of Agriculture was of great importance in relation to *Nash sovremennik*, taking a close interest in the journal as a publication devoting a large part of its

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<sup>32</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*, No. 9, 1996, p. 9; S. Potemkin, interviews (by telephone) 3/10/94; 5/10/94; I. Zhukov, interview 22/6/94.

<sup>33</sup>Semanov, interview.

<sup>34</sup>Gavrilov, interview 14/7/94.

<sup>35</sup>Semanov, interview.

publitsistika and prose sections to agricultural questions<sup>36</sup>.

### The Censorship<sup>37</sup>

If the activities of the Union of Writers and of the Central Committee were generally acknowledged in public, those of the censorship were not. Although all involved in the production of the journal were aware of the work of the censor, Glavlit (the Main Administration for the Protection of State Secrets of the Council of Ministers of the USSR), it was forbidden to publicly acknowledge its existence.

Censorship, in the general sense of exerting influence on publication policy, was practised by a wide variety of bodies, as indicated above. In a more restricted sense, censorship of *Nash sovremennik* was the work of a sector of Glavlit concerned with literature, which consisted of approximately 150 censors<sup>38</sup>. One low-level member of Glavlit was appointed the journal's 'own' censor, and read each issue from cover to cover<sup>39</sup>. Glavlit's work involved control over the publication of two broad types of subject matter: state secrets and 'ideological' questions<sup>40</sup>. On the one hand, the censorship sought to eradicate from the media all mention of state secrets (most obviously those of a military nature, but, in the Soviet period, state secrecy was very broadly defined). On the other hand, the censorship was responsive to the current political line as

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<sup>36</sup>Yu. Chernichenko, interview 9/3/95; Gavrilov, interview.

<sup>37</sup>On the censorship, see M. Dewhurst & R. Farrell (eds), *The Soviet Censorship*, Scarecrow Press, Metuchen, New Jersey, 1973.

<sup>38</sup>V. Solodin, interview 30/7/93.

<sup>39</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*, No. 10, 1996, p. 17. According to Vikulov, this censor was usually a woman (Vikulov, interview 10/12/92).

<sup>40</sup>Solodin, interview.



it affected literature and journalism. However, even to a senior censor the dividing line between ideology and secrecy was not always clear<sup>41</sup>.

Within Glavlit, there was a collegium with representatives of 'interested authorities', which included important party and state bodies, such as the Ministry of Defence and the KGB<sup>42</sup>. Formally, Glavlit was subordinated to the Department of Propaganda. However, the list of instructions the censors regularly received (instruktazh) on policy came not from the Department of Propaganda, but from the General Department<sup>43</sup>. The ultimate source of this list was the KGB<sup>44</sup>. According to one Western commentator, Glavlit might also seek to have a representative on the editorial boards of journals<sup>45</sup>.

The Soviet censorship had its limitations. Thomas Venclova has observed that 'the mechanism of totalitarian censorship is so multi-levelled and complex that like any complex machine it breaks down frequently'<sup>46</sup>. Frankel has noted, of the late Stalinist period, that 'certain people in certain fields were able on occasion to publish or say what was important to them even at the worst of times'<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

<sup>43</sup>N. Bikkenin, interview 26/9/94. According to Bikkenin, staff in the Department of Propaganda would not necessarily know what was on this list.

<sup>44</sup>V. Solodin, 'Tsenzura v teatre i v literature', in Obshchestvennyi fond "Glasnost'", KGB: Vchera, Segodnya, Zavtra, Znak-SP, Moscow, 1994, pp. 159-163; Semanov, interview.

<sup>45</sup>J. & C. Garrard, *Inside the Soviet Writers' Union*, I. B. Tauris, London & New York, 1990, p. 177.

<sup>46</sup>T. Venclova, 'The Game of the Soviet Censor', *The New York Review of Books*, March 31st, 1983, p. 34.

<sup>47</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

## The KGB

The KGB took an active interest in the cultural life of the country<sup>48</sup>. The 'thick' journals, prime centres of this cultural life, were therefore objects of active KGB interest. The KGB's 'Fifth Directorate' oversaw the work of the journals as well as the intelligentsia and cultural life in general<sup>49</sup>. Within this Directorate was a department on literature<sup>50</sup>. After the creation of the Legal Affairs Commission, headed by ex-KGB chief Chebrikov, in the autumn of 1989, the Fifth Directorate was renamed 'Directorate for the Defence of the Constitutional System'<sup>51</sup>.

The KGB operated by both open and covert means. KGB officials read each issue and conducted consultations with the journal, usually through the responsible secretary<sup>52</sup>. It has been suggested that appointment to this latter post was controlled by the KGB<sup>53</sup>. However, this was only one of the possible posts which a KGB agent could occupy at the journal<sup>54</sup>. In every journal there was at least one individual who was a KGB agent, and generally it was known within the journal who this was<sup>55</sup>. Eavesdropping might be conducted through hidden microphones, in the chief editor's office and elsewhere<sup>56</sup>. The KGB could use the journals to publish information or disinformation, to influence public opinion about the work of the organisation, or to discredit

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<sup>48</sup> Gorbachev himself has made this observation (see M. Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, Vol. 1, Novosti, Moscow, 1995, p. 329).

<sup>49</sup> J. Waller, *Secret Empire: the KGB in Russia today*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1994, pp. 15-16.

<sup>50</sup> S. Lekarev interview 13/2/95.

<sup>51</sup> Waller, *op. cit.*, p. 90. In 1991, with a further renaming, the Directorate became 'Directorate Z'.

<sup>52</sup> S. Zalygin, interview 13/4/94.

<sup>53</sup> Garrard, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

<sup>54</sup> V. Oskotskii, interview 7/5/95; N. Ivanova, interviews 27/4/95; 4/5/95.

<sup>55</sup> Oskotskii, *ibid.*; Ivanova, *ibid.*; Semanov, interview.

<sup>56</sup> Yu. Shchekochikhin, interview 4/10/94.

particular people or groups of people<sup>57</sup>. The KGB could also prove useful to a chief editor. If a chief editor obtained the support of the KGB for a particular work, other institutions would not challenge publication<sup>58</sup>.

### **Odnopartiinaya no mnogopod''ezdnaya**

In their work of supervision, the departments of Culture and of Propaganda had to take into account the various personal and institutional influences, which could frequently compete with one another. The pattern was further complicated by the influence which the numerous government ministries and state committees could bring to bear on the journal's publication policy on occasion. As a result, an able chief editor was able to 'play off' competing Central Committee departments, ministries or state committees against each other in favour of the journal. The departments of Culture and Propaganda might be unwilling to challenge a publication which had the backing of another Central Committee department or ministry or state committee - or one assumed to have such backing. This complexity was well-expressed in the adage that, while the political system was *odnopartiinaya* (one-party) it was also '*mnogopod''ezdnaya*' (had many entrances)<sup>59</sup>. One particular way to make use of this system was to initially publish a short version of an article in as important a newspaper as possible, whereupon other institutions would think twice before challenging the proposed journal version of the

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<sup>57</sup>Lekarev, interview.

<sup>58</sup>Semanov, interview.

<sup>59</sup>A. Kuz'min, interview 24/6/93.



article<sup>60</sup>. In sum, as Edith Frankel has noted, 'the editor's individual resourcefulness was essential for the publication of a controversial manuscript'<sup>61</sup>.

### The Publication Process<sup>62</sup>

The working year of the journal, during which twelve monthly issues were produced, ran from September to September. Work on each issue lasted four months, so that several issues were in production concurrently<sup>63</sup>.

On-going co-ordination of the journal's work was achieved by means of monthly meetings (*planerki*) of the chief editor, the deputy chief editors, the responsible secretary and the heads of departments. Once a month there were also separate meetings (*letuchki*) when the past issue was reviewed and press reviews were discussed. As noted above, the *redkollegiya* would be called to a meeting to discuss past and future issues, usually twice a year.

In September each year, in consultation with the *redkollegiya*, the chief editor drew up a publication plan for the year. In doing so he would take into account the results of recent meetings he had attended in the Central Committee<sup>64</sup>, and limited-circulation information to which he had access, as a member of the *nomenklatura*. In turn, each head of department, overseen by the relevant deputy chief editor, would draw up a corresponding departmental plan in accordance with allotted space.

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<sup>60</sup>I. Vasil'ev, interview 4/8/93.

<sup>61</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>62</sup>See note 1.

<sup>63</sup>Computer technology reducing production time to one month was

introduced at *Nash*

*sovremennik* only from November 1992.

<sup>64</sup>Loshkareva, interview.

Members of the redaktsiya and redkollegiya would seek out, often from among their regular writers, work that suited the publication plan. Many manuscripts, nonetheless, arrived, by hand or by post, unsolicited at the editorial office (so-called samotek).

The literaturnye sotrudniki in each department first read and evaluated manuscripts. If the manuscripts were considered unsuitable, they were returned to the author. If accepted, they were passed on to the head of the department. If accepted at that level, the manuscript was edited and, if changes were made, the author was consulted, either in person or by telephone. All texts were edited, even those of established authors.

In order to deal with the possibility that the censor would reject certain works, the editors prepared reserve material, the so-called 'dubler'. This was also necessary given the common practice for a chief editor to seek to publish a single rather more daring publication in an issue<sup>65</sup>. The simultaneous preparation of several issues of the journal simplified the problem of coping with rejections by the censor.

The work of each department was overseen by one of the deputy chief editors. The work of co-ordinating between departments was that of the responsible secretary. One deputy chief editor, aided by one head of department, was responsible for the production of each issue. When the agreed materials for the issue had been gathered, they were typed up (in about 530 A4 pages), reread by the heads of

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<sup>65</sup>Kazintsev, interview 10/6/93; Semanov, interview.

department and signed by the two editors on duty. This was then sent to the printers (Krasnaya zvezda in west Moscow).

From the typed sheets the printers made up 'granki', long, printed sheets. These were sent back to the journal where they were cut up and distributed among the respective departments. They were reread and mistakes corrected. Thus improved, they were stuck together again as a mock-up (maket) and sent back to the printers, a date indicated as 'sent for typesetting' (sdano v nabor) in the published issue.

The printers turned this mock-up into a second version of the journal known as the proofs (verstki), already in journal format. These were again sent back to the journal and distributed to the departments. The verstki were reread and contractions made to fit things together. Some material might be removed from the verstki altogether, and new added. Professional proof readers (korrektory) read the result.

Corrected verstki were then sent back to the printers, who made a third copy, the so-called 'sverka'. At the journal, the sverka was read by the two duty editors, who made final checks and changes. The two editors discussed the issue together and called on heads of department to clear up final questions. The chief editor (or deputy chief editor, if the former was absent) and the responsible secretary now signed the journal. One copy was sent to the censor, the other to the printers.



At the censor, each issue was read by the rank-and-file censor assigned to the journal<sup>66</sup>. The work reviewed was marked with blue and red pencils: 'blue' indicated minor changes were necessary to a work, 'red' a strict prohibition<sup>67</sup>. The responsible secretary would then normally discuss the issue with a censor at least one level higher. If problems arose, the matter would be passed upwards to a senior censor, ultimately to a deputy of Glavlit's section on literature. Correspondingly, the rank of the journal's representative would increase.

If the censor was against the publication of a whole article, poem or work of fiction, in the first instance the deputy chief editor on duty for the issue would be called to meet the Glavlit officials. If the problem was not resolved at this stage, the first deputy chief editor or the chief editor would meet a senior censor. Very rarely, a senior writer might also be present at these discussions<sup>68</sup>, although the fiction that the censorship did not exist was at all times to be observed.

If agreement was not reached between censor and journal, the matter would go to arbitration at the Department of Culture, where usually a final decision was made. In complex and politically highly-charged cases, the Propaganda Department might also be involved in reaching a final decision.

In this publication process, the journal's representatives were able to exercise some pressure of

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<sup>66</sup>Vikulov, *op. cit.*, No. 10, 1996, p. 17.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup>M. Alekseev, *Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh. Toma sed'moi - vos'moi*, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow, 1990, pp. 565-568.

their own. Firstly, the decision on publication in the last resort remained the chief editor's, although he would have to face the consequences for any 'error'. Secondly, editors, censors and Central Committee workers all acted under the pressure of the need to bring the journal out on time and to avoid any obvious breakdown in their work. This need to preserve appearances, and to keep any dispute, or disruption, hidden as far as possible, concentrated the minds of officials. When agreement was reached, the censor would stamp, date and sign two copies of the issue. One copy was sent to the archive, a second was returned to the journal<sup>69</sup>. The date of the censor's approval was indicated in the journal as 'signed for printing' (podpisano v pechat'). Each issue carried a code number, in which 'A' indicated the literature sector of Glavlit, and the following number was one of a series allotted to a particular publication<sup>70</sup>.

The first copy from the printers was sent back to the journal one final time to be checked. If there were no mistakes, then the printers were given the go ahead to print the issue. After printing, copies were normally given to each of the authors of that issue, to the RSFSR Writers' Union, to the party raikom, to the Central Committee and to the KGB.

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<sup>69</sup>Semanov, interview.  
<sup>70</sup>Frankel, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

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Leading contributor on economic issues to *NS*; incarcerated in a psychiatric prison, 1968-71; contributor to the *samizdat* journal *Veche*; publitsist; expert on railways.
- Belov, Vasilii Ivanovich 30/9/94.  
Leading contributor to *NS*; member of the *NS* editorial board; novelist.
- Belyaev, Al'bert Andreevich 1/4/92.  
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Member of the *NS* editorial board until 1994; deputy chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union until 1990; from 1990, chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union.
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Novelist; chief editor of *Moskva* from 1990; participant in VSKhSON; served prison camp terms in 1967-1973 and 1982-1987.
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Literary critic; deputy chief editor at *NS*, 1968-70; a *Molodaya gvardiya* associate in the 1960s.
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Literary critic; expert on Bulgakov.

<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, posts to which reference is made were held at least from 1981 to 1991.



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Literary critic.

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Deputy head of the Propaganda Department of the Komsomol until 1985; rector of the Gor'kii Literary Institute of the USSR Union of Writers, 1985-1987; deputy head of the Central Committee Department of Culture, head of the Sector on Literature, 1987-1989; adviser to Gorbachev on culture, 1989-1991.

Frolov, Leonid Anatolievich 7/7/77  
Deputy chief editor at NS, 1973-1981; member of the NS editorial board until 1989; chief editor at *Sovremennik* publishing house, 1981-1984; director of *Sovremennik* publishing house since 1984.

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Chief editor of *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 1978-1980; chief editor of *Roman gazeta*, 1981-1994; a *Molodaya gvardiya* associate from the 1960s; a member of the NS editorial board from 1995; currently chair of the Union of Writers of Russia.

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'Overseer' of NS in the Sector on Journals of the Central Committee Propaganda Department, 1968-1982.

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Editor in the prose department at NS since 1975; head of the prose department, 1986-1990; party secretary at NS, 1977-1980.

Gusev, Gennadii Mikhailovich 4/8/94.  
Director of *Sovremennik* publishing house, 1980-1984; aide to the chair of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, 1984-1990; secretary of the Writers' Union of the RSFSR, 1990-1992; deputy chief editor at NS since 1993.

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Deputy chief editor at NS, 1990-91; deputy chief editor of the poetry section of *Sovremennik* publishing house, 1985-1990; career army officer until 1984.

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Deputy chief editor at *Znamya* since 1991; worked at *Druzhba narodov*, 1986-1991; and *Znamya*, 1981-1986.

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Literary critic; leading contributor to NS; member of the  
NS editorial board since 1990.

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Deputy chief editor at NS 1978-1981 & 1982-1984.

Krupin, Vladimir Nikolaevich 5/7/94; 20/7/94.  
Novelist; chief editor of *Moskva* 1989-1990.

Kunyaev, Stanislav Yur'evich 31/8/93.  
Chief editor at NS since 1989; leading contributor to NS;  
poet and literary critic.

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Leading contributor to NS; member of the NS editorial  
board, 1982-1992; historian.

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Literary critic.

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Currently deputy chief editor at *Oktyabr'*.

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Responsible secretary at NS, 1984-1988; party secretary at  
NS, 1985-1988.

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Official in Glavlit, 1976-1989 (deputy head of the  
department for social, political and imaginative literature  
in Glavlit, 1983-1989)

Melent'ev, Yurii Serafimovich 6/10/94.  
Director of *Molodaya gvardiya* publishing house, 1962-1965;  
deputy head of Central Committee Department of Culture,  
1965-1971; first deputy head of Goskomizdat (USSR), 1971-  
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1970-1974.

Mikhalkov, Sergei Vladimirovich 21/5/93.  
Chair of the RSFSR Writers' Union, 1970-1990; children's  
author.



Mussalitin, Vladimir Ivanovich 20/7/93.  
Deputy chief editor at NS, 1984-1987; graduate student at the Central Committee Academy of Social Sciences, 1981-1984; *Izvestiya* correspondent at the Supreme Soviet, 1975-1981.

Nagibin, Yurii Markovich 16/8/93.  
Member of NS editorial board, 1965-1981; novelist & short story writer.

Ogryzko, Vyacheslav Vyacheslavovich 25/7/94.  
Responsible secretary at NS, 1991; deputy chief editor at NS, 1992-1993; head of department of publitsistika at *Sovetskaya literatura* (chief editor Aleksandr Prokhanov), 1989-1991.

Oskotskii, Valentin Dmitrievich 21/9/94; 7/5/95.  
Literary critic.

Pal'chikov, Vladimir Alekseevich 27/8/93.  
Responsible secretary at NS, 1982-1985; head of poetry department at NS, 1981-1982.

Palievskii, Petr Vasil'evich 7/9/94.  
Literary critic.

Potemkin, Sergei Vasil'evich 3/10/94; 5/10/94 (by phone).  
'Overseer' of NS in the Sector on Literature of the Central Committee Department of Culture, 1985-1988.

Pozdnyakov, Aleksandr Petrovich 22/9/94.  
'Third' deputy chief editor at NS, 1990; head of a 'creative studio' at the Ministry of Defence, 1990; author of works on the history of the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs; army officer until 1991.

Rasputin, Valentin Grigor'evich 12/12/93.  
Leading contributor to NS; member of the NS editorial board; novelist & short story writer; publitsist.

Segen', Aleksandr Yur'evich 24/6/93.  
Head of the criticism department at NS, 1990; head of the prose department at NS from 1990; head of the department of publitsistika at *Sovetskaya literatura* (chief editor Aleksandr Prokhanov), 1989-1990.

Semanov, Sergei Nikolaevich 21/9/94.  
Historian; chief editor of *Chelovek i zakon*, 1976-1981; head of the editorial board of *ZhZL*, 1969-1976.

Semenova, Elena Vladimirovna 31/5/94.  
Widow of Semenov, Georgii Vital'evich (leading contributor to NS, member of NS editorial board until 1989; novelist & short story writer)

Shchekochikhin, Yurii Petrovich 4/10/94.  
Journalist at *Literaturnaya gazeta*, (head of 'investigations' department).



Shundik, Nikolai Ivanovich 24/8/93.  
Member of the NS editorial board, 1982-1989; director of Sovremennik publishing house of the RSFSR Writers' Union, 1979-1981; 'working secretary' of the RSFSR Writers' Union, responsible for the literatures of the autonomous republics within the RSFSR, 1975-1979; founding chief editor of *Volga*, 1965-1975.

Sinitsyn, Ivan Semenovich 14/9/93.  
Leading contributor to NS; publitsist; writer on education.

Solodin, Vladimir Alekseevich 30/7/93.  
Deputy head of Glavlit, 1972-1991.

Soloukhin, Vladimir Alekseevich 4/9/93.  
Leading contributor to NS; member of NS editorial board, 1990-1997; poet; novelist.

Sporov, Boris Fedorovich 9/7/93.  
Head of the prose department at NS, 1981-1983; in the 1950s served a four-year term in prison camp for political activity.

Stukalin, Boris Ivanovich 8/9/93.  
Head of the Central Committee Department of Propaganda, 1982-1985; chair of Goskomizdat (USSR), 1970-1982; deputy chief editor of *Pravda*, 1965-1970; chair of Goskomizdat (RSFSR), 1962-1965.

Surovtsev, Yurii Ivanovich 29/9/94.  
Literary critic; secretary of the USSR Writers' Union from 1976.

Svininnikov, Valentin Mikhailovich 17/12/92; 24/5/93.  
Deputy chief editor at NS, 1986-1989; chief editor of children's literature at Goskomizdat (RSFSR), 1983-1986; graduate student at the Academy of Social Sciences of the Central Committee, 1980-1983; journalist at *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 1978-1980.

Ustinov, Valentin Alekseevich 19/8/93.  
Deputy chief editor at NS, 1981-1982; secretary of the Moscow Writers' Organisation, 1985-1989; student at the Gor'kii Literary Institute of the USSR Union of Writers, 1977-1980; head of department at *Sever*, 1969-1977.

Vasil'ev, Ivan Afanas'evich 4/8/93.  
Leading contributor to NS; publitsist; writer on rural affairs; member of NS editorial board until 1991.

Vasil'ev, Vladimir Vasil'evich 7/6/93.  
Leading contributor to NS; deputy chief editor at NS, 1982-1984; responsible secretary at NS, 1979-1980 & 1981-1982; journalist at *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 1977-1978.

Vikulov, Sergei Vasil'evich 8/4/92; 10/12/92.  
Chief editor at NS, 1968-1989; leading contributor to NS; poet; publitsist; deputy chief editor at *Molodaya gvardiya*, 1967-1968.

Yakovlev, Aleksandr Nikolaevich 15/3/95.  
Politburo member, 1987-1991; Central Committee secretary, 1986-1988; head of the Central Committee Propaganda Department, 1985-1986; director of IMEMO, 1983-1985; ambassador to Canada, 1973-1983; worked in the ideological organs of the Central Committee (1953-1973), rising to become first deputy head, and acting head, of the Central Committee Propaganda Department.

Zalygin, Sergei Pavlovich 13/4/94.  
Chief editor of *Novyi mir* from 1986; novelist.

Zhukov, Ivan Ivanovich 22/6/94.  
'Overseer' of NS in the Sector on Literature of the Central Committee Department of Culture, 1982-1986; head of the publishing department of the apparatus of the President of the Soviet Union, 1989-1991; deputy chief editor at *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 1975-1981.

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