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Otblesk kostra [*Le Reflet du brasier*] de Jurij Trifonov et les communautés
mnémoniques de l'ère brejnévienne

Polly Jones



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POLLY JONES

IURII TRIFONOV'S FIREGLOW AND THE "MNEMONIC COMMUNITIES" OF THE BREZHNEV ERA¹

"I want terribly to write something—maybe not a book, maybe a story or a sketch—about the days of revolution, about my father. For some reason, I'm afraid to take on this theme."² With this diary entry of late January 1957, the writer Iurii Trifonov first signalled his intent to write the work that he published, nearly a decade later, as *Fireglow*: a biography of his Old Bolshevik father, Valentin Trifonov and uncle Evgenii Trifonov, which evolved into a prosopography of many repressed Old Bolsheviks as well as the controversial (and only very recently rehabilitated) Cossack military leaders, Filipp Mironov and Boris Dumenko, Valentin's colleagues during the Civil War in the Don.³ This earliest mention of the work proved prescient about the difficulties of researching and writing it, and of defining its genre: when *Fireglow* first came out in *Znamia* in early 1965, this "documentary tale" took up fewer than 50 pages of the journal.⁴ When published as a book in 1966 by Sovetskii pisatel', it had grown to nearly twice its original size, by incorporating the first publication's enormous response from readers, especially contemporaries of Trifonov's father and uncle and of Mironov and Dumenko.⁵

1. The author thanks Miriam Dobson, Dan Healey, Simon Huxtable, Mike Nicholson, Robert Service, Andrei Zorin and the anonymous reviewers for *Cahiers* and the special issue editors for their help with this article. Versions were presented at the University of Cambridge, University of Amsterdam and University of Oxford, and the author is grateful for the feedback received on each occasion.

2. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei [From diaries and notebooks]," *Druzhba narodov*, no. 6 (1998): 119. The observation was prompted by reading an article in *Krasnaia zvezda*, 25 January 1957 about the Central Army Museum holdings on Valentin and Evgenii Trifonov. Trifonov's archive contains a copy of this article. FSO (Das Archiv der Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Bremen), f. 220 (Iurii Trifonov), 4.2.2.36.

3. On Mironov and Dumenko, see *Filipp Mironov: Tikhii Don v 1917-21gg.* [Filipp Mironov: The Quiet Don in 1917-21] (M.: Rossiia XX vek, 1997).

4. Iu. Trifonov, "Otblek kostra [Fireglow]," *Znamia* no. 2 (1965): 142-160; no. 3 (1965): 152-177.

5. Iu. Trifonov, *Otblek kostra* [Fireglow] (M.: Sovetskii pisatel', 1966); this edition was 189 pages long.

The hybrid documentary-literary genre of this text and the text's expansion through incorporation of readers' memories and historical data (as well as the author's "fear" about this research's publication prospects) places it in a long tradition of collaborative and open-ended historical texts, dating back at least as far as Aleksandr Pushkin's research into Pugachev.⁶ However, this article will focus on the specific forms of collaborative, public-private historical writing engendered by the shifting norms of Brezhnev-era Soviet literature, historiography and public memory. The second half of the 1960s was characterised by post-thaw uncertainty about the boundaries between publishable and unpublishable historical narrative, by ongoing official restrictions on empirical research into the revolution and Stalinism, and by a burgeoning "historical turn" in the Soviet population, especially amongst the ageing Old Bolshevik community with whom Trifonov formed extensive links.⁷ This left texts published during this juncture, such as *Fireglow*, both open-ended and open to question with regard to their Soviet credentials.

For over a decade of the Brezhnev era, *Fireglow* hovered at the boundary between official and unofficial historical narrative: its initial journal version was republished as a much longer book and then adapted into Trifonov's much later novel *The Old Man* (1978), but the text also fell victim to the tightening state constraints on empirical research and on rethinking the Leninist and Stalinist past. In contrast to analogous, contemporary collaborative historical projects such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*—a parallel explored further in the conclusion—Trifonov's text, and the "mnemonic communities" that it both created and illuminated, never conceived of themselves as dissident, even though much of their discussion had to take place in unofficial fora such as letter-writing and domestic interviews.

In this sense, not only Trifonov's published writings—often viewed as only marginally Soviet—but also his unpublished discussions with his readers complicate the apparent binary division between Soviet and dissident history-writing, and between this period's cultural and communicative memory of the Soviet past.⁸ Indeed, *Fireglow*'s long afterlife in both unpublished discussion and published "rewritings" suggests that this blurring of boundaries extended well beyond the

6. See e.g. A. Wachtel, *An Obsession with History: Russian Writers Confront the Past* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 66-87; P. Debreczeny, *The Other Pushkin: A Study of Alexander Pushkin's Prose Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), 239-274.

7. See e.g. R. Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1956-1974* (Palgrave: Basingstoke, 2001), 199-233; D. Kozlov, "The Historical Turn in Late Soviet Culture: Retrospectivism, Factography, Doubt, 1953-1991," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 2 (2001): 577-600.

8. On Trifonov as a minimally Soviet writer, see e.g. N. Leiderman, M. Lipovetskii, *Ot sovetskogo pisatel'ia k pisatel'iu sov epokhi* [From Soviet Writer to Writer of the Soviet Epoch] (Izdatel'stvo AMB: Ekaterinburg, 2001); M. Falchikov, "Endings and Non-Endings in Iurii Trifonov," in H. Chung, ed., *In the Party Spirit* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), 69-77. On deconstructing binaries in late socialist culture, see A. Yurchak, *Everything was Forever until it was No More* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). On "cultural" and "communicative" memory, see J. Assmann, "Collective memory and cultural identity," *New German Critique*, 65 (1995): 125-133.

transitional flux of the immediate post-Khrushchev years, lasting until the end of Trifonov's life (in 1981) and possibly to the end of the Brezhnev era, a year later.

“Archive Monts Blancs”⁹: Researching and Writing *Fireglow*

Iurii Trifonov's father, arrested and killed in the Great Terror of 1937-1938 when his son was only 11 years old, haunted his son's literary career from the start.¹⁰ However, it was not until the 1960s that Trifonov's works paid sustained attention to his father's role in Leninism and his death under Stalinism. Towards the end of the Khrushchev era, his production novel *The Slaking of Thirst* featured a sub-plot about a traumatized son of a victim of 1937.¹¹ With the first publication of *Fireglow* in 1965, though, Trifonov's oeuvre took a turn towards the personal, the factual and the historical, with a corresponding shift in genre and form.¹² Yet the text remained unstable, fraught with anxiety about establishing and revealing truth, and thus open to correction and supplementation by its readers.

The Trifonov brothers had been rehabilitated, after nearly two decades as “enemies of the people,” in 1955 and 1956. Yet, as with many terror victims, efforts to rescue them from these decades of oblivion were halting and fragmentary.¹³ Their names appeared in scattered works of historiography in the late Khrushchev era, but before Trifonov's work, the longest tribute to Valentin came in a 1963 article in the main army newspaper written by a small group of Old Bolshevik colleagues.¹⁴ His son's more concerted attempt to tell the story of the life of his father (and uncle) was already well underway by the time that this tribute appeared. When he started research for it in the early 1960s, Trifonov was struck as much by the gaps as by the

9. “Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradci,” *Druzhba narodov*, no. 10 (1998): 105.

10. His first, orthodox Socialist Realist Stalin-era novel *Students* has often been seen as a veiled response to his father's repression (e.g. J. Woll, *Invented Truth: Soviet Reality and the Literary Imagination of Iurii Trifonov* (Raleigh: Duke University Press, 1991), 20). David Gillespie traces the effects of grief for his father throughout his career (D. Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov: Unity Through Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 6-9 and passim.)

11. Leiderman, Lipovetskii, *Ot sovetskogo pisatel'ia*, 7-10; P. Jones, “Memories of Terror or Terrorizing Memories? Terror, Trauma and Survival in Soviet Culture of the Thaw,” *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 86, 2 (2008): 346-371.

12. *Fireglow* is widely seen as pivotal in all these senses, though remains little analysed (Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 6; Leiderman, Lipovetskii, *Ot sovetskogo pisatel'ia*, 13; V. Kardin, “‘Nas eshche sud'by bezvestnye zhdu...’ (perechityvaia *Otblesk kostra* Iurii Trifonova),” in *Mir prozy Iurii Trifonova: Sbornik statei* [The World of Iurii Trifonov's Prose] (Ekaterinburg: izdatel'stvo ural'skovo universiteta, 2000), 158-168 (here, 163-64).

13. P. Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma: Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union, 1953-70* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), Chapter 4; M. Dobson, *Khrushchev's Cold Summer: Gulag Returnees, Crime and the Fate of Reform after Stalin* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

14. *Krasnaia zvezda*, 18 December 1963 (Trifonov's archive contains multiple copies of this article, suggesting its great importance to his research on *Fireglow* and other works concerning his father: FSO, f. 220, 4.2.2.40).

“archival Monts Blancs” of information about his topic. This tension between being overwhelmed and disappointed by documents would endure throughout the text’s subsequent drafting, reception and rewriting.

On the one hand, State and Party archives, including the main party archive at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, the principal state archive (TsGAOR) and the Central Museum of the Soviet Army, all contained copious records about his father and uncle, which the author notated, often verbatim over many pages of his notebooks. These ranged from police records about the brothers’ earliest period of party work in the revolutionary “underground” to telegrams, speeches and phone transcripts confirming the brothers’ central role in the revolution and on multiple fronts of the Civil War. Given the stigma long attached to both men, and to countless colleagues repressed during Stalinist terror, these files had long been unavailable and unappealing to researchers. Trifonov was therefore often the first person to have ever looked at them, making his work inherently innovative and valuable.¹⁵

On the other hand, though, partly because of the two decades of “forced forgetting” of the Trifonov brothers and many of their fellow revolutionaries, and partly due to their unrelenting party work and the chaos of the Civil War, many records of their contribution to Bolshevism had been destroyed, lost or never preserved in the first place. Trifonov did also have access to some family materials such as the diary of his uncle, Pavel Lur’c, and the memoirs of Pavel’s mother Tat’iana Slovatinskaia, with which to supplement party-state materials. Equally, however, he was aware of how few direct family memories he himself possessed, due to his father’s relentless work schedule, and then his 1937 arrest.

There was a particular poignancy to the fact that this son was thus forced to resort to others’ records in order to fill the gaping holes in his own memories of his father, but even before *Fireglow*’s first publication, the author had also started to hear from writers and readers around the Soviet Union reporting similar gaps in knowledge about the Trifonov brothers. This correspondence evoked the critical need for more (or even any) information about them, as in one 1963 letter from a certain Mikhailenko, who had briefly met the brothers during the war, but craved more publications about them, to fill the gaps in his personal memories.¹⁶ It also began to forge a mnemonic community of Old Bolsheviks, veterans and historians, which would expand further after the text’s first publication, generating the much fuller second edition of *Fireglow* and thereafter granting the text a rich afterlife.

For example, in the early 1960s, before he had started research in earnest, Trifonov corresponded with a historian, M. Batorgin, who was writing a history of the Bolsheviks in pre-revolutionary Rostov, where both Trifonov brothers had

15. FSO, f. 220, 1.1.14 (notebooks for *Fireglow* research); 4.2.3.48 (preparatory materials for *Fireglow*). Many archives and archival materials remained completely inaccessible to ordinary researchers of course (see Polikarpov, “V sovместnykh literaturno-istoricheskikh boiakh (zapiski istorika) [In joint literary-history battles (notes of a historian)],” in V. Polikarpov, A. Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov i sovetskaia epokha* [Iurii Trifonov and the Soviet Epoch] (M.: sobranie, 2006), 386).

16. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.15.

started their party careers. Confident that Valentin and Trifonov were now rightfully restored to the “pleiade” of local revolutionaries, and well-informed about their pre-revolutionary activities, Batorgin first wrote in 1960 to say that he still did not know “how the life path of both men ends.”¹⁷ When Trifonov wrote back to Batorgin with this information, together with news of his planned biography, their correspondence broadened, taking in a wider range of biographical episodes, yet also became more focussed on checking specific facts and details. However, this historical and historiographical correspondence was couched not just in the idiom of fact (or factography), but also, like Batorgin’s first letter, in the language of faith. “Iurii Trifonov,” he solemnly proclaimed, “I never doubted the devotion of both brothers to the party.” Batorgin’s project, ultimately published in Rostov just before *Fireglow*, was methodologically and ethically (though not stylistically) akin to Trifonov’s text: both blended archival sources with eyewitness testimony and snippets of information from published histories, in order to represent the brothers as fully and truthfully as the fragmentary surviving evidence permitted. However, both also sought to mythologise them as exemplars of a distinctively Leninist ideal of revolutionary and party devotion, cast into oblivion by terror and subsequent historical falsification.¹⁸

As Trifonov’s work on the manuscript intensified, and especially after previews of the work appeared in the Soviet press of 1963-64, the author engaged in correspondence with several surviving colleagues of his father and uncle in order to hone the final draft of his text. The most frequent and engaged of these was the formerly repressed, now rehabilitated, Civil War veteran Ivan Vrachev.¹⁹ Vrachev had first written to Trifonov immediately after the author first publicly announced his plans to write about his father in 1963.²⁰ “Agitated” by the discovery that Iurii Trifonov was the son of the man under whom he had fought on several fronts of the Civil War (and had then met in the 1930s), Vrachev was also relieved that the author had dared to raise “important questions” avoided by most Soviet historians who “are still acting very slowly and unfortunately at times with one eye on those constraints that you mention.”²¹ Thereafter, Vrachev continued to follow the material that Trifonov published about his father in 1964, and offered scrupulous feedback on drafts of the *Znamia* manuscript prior to its 1965 publication.²²

17. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.2.

18. Ibid. On Batorgin, see also A. Shitov, “Primechaniia. Otblesk kostra [Notes. Fireglow],” in Iu. Trifonov, *Ischeznovenie: Sbornik (otblesk kostra, starik, ischeznovenie)* [Disappearance. A Collection (Fireglow, The Old Man, Disappearance)] (M.: Moskovskii rabochii, 1988), 569-579.

19. On Vrachev’s biography, see Ibid., and O. Trifonova, “O vremeni i o sud’be [On time and Fate],” who calls Vrachev a person who knew Valentin and Mironov, as well as many, many others known to us only through photos, 504).

20. All Vrachev correspondence contained in FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.4. Reference to Vrachev’s first contact in Trifonov’s diaries: “Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei,” *Druzhiba narodov*, no. 11 (1998): 60-61.

21. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.4.

22. Ibid.

On each occasion, Vrachev checked facts, pointed out errors and, where possible, sent the correct information instead. At times, Vrachev could not entirely clarify matters, but at others, he corrected the text with supreme confidence.²³ An example of the latter came in his response to an early draft of *Fireglow*, where he acclaimed Trifonov's use of historical and archival material, but criticised him for being "very modest in your evaluations of the revolutionary activity of your father." Claiming that "I can judge this because I knew your father," he insisted that Trifonov change his assessment of his military record to reflect the fact that that it "was not ordinary, but outstanding."²⁴ Reading a later draft at the end of 1964, Vrachev acclaimed the further progress that Trifonov had made towards becoming a "historian" and "expert in your field"; this was now a "historical sketch [...] written with the hand of an artist." Still, though, Vrachev remained unsatisfied with the "modesty" of Trifonov's presentation of Valentin; it was his opinion—and the collective judgement of Old Bolsheviks—that he was, as previously pointed out, an "outstanding" figure.²⁵

Trifonov quickly finished writing the book in late 1964 and submitted it to *Znamia*, without exploring all the avenues suggested by Vrachev. Like several colleagues at this juncture who were also trying to publish works about the Soviet past (especially those touching on the "cult of personality"), he was conscious that his publication chances might be dwindling with every day since the ouster of Khrushchev in late 1964.²⁶ *Znamia* had greater success in publishing such texts than *Novyi mir* in the early Brezhnev era, due to its more conservative reputation and to the fact that it subjected such prospective publications to very stringent internal review before they even reached censors and other party-state officials.²⁷ *Fireglow* "squeaked in through a crack in the door" in this transitional epoch not only due to the subtlety of its criticisms of Stalinism and its unmistakable affirmation of Leninist ideals, but also thanks to the constructive critique provided by the main manuscript reviewer, the historian Vasilii Polikarpov.²⁸ His late 1964 report sought not to criticise or dismiss the writer's lack of historical expertise (as historian-reviewers often did for *Znamia* and other journals), but rather to safeguard against political pot-shots Trifonov's important enterprise of "recreating bit by bit the identity of

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei," *Druzhba narodov*, no. 11 (1998): 64; Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, Chapter 6, examines other such works' chances of publication, including Grigorii Baklanov's *July 1941* (whose final installment appeared in the same issue of *Znamia* as the first part of *Fireglow*). C.f. Woll, *Invented Truth*, 24, on increase in prohibitions by this time.

27. Iu. Trifonov, "Zapiski soseda [Notes of a Neighbour]," in Id., *Rasskazy. Povesti. Roman. Vospominaniia. Esse* [Stories. A Novel. Memoirs. Essays] (Ekaterinburg: U-faktoriia, 1999), 658-739, on contrast in publishing policy and reputation between *Znamia* and *Novyi mir* in the 1960s.

28. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei," *Druzhba narodov*, no. 11 (1998), 64; Polikarpov, Shitov, "V sovместnykh literaturno-istoricheskikh boiakh," 382-386.

party-state actors, hounded by Stalinist arbitrariness.” “The slightest imprecisions,” he warned, “will be used by the proselytisers of the cult, who will never lay down their weapons in trying to discredit what Iurii Trifonov has written.” Polikarpov therefore provided over a dozen pages of corrected dates, names and posts, as well as explaining at length why the sensitive military careers of Mironov and Dumenko had to be treated with the utmost care and nuance. Admiring Trifonov’s pioneering work, he sensed that his attempted factual reconstruction and reputational rehabilitation would face resistance in this period of lingering Stalinist legacies and threatened re-Stalinisation.²⁹

Polikarpov was prescient: while its later readers offered copious factual corrections and additions of the kind that Polikarpov gave here, *Fireglow* also attracted public and private criticism after publication, especially concerning Dumenko and Mironov. As Polikarpov also predicted, this battle was often fought at the level of microscopic detail, with all sides claiming factual accuracy and historical “truth.” Yet these ferocious exchanges also forged bonds between like-minded literary and historical writers, as presaged by Polikarpov’s assistance, and between Trifonov and historians and eyewitnesses amongst his readership, as already indicated in his pre-publication correspondence with a few such informants. The journal publication vastly expanded such discussion and collaboration. This was precisely because, as the next section explores, the text itself emphasised its inadequate historical data and memories, and invited more qualified readers to supplement and rewrite the text.

A Post-memory text?

In both of its published versions, *Fireglow* wove a tapestry of different sources, voices and methodologies, to attain the most complete possible picture of its biographical and historical subjects. It has been described as painstaking and “palaeological,” its deep commitment to “scrupulous” “reconstruction” visible on every page.³⁰ Yet, more than the correspondence that preceded it, it also acknowledged gaps and silences in memory that were difficult or impossible to fill.³¹ Josephine Woll’s observation that Trifonov’s texts alternate between accretion and deconstruction of historical truth is particularly apt for *Fireglow*.³²

29. RGALI (Russian State Archive of Literature and Art), 618/18/80/79-90.

30. A. Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov i sovetskaia epokha: Fakty, dokumenty, vospominaniia* [Iurii Trifonov and the Soviet Epoch. Facts, Documents and Memoirs] (M.: sobranie, 2006), 279, stresses “restoring wholeness” through this “palaeontology”; Woll traces “reconstruction” (Woll, *Invented Truth*, 22); Gillespie describes text as “scrupulous” (Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 141).

31. This anxiety is less acknowledged in critical work on *Fireglow*; though one review at the time of publication described the “pathos” of the son encountering his father through documents after so long (“Sud’ba i vremia [Fate and Time],” *Novyi mir*, 3 (1967): 252-55).

32. Woll, *Invented Truth*, 36.

Trifonov's particular difficulties in researching his father and uncle were partly down to the official forgetting suffered by both (and hundreds of their colleagues), exacerbating the natural loss of memory and factual accuracy caused by time passing. They were also, though, connected to the peculiar meanings of biography in Bolshevik ethics, which suppressed individual thoughts of posterity in favour of full-time service to the collective. All these themes and tensions are evident in the opening of the work, whose ambivalent, proliferating symbolism and diverse narrative modes immediately challenge the conventions of history and biography. Therefore, even when a more linear biographical narrative does get underway soon afterwards, the enigmatic prologue suggests that the reader should continue to seek hidden meanings beneath the careful, apparently prosaic compilation of documents about both men.³³

The first paragraph of the text is immediately unsettling, plunging the reader into an abstract, ambiguous image of history and its effect on people. The initial metaphor evokes the different ways in which the eponymous "glow" (*otblesk*) of history is reflected on individuals, some barely warmed by it, but others burned. To this ambiguous metaphor is then added a simile likening history to a "huge fire" (the also eponymous *koster*), fuelled by each individual's contribution(s). History is thus harmful and helpful, both an agent of destruction, but also an object of individual and communal construction.³⁴

This portentous but ambiguous symbol is left without further explanation, the narrative then switching abruptly to a bucolic scene of the narrator and his father playing outside.³⁵ From the abstract view of history in the first paragraph, we now focus in upon identifiable individuals and fond family memories. Yet the text remains unsettled and unsettling. The toys for the pair's game turn out to be paper snakes, fashioned from old Civil War maps. Already transformed from documents into toys, these snakes, like the "fire" of the opening passage, continue to take on further meanings: a sudden chronological leap forward and switch of tone links the father's carelessly destructive attitude to documents to his own destruction during the Great Terror (the night-time arrest takes place at the same countryside location as the game-playing).³⁶ In a further leap forward across several decades, the adult narrator is then shown trying to reconstruct his father's life, and mourning the silences caused partly by his father's carelessness.

Yet he is also deeply seduced by "going after the documents" that *had* somehow been preserved: "they were all bathed in a red light," he explains, "the glow of that huge, thundering fire in which all past Russian life burned." This return of the "fire" image confirms the deeper continuity between the seemingly incongruous

33. Start of the biographical narrative: *Znamia*, no. 2 (1965): 143. The literary qualities have been under-emphasised by critics, who have mostly seen the work as documentary and historical.

34. *Ibid.*, 142 ; Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 143, also notes the ambivalence of the *koster*.

35. *Znamia*, no. 2, 1965, p. 142.

36. *Ibid.*

narrative modes of the opening passages, while further deepening the ambiguity of that image. The narrator's father is now shown "stand[ing] close to the fire," as one of the main "stokers" of revolution, this central but vulnerable position again evoking history's destructive force *and* individuals' contributions to its progress.³⁷

This opening destabilises the narrative as much as it clarifies what is to come. It is "not a historical sketch, not a memoir about my father, not a biography of him, not an obituary," the narrator explains, and it lacks the "comprehensiveness" and "linear form" of conventional biography or historiography.³⁸ The destruction of people, documents and memories, so powerfully evoked through the symbolic and narrative shifts of the opening passage, makes such a complete, coherent narrative impossible. On the other hand, the opening to *Fireglow* also affirms that it is now possible for the narrator to "speak out loud" about previously stigmatised figures (the reasons for this greater openness are veiled, as is most of the text's subsequent criticism of Stalin), and to use the remaining documentary traces ("old telegrams, protocols, newspapers, leaflets, letters") to forge a direct connection not only to his father, but to the revolution more broadly.³⁹ The text's apparently disorientating, de-stabilising opening in fact therefore establishes the key theme of the text: the difficulty, but also the necessity and obligation, of reconstructing historical truth and revolutionary ideals.

Within the rest of *Fireglow*, these tensions between deconstruction and reconstruction of memory are above all visible in the shifting structure of the *povest'* and in the different ways that its narrator deploys his sources. Structurally, after the complicated opening, the text takes a broadly chronological approach to the brothers' lives, starting not at birth or childhood, but only from the moment of their first involvement with radical politics in the early 20th century. This focus on the brothers' ideological maturity means that the narrative can be structured around the successive party posts that they held in the pre-revolutionary and early post-revolutionary years, only very rarely pausing to reflect on their personalities, and not at all on their private lives. Indeed, their behaviour in these successive party posts is driven less by personal characteristics than by Bolshevik ethics, especially Leninist justice, a theme that unites many episodes and positive characters (including Lenin and Aron Sol'ts).

However, as the opening (non-)definition of the text's genre had warned, this could not be an entirely chronological and coherent narrative, and indeed there are frequent interruptions and disruptions to this orderly progression.⁴⁰ The chronological account of the revolution and Civil War periodically leaps forward

37. *Ibid.*, 143

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Znamia*, 2 (1965): 143.

40. Contrast this reading to a claim of the sudden "fluency" of Trifonov's historical writing in *Fireglow*, and of his "virtually inexhaustible source of data" for the text (C. Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov and the Drama of the Russian Intelligentsia* (Ghent: Ghent State University Russian Institute, 1990), 62).

to the Great Terror, the narrator's traumatic foreknowledge of this catastrophe irrupting into the text. As already shown, Valentin's arrest and death appear from very early in the text, and Evgenii's terror-related fatal heart attack similarly looms into the middle of a passage about April 1918.⁴¹ The tragic deaths of several other figures are also suddenly foreshadowed in the midst of the revolution and Civil War, highlighting the tragedy of the party's later turn against its heroes.⁴²

In a similar way, the narrator's reflections on his sources and methods alternate between faithful reconstruction of the events and ideals of the time, on the one hand, and interludes of frustration at the gaps and silences in the record, on the other. The text attains its greatest fluency in parts based on Pavel Lur'e's diary of 1917-1918, where the full quotidian record grants the narrator a firm grasp of events and thus permits him to recount the days of revolution in an unusually vivid, "literary" way, with metaphors and similes suddenly abounding.⁴³ More typically, though, successive episodes are laboriously pieced together out of surviving archive documents, fragments of testimony and carefully selected pre- and post-Stalinist history texts and memoirs.⁴⁴ The care with which the narrator thus assembles and acknowledges his sources promotes historical methods and ethics sharply distinct from the falsifications and glib fluency of Stalinist historiography.⁴⁵ At the same time, though, the narrator openly wishes he had more copious sources, and is often self-conscious about the gaps and distortions in his evidence.

The most frequent motif in his meta-narrative of historical research (introduced at the very start of the story) is the "trunk" of documents left by his father.⁴⁶ Trifonov's father's papers were in fact held (and researched) at an Army archive, but the trunk serves throughout as a symbol for how fragmentary and haphazard the son found this paternal archive to be. While maintaining a largely chronological approach, as indicated above, the narrator is honest about the fact that his text is structured not necessarily by the key landmarks of the era or even of his father's own life, but rather by the often minor events that could be reconstructed from documents "preserved"

41. *Znamia*, no. 2 (1965): 153.

42. E.g. one the Red Guard's founder members, K. Iurenev, has his biography summarized at his first appearance in the text, the summary ending "and in 1937 he perished, like many others, and is now rehabilitated" (*Ibid.*, 151).

43. Lur'e's diary is introduced in *Ibid.*, 155, as a source of "exact information" about 1917-1918; having reassured the reader that "all these details are not made up (*vymysel*) and not murky echoes of stories heard at some point from my father," the narrator then resumes a vivid narrative of the time, for example describing "the first post-October spring [...] exploding like a young wine" (*Ibid.*).

44. Amongst the pre- and post-Stalinist historians used and cited by Trifonov are Pinezhskii and Naida (*Ibid.*, 147-149, 153-154; no. 2, 158).

45. There are occasional direct critiques of Stalinist historiography's silencing of the merits of true revolutionary heroes and exaggeration of Stalin's leadership and Soviet military successes (this is also implicitly linked to the tragic consequences of Valentin's attempts to alert Stalin to the threat of World War II at the end of the text): *Znamia*, no. 2 (1965): 147; no. 3 (1965): 157, 168.

46. Introduced *Znamia*, no. 2 (1965): 143, and the word *sunduk* is repeated several times afterwards.

by chance in this chaotic, untended archive.⁴⁷ This deductive method helps to reinforce the text's critique of a priori history writing, and every single trace found is described as valuable and evocative.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the text remains haunted throughout by failures of memory, silences in testimony and gaps in the archive.

Appropriately, then, the text ends without firm resolution. The final long paragraph traces a horribly inexorable journey into the void: by defying Stalin and Stalinist policy (on the looming war), Valentin seals his fate, and the final lines of his biography tell us what we knew from the start: "people in military uniforms [...] appeared in the night at Serebrianyi bor. My father was 49."⁴⁹ Yet this tragic end is not quite the end of the narrative: as at the start, the father's life is framed by broader reflections on history, and in its last appearance in the text's last sentence, the *koster* symbol takes on its most positive hue: "and the fire roars and sparks and lights up our faces, and will light up the faces of our children and those who will come after them."⁵⁰ The father's death in the Holocaust of Stalinist terror thus gives way to an image of temporal and ideological continuity, his life's example burning on for future generations. Yet this sudden shift into the *koster* metaphor, like the lurch away from it at the start of the text, does not clarify whether the text offers mourning or affirmation of the memory of revolution.

The ambiguous views of history, memory and trauma in *Fireglow* suggest that it is to some degree a "post-memory" text, or a "post-memoir": that is, an account of deeply personal (often family) history shadowed by traumatic ruptures and anxiety about generational distance and gaps in the surviving evidence.⁵¹ However, while the majority of "post-memory" texts can only hope in vain to restore the "intergenerational memorial fabric," *Fireglow* made a more robust claim to resurrect revolutionary memory, claiming that the "fire" could burn on, and even be more powerfully reignited, thanks to such texts.⁵² Yet for this to happen, the historical research and patchy memories of one person (one who was not even alive at the time) were not nearly enough: it was precisely by emphasising the ruptures and silences in his own memories and sources that Trifonov invited his readers to fill them with their own, opening the text up to a collaborative rewriting that ultimately consumed much of the rest of his career.

47. Use of the verb "to be preserved" (*sokhranit'sia*) e.g. no. 2 (1965): 159; no. 3 (1965): 154, 165, 171-72 (this last reference describes the "paper trash" at the bottom of the trunk).

48. e.g. *Znamia*, no. 2 (1965): 149-150, 152, 159; no. 3 (1965): 154, 158-59, 163. Kardin, "Nas eshche bezvestnye," 162, calls the text "a sharp rejection of a priori thinking."

49. *Znamia*, no. 3 (1965): 177.

50. *Ibid.*

51. On "post-memory," see e.g. M. Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); K. Goertz, "Transgenerational Representations of the Holocaust: from memory to 'post-memory'," *World Literature Today*, 72, 1 (1998): 33-38; J. Young, "Toward a Received History of the Holocaust," *History and Theory*, 36, 4 (1997): 21-43; on "post-memoir" as a genre of "post-memory" texts, see L. Morris, "Postmemory, postmemoir," in Morris, Zipes, eds, *Unlikely History: The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 291-306.

52. M. Hirsch, "The Generation of Postmemory," *Poetics Today*, 29, 1 (2008): 103-128.

Reader response and the (post-) memory of revolution

As soon as *Fireglow* was published, Trifonov was overwhelmed with a “flood” of letters from its readers, which both helped and complicated the task of writing the book edition, while deepening the dilemmas of (post-)memory dramatised in the original text.⁵³ Some readers simply thanked and praised the author for supplementing fragmentary personal and public knowledge about the brothers. A certain Sal’kov from Odessa, for instance, offered reminiscences about how Valentin had inspired him during the war, but viewed *Fireglow* as more substantial, “a lifelong memory, and not just for me. It will be a memory for our sons and grandsons.”⁵⁴ Sal’kov’s letter also expressed sadness that Valentin had become a victim of the “cult of personality,” and amongst Trifonov’s other readers were those who had personally suffered such a fate, placing Trifonov’s reception within the broader phenomenon of 1960s reader response and its discussion of Stalinist terror. Such readers included a repressed Civil War veteran, Del’va, and also a certain Orlova, whose emotional letter to Trifonov recounted that she too had been burned by the “fire” that had ended the brothers’ lives, but had never lost her faith in the party.⁵⁵

Other responses, though, offered additional testimony to fuel the eponymous “fire” of revolution and keep its memory burning in the present: as Trifonov’s then wife recalled, such correspondence showed how “many people were still alive, [and] they came out after *Fireglow* was published, sent letters and their documents and archives, shared their memories.”⁵⁶ Because the text’s narrator had been so open about the inadequacy of his sources, many readers sent in historical evidence and eyewitness testimony to fill these gaps, often expressing a confident commitment to the collaborative, communal restoration of historical truth and revolutionary ideals that was more broadly typical of the early post-Khrushchev era.⁵⁷ However, the narrator’s honesty about his incomplete understanding of his father and his evocation of the distance between their respective generations and epochs also left the text vulnerable to critique and even outright rejection, precisely because of this avowedly patchy knowledge. Many readers had a quite different view of the period and personalities depicted, especially of Dumenko and Mironov, and

53. Maegd-Soep, *Iurii Trifonov*, 64-65; Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 140-143. Shitov, “Primechaniia,” 569, estimates that over 200 letters were received by Trifonov, but these numbers are not borne out in available archival materials. These analyses also do not extend much beyond the quantitative.

54. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.22. Sal’kov continued to write with more information about the Civil War over the coming months.

55. FSO, f. 22, 4.2.1.8; Polikarpov, Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, 74. On 1960s readers of literature and the discussion of Stalinist terror, see D. Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi mir. Coming to terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 171-239.

56. Trifonova, “O vremeni i sud’be,” 515.

57. The invasion of Prague in 1968 was a more significant turning point in intelligentsia attitudes towards the system (see e.g. B. Kagarlitsky, Boris, W. Nickell, “1960s East and West: The Nature of the Shestidesiatniki and the New Left,” *Boundary*, 2 36, no. 1 (2009): 95-104).

they cited their more direct memories and fuller knowledge of the epoch to prove the superior “truth” of their views. Thus, these initial responses to *Fireglow* helped to (re)construct a fuller historical picture and thereby to (re)construct a mnemonic community, yet they also deconstructed, even denied, the author’s entitlement to describe the characters and events featured in his text.

Within the former, more common, responses after publication, a significant role was played by the same figures who had advised Trifonov prior to publication, such as Vrachev, but also by new Old Bolshevik and historian correspondents. As soon as *Fireglow* was first published, such readers started to send responses to the text, intended to highlight, and then to fill, the gaps in Trifonov’s account of the revolution and Civil War. The Old Bolshevik Pavel Shalaev, for example, wrote at least 17 letters to Trifonov, Trifonov’s mother and Pavel Lur’c between publication of Trifonov’s “very necessary and well-written sketch about your father” in early 1965 and the end of that year, sometimes at daily intervals.⁵⁸ Amongst the material that he feverishly dispatched to the author were unpublished memoir and historical manuscripts (for example, the first volumes of his 6-volume unpublished autobiography about his time in pre-revolutionary Tobol’sk), as well as small print-run, locally published texts (including an article about Aron Sol’ts from a 1961 collection published in Tiumen’ and co-authored with Nakoriakov).⁵⁹ Although only some of these works had been published, Shalaev did not present them as illicit samizdat, but rather as a contribution to a forthcoming, important Soviet publication.

Despite old age and some serious health problems, Shalaev also responded to *Fireglow* by accelerating his already intensive writing program, to produce reams of new material about the brothers (including a 40-page biographical sketch of Valentin), and about other pre- and post-revolutionary figures and events; again, these were fully intended for publication via Trifonov’s new text.⁶⁰ Swiftly drafting and dispatching in October 1965 one such batch of material about “his real thoughts about *that* time,” to allow Trifonov “to understand the *spirit* of that epoch,” Shalaev acknowledged that his enclosed text lacked a fully worked through form (*obrabotka*). However, he believed that this was appropriate to their auxiliary function (“this isn’t an article, it’s *material!*”), and that their lack of “literary” form in fact only underscored their “full sincerity.”⁶¹

For his part, and in a similar vein, Trifonov’s already well-established correspondent Vrachev sent copious further information to the author after the journal publication. These included a five-page account of an attack on a Komintern

58. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28. Trifonova noted that Shalaev, as one of few survivors, had valuable memories and evidence to contribute to Trifonov’s archive (Trifonova, “o vremeni i sud’be,” 567).

59. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid. “Sincerity” had of course been a key value promoted in the “thaw” (for an excellent discussion of its meanings, see Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi mir*: 44-87).

train in 1920, never before written up, a 21-page list of additions and corrections to the first journal issue and a five-page list for the second half of *Fireglow*. Both these lists included numerous proposed insertions, some spanning several pages.⁶² These proposed rewritings, he explained, were intended to correct Trifonov's excessively laconic representation of his father and the Civil War:

You sped along at maximum motor speed along the south-eastern and Caucasian fronts. This is hard to agree with, as very important HISTORICAL events occurred on these fronts. It's irritating to read an abbreviated, dry party questionnaire [*anketa*] of the subsequent activity of Valentin Trifonov. So for that reason, I am trying to get rid of the gaps [*probely*] given in the text.⁶³

Even after this seemingly exhaustive enumeration of the "gaps" needing to be filled in Trifonov's text, though, Vrachev still had more to add. As late as the end of 1966 (apparently before seeing the book edition), he sent two more corrections to the journal edition, and even then had to add a post-script. "No that's not all," he wrote, directing Trifonov to look at more historiography and Lenin-era party documents to clarify his picture of the 1918-19 period and Lenin's view on the Cossack question.⁶⁴

Shadowing such factographic collaboration were the other communications involving Old Bolsheviks and veterans that took place after *Fireglow*'s first publication. Shalaev contacted "old comrades" in Moscow and the Urals after publication, and transmitted details of their communications to the author (and to Lur'c), including several oral and written discussions about *Fireglow* with his long-standing collaborator Nikolai Nakoriakov.⁶⁵ Nakoriakov himself met Trifonov, and in turn introduced the author to more Old Bolshevik survivors.⁶⁶

Such encounters expanded Trifonov's store of oral history sources while also revealing the close ties and urgent commitment to the memory of revolution that bound together the few surviving remnants of the Old Bolshevik community. However, these exchanges also exacerbated awareness that this community and its memory were fragile, earlier decimated by terror, and now under further threat from memory loss, old age and death. When he met Nakoriakov, for instance, Trifonov was aware that his memories had been fragmented by the chronological distance from the revolution, and by the ageing that he had since undergone.⁶⁷ Trifonov's informants also admitted these weaknesses themselves. The seemingly inexhaustible Shalaev occasionally paused in his rapid-fire correspondence with the

62. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.4.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28.

66. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradci," no. 11 (1998): 69-71.

67. Ibid.

author and his relatives to reflect on what he had forgotten, sometimes by quoting Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* ("few faces has my memory preserved/few words reach me").⁶⁸ When trying to reconstruct the events in Tiumen' prison involving Evgenii Trifonov in 1909, he explicitly admitted that "remembering what happened half a century ago is getting more difficult."⁶⁹ Shalaev also lamented the reluctance of some Old Bolshevik colleagues "to *formulate [their] own memories*."⁷⁰ This elegiac anxiety about memory's depletion and loss would also haunt the book edition.

These offers of written and oral testimony constituted genuine attempts to supplement the gaps in Trifonov's historical research, with their authors often recognising that Trifonov had the literary skill and celebrity to reach a larger audience than their low-profile, more drily written historical publications (or manuscripts). However, as Polikarpov had predicted, some other readers sought instead to criticise and reject Trifonov's account, especially its rehabilitating impulse, thus foreshadowing official criticisms of the text later in the Brezhnev era. By far the most controversial issue was the representation of Mironov and Dumenko, though one reader, Shul'ts also repeatedly questioned *Valentin's* rehabilitation on the basis of his own observations of his behaviour in 1920.⁷¹ The larger body of letters doubting Trifonov's more positive view of Mironov and Dumenko offered testimony and historical analysis, but again not to supplement Trifonov's account as much as to undermine and invalidate it. In so doing, they articulated a distinctively post-Stalinist blend of "exposing" historical truth while still "exposing" enemies.⁷²

For example, one of Trifonov's correspondents, Bogdan Kol'chigin, initially sought to help Trifonov expand his text, but changed his attitude after reading the published version of *Fireglow*. When Trifonov first wrote to him just before publication, Kol'chigin confirmed that he had "retained very good memories about your father," and was happy to pass on these memories in order to enrich Trifonov's "interesting work of commemorating the memory of veterans of the Civil War." He described at length, for example, his memories of Trifonov's father's "very white and healthy full face with an attentive gaze and a pipe in his mouth" and of Trifonov's uncle "in contrast to your father, dusky, sharp nosed, with [...] a severe gaze, speaking little and wearing a pince-nez." He ended this first letter to Trifonov by passing on contact details of other veterans who could provide further details about his father and uncle.⁷³ However, after reading the journal version of

68. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28.

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.*

71. RGALI, 618/18/80/31-33 (a letter to *Voprosy istorii* alleging Valentin was a Trotskyist), 56-58 (letter to *Pravda*), 59-62, 64-67. These suspicions only dried up when *Znamia* obtained details of Valentin's rehabilitation from Trifonov and sent them to Shul'ts: RGALI, 618/18/80/20, 54-55, 64.

72. Dobson, *Khrushchev's Cold Summer*.

73. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.82.

Fireglow, Kol'chigin sent two, much more critical letters to Trifonov within the space of a single month.⁷⁴ These expressed his displeasure at Trifonov's "defence of Dumenko and Mironov" and this time used his superior knowledge of Valentin to refute, rather than to enrich, Trifonov's narrative. "I am convinced, he claimed in the first of these letters, that your father was of a completely different opinion about Dumenko." In elaborating on the "large trauma to Soviet education [*vospitanie*]" that such "muddled" reputational rehabilitations could cause, Kol'chigin accused them of transgressing the scholarly *and* Soviet rules of historiography: both factually incorrect, and harmful to propaganda.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, these objections did not entirely over-ride Kol'chigin's desire to continue contributing to knowledge about the brothers: both his letters of November 1965 ended with further suggestions for sources and contacts.

Other readers, though, used their historical knowledge and personal memories exclusively for the purpose of demolishing Trifonov's account. A certain Saenko from Rostov wrote to both the author and the journal immediately after publication of *Fireglow*, to perform such a holistic denial. Beginning with the allegation that Trifonov "had clearly relied on the fact that participants in the events linked to [Dumenko's] name are no longer alive, or if people are still alive, they don't know the essence of the matter," Saenko then claimed to speak on behalf of the "dozens, even hundreds" of people who *did* know the truth about the events and personalities represented in *Fireglow*. The rest of his letter advanced a point-by-point exposition of how Trifonov's account of Dumenko didn't "correspond to reality": that is, to what Saenko himself had witnessed and experienced during the Civil War in the Don region, and had later confirmed against archive and museum materials. Saenko accompanied this array of facts with broader critiques of Trifonov's historical methods and ethics.

Comrade Iurii Trifonov, he proclaimed towards the end of his letter—, you are highly superficial and free in your approach to illuminating the Dumenko issue. You can't approach historical facts that way. There must be truth [*istina*] here, and only truth, irrespective of whom it concerns, and whether it's pleasant, or not entirely pleasant.

These references to *istina* were reinforced in Saenko's parting statement that "in everything, we need to write the truth [*pravda*], as it is, and not write only what pleases someone," again contrasting Saenko's narrative to the ignorance, even falsification, of Trifonov's text.⁷⁶ Saenko left no part of *Fireglow*'s portrait of Dumenko intact in these efforts to supplant, rather than supplement, Trifonov's original text.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

76. RGALI, 618/18/80/68-74.

The effects of this reader response on the next version of *Fireglow* were profound, yet the new text retained the original version's beliefs about history and memory.⁷⁷ Most obviously, Trifonov expanded his text almost twofold by incorporating the plentiful evidence sent by his readers. Such generous inclusion of others' testimony not only reprised Trifonov's method from the original version, but also resembled the deference to veteran testimony in, for example, Konstantin Simonov's evolving representations of World War II at this time.⁷⁸ The majority of such revisions affected the first half's depiction of the years leading up to the Civil War, and by far the most important "co-author" of this new text was Shalaev. Long extracts from his voluminous material about the brothers' pre-revolutionary imprisonment and exile were inserted, frequently (though not always) acknowledged by name.⁷⁹ In a similar way, though at lesser length and frequency, Trifonov also wove other information from other Old Bolsheviks and veterans (including Vrachev) into his text. These enriched his text's account of the Leninist period while subtly affirming the value of such networks of historic and mnemonic exchange.⁸⁰

Yet this expanded source base did not eliminate the difficulties of reconstruction dramatised in Trifonov's original text; the new version of *Fireglow* still mourned irreparable gaps in memory. In the book's meta-narrative of his research and drafting of the text, the narrator added further examples of such lacunae: the encounter with Nakoriakov, coming more than five decades after his last meeting with Valentin Trifonov, yielded disappointingly little information, and so did new sources sent from the widow of another colleague of his father, Zakharov.⁸¹ It was openly admitted that such exchanges so long after the revolution and terror left only "memories of memories", but the narrator "had no other memories" to use instead.⁸²

In this sense, the second edition reaffirmed the urgency and importance of further investigation of the past; precisely because most sources or informants could yield only a small amount of usable evidence about the distant past, the collective, incremental gathering of such information had to continue. And indeed, the publication of this second edition suggested no firm official prohibition on this yet. However, some new features of the 1966 text evoked a sense of anxiety that

77. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei," no. 11: 78.

78. Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, Chapter 5.

79. Shalaev introduced as an informant in Iu. Trifonov, *Otblek kostra* (M.: Sovetskii pisatel', 1988), 15-16, and his material frequently cited thereafter, for example long citations of testimony about the pre-revolutionary era at: *Ibid.*, 19, 32, 43-45. The 1988 *Sovetskii pisatel'* edition is cited in all references to the book edition, as the 1966 edition is currently impossible to obtain. There is no reason to suppose, though, that the text of the 1966 and the 1988 editions are different.

80. Vrachev material cited and acknowledged: *Ibid.*, 109-10, 126-27, 130-31; material from other Old Bolsheviks and their relatives: *Ibid.*, 14 (Nakoriakov), 35 (Zakharov and his widow Zakharova), 78-81 (Godzievskaia). The other most frequently cited source is Evgenii Trifonov (Brazhnev) himself, whose memoirs and prison poetry are extensively added into the book addition.

81. *Ibid.*, 14, 35.

82. *Ibid.*, 36, 97.

that there might soon be. In adding an anecdote criticising the weak implementation of the 20th Congress' principles, and in refuting Kol'chigin (named in the text) and other journal readers who had objected to his presentation of Mironov and Dumenko, Trifonov firmly advocated both continuation of the historical research and rehabilitations of the "thaw" (with the concomitant need for nuanced biographies to supplant the stigmatisation of "enemies").⁸³ Yet, the obstacles to this agenda soon emerged more clearly, and *Fireglow* became entangled in the new era's politics of memory and historiography.

Legends and Facts in the Early Brezhnev era

Published in a small print-run, the book of *Fireglow* provoked intense reader interest that far outstripped the limited supply of texts. As Shalaev observed to Trifonov in 1967, if it had been published in 3 million copies, they would all still have sold out.⁸⁴ Fellow historians and literary colleagues wrote to the author asking him for copies of a book that they found impossible to locate in local book shops and libraries; when copies did exist, they passed from hand to hand, like the most popular Khrushchev-era fiction and the burgeoning samizdat of the Brezhnev era.⁸⁵

Those lucky enough to find and read the book responded in a largely similar way as to the journal edition. Long-standing informants, such as Shalaev, provided additional fact-checking ("to note the very tiniest digressions from the truth") and further evidence for use in future editions.⁸⁶ The book also provoked more Old Bolsheviks to contact the author with information, sometimes in person.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, those who had earlier disagreed with the portrayal of Dumenko and Mironov found no reason to change their minds. Kol'chigin, for example, praised the expanded edition for providing much new information and criticism of Stalin, but continued to attack Trifonov's view of Dumenko, a contrast captured in his concluding observation that: "your work is truthful, but you know far from the whole truth."⁸⁸ In a similar vein, a certain Garin wrote in 1967 to praise Trifonov's "wonderful book" and to request information about Slovatinskaia. But he also

83. *Ibid.*, 65, 141.

84. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28.

85. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.128; "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradci," *Druzhba narodov*, 11 (1998): 83-84. This hand-to-hand circulation of scarce published texts had happened most famously with Dudintsev's *Not by Bread Alone* and Solzhenitsyn's *Ivan Denisovich* after both texts were published in *Novyi mir* (in 1956 and 1962 respectively) and instantly sold out.

86. Shalaev letter of 4 February 1967, justifies such stringent fact-checking by reminding Trifonov that he has "written not a novel but a documentary sketch in which what is written demands to accord with reality, otherwise the sketch loses its main value" (FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.25-28).

87. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradci," *Druzhba narodov*, 1 (1999): 90.

88. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.82; a similar resistance to Dumenko's rehabilitation, from a history teacher from Kharkov (Katrechko) is described in Polikarpov, "V sovmesnykh literatyrno-istoricheskikh boiakh," 449.

accused Trifonov of failing to understand his father's principles, the necessity of punishing Mironov to prevent further "harm," and the 1920s more broadly. "In 1937, you were 11, you're not able to judge," he caricatured the son's ignorance, "If your father was alive today, he would have given you a thrashing."⁸⁹

The small size of the book edition in 1966 was already a sign of official discomfort, and this would become more pronounced by the end of the decade, through an effective ban on re-publication.⁹⁰ Trifonov was therefore unable to incorporate readers' responses into a new edition of the text, as he had done with the journal edition's reader responses.⁹¹ This did not mean, however, that this open-ended text, and its expanding community of readers, came to a close after 1966. Instead, the interpersonal links forged by the texts' two published versions continued to expand further, albeit largely in private, as the Brezhnev era evolved its characteristic, different forms of history-writing and public memory.

The author himself remained fascinated over the rest of his career with the issues of history, memory and trauma raised by *Fireglow*. In the immediate aftermath of the book publication, though, he maintained a focus on the specific figures of Mironov and his father, his notebooks of 1967 listing the two individuals as key themes of his archival research in Moscow and in Rostov.⁹² The latter location, which Trifonov visited at length that year, proved particularly rich in terms of archival material and exchanges with local historians.⁹³

As before, though, both Trifonov and his readers knew that the archives, even local ones, were both too voluminous and too restricted in access for a lone individual to resurrect the historical truth. Historians and others invested in similar projects therefore continued to share with the author their own discoveries of relevant sources. Vrachev, for instance, wrote to the author early in 1967, offering tips about where to find further information about his topic in TsGAOR, where he himself continued to research his own, overlapping interests.⁹⁴ Almost a decade later, a certain Geguzin sent citations relevant to Trifonov's interests, just unearthed in the Rostov archives; he "couldn't not tell you," he said, and once he had, he "felt more at ease."⁹⁵ Trifonov did not just receive this information, however; he also became a source for others' research. For example, several museums made

89. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.46.

90. Trifonova, "O vremeni i sud'be," 510; Kardin, "Nas eshche bezvestnye," 164.

91. "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei," no. 1 (1999): 90.

92. FSO, f. 220, 1.1.22; A. Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov: Khronika zhizni i tvorchestva* [Iurii Trifonov: A Chronicle of his Life and Works] (Ekaterinburg, 1997), p. 373. Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 143, points to overlapping of book publication of *Fireglow* and archive work for *Old Man*.

93. Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov and the Drama of the Russian Intelligentsia*, 67; "Iz dnevnikov i rabochikh tetradei," *Druzhba narodov*, no. 1 (1999): 81-82; Trifonova, "O vremeni i sud'be," 510-511. Trifonov's archive for these years also contains material sent to the author by Rostov historians and/or from the Rostov press (e.g. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.2.31)

94. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.4 (he also clarifies date of first meeting with father, in 1918. The P.S. adds that the archive documents were actually about Evgenii, not Valentin).

95. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.47.

contact with Trifonov in the years after *Fireglow's* last publication, asking him to contribute material about the Trifonovs and their era to their exhibitions.⁹⁶ In this sense, Trifonov's text contributed to the "historical turn" in late Soviet culture, both fuelling and revealing the dedication with which amateur and professional historians and writers continued to explore historical themes, even where their publication chances were dwindling.⁹⁷

However, the text was not merely the focus of antiquarian or factographic discussion. Although *Fireglow* had been ambiguous and elusive in its presentation of both historical and political issues, it and its author were also drawn into the intensifying politics of history and historical justice of the late 1960s. One community revealed to the author through responses to his text(s), and particularly keen to recruit him to their cause, might loosely be termed Cossack activists. Both editions of *Fireglow* provoked enthusiastic responses from historians and literary writers who had long been frustrated at the ongoing—and, by the late 1960s, worsening—negative attitudes towards Cossacks in Soviet public culture.⁹⁸ Dmitrii Petrov (Biriuk), for example, wrote to the author in 1967, astounded but also grateful that Trifonov had managed what he had not, despite devoting most of his literary career to the Cossacks and the Don: that is, publishing a positive literary representation of Mironov. What was striking in this writer's letter was its apparent absence of literary rivalry: he was simply glad that someone, somewhere had written about this "remarkable person," bypassing the censors who had blocked his own efforts, and thus fulfilling the wishes of Mironov's colleagues and relatives who had long petitioned him for a portrait.⁹⁹

Historian correspondents also revealed to Trifonov the past and present barriers to publication of positive, or even ambivalent, factual portrayals of the Cossacks. Assuming that Trifonov, as a "writer, not a historian" and someone "engaged in history [...] only because you were the son of a famous father," knew little about historical research into the Cossacks, a certain Efremov offered him a brief outline of this research. Unsurprisingly concentrated in the Don, it also stretched across the Soviet Union, including Leningrad where Efremov, a retired *Neva* editor, now worked as an amateur historian.¹⁰⁰ What united these historians of the Cossacks, Efremov explained, was that "they all know the truth, not just from carefully and richly collected archival material and all manner of testimony, but also through personal memories, as active participants in the past."

96. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.30 (Volgograd museum); Polikarpov, Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, 450-51 (Rostov museum).

97. Kozlov, "The Historical Turn."

98. The review in the regional journal *Don* used *Fireglow* to praise and encourage a positive attitude to Cossacks (*Don*, 7 (1965): 167-168).

99. FSO, f. 220, 2.4.128. Trifonova, "O vremeni i sud'be," 538, notes that *Fireglow* showed that the memory of Mironov was still "alive in the Don amongst his colleagues and friends."

100. Another letter from a Moscow historian, Topilin, also informed Trifonov that passions were running high in the Don over Mironov and Dumenko's ongoing misrepresentation (FSO, f. 220, 2.4.163; Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, 378-380).

These immaculate credentials, though, offered no guarantee of getting their work published. Efremov invited Trifonov to meet some of these historians to “help you become a historian-fighter [*istorik-boets*], alongside us,” thus seeking to improve Trifonov’s training as a historian as well as to expand the network of “fighters” for the “truth” about the Cossacks.¹⁰¹

Trifonov’s text thus continued to stand, as indeed it had from the moment of its first publication, at the unstable boundary between official and unofficial history and memory in the aftermath of the Khrushchev-era “thaw.” It also increasingly served as a focus for discussion of what could and could not be said about the Soviet past, and why (not), as the Brezhnev era left behind the early flux that had contributed to Trifonov’s text being published in the first place.¹⁰² The majority of Trifonov’s correspondents amongst old Bolsheviks, local and amateur historians and interest groups still did not place their mutual interests in historical truth and justice in opposition to the Soviet party-state and its ideology. They believed, rather, that their deep commitment to excavating the truth about the revolution and Civil War, resurrecting Old Bolshevik ethics and restoring historical justice—issues intertwined in real life, as in Trifonov’s text—was shared by the state, since these ideas were widely promoted in Soviet public culture, especially during the Khrushchev era but also as part of the growing cult of revolution in the Brezhnev era. However, as Trifonov’s exchanges with his readers continued into the late 1960s and early 1970s, their sharing of historical evidence was increasingly accompanied by sharing of information about obstructions to “truthful” representations of historical events and individuals, akin to the way that samizdat now sought to “chronicle” the state’s betrayals of its own principles.¹⁰³

The lines were still not clear-cut, however. Especially in the late 1960s, and to some degree in the early 1970s too, it was possible to argue publicly that both “fact-based” accumulation of historical knowledge—epitomised by Trifonov’s methodology and by the exchanges with readers after publication(s)—and also nuanced, evolving views of individuals and events (also typical of Trifonov’s text, though not of some readers’ hostile responses to recently rehabilitated figures) were preferable to fixed hagiographic or demonising narratives. For example, two articles in *Novyi mir* in 1966 and 1967, during intensifying official attacks on the journal, used *Fireglow* to symbolise the continuing “obligation” to engage in excavation and revelation of “documentary, precise fact” and of “the raw truth,” rather than embellishment of the past.¹⁰⁴ Deliberately tracing the opposite trajectory to Soviet

101. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.9.

102. The same was true of texts that notoriously remained in publication limbo in the late 1960s, such as Solzhenitsyn’s *Cancer Ward* and Aleksandr Bek’s *The New Appointment*: see Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, Chapter 6.

103. E.g. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.2.31 (see also above mentioned letters by Efremov, Petrov (Biriuk)).

104. The articles were: “Sud’ba i vremia”; B. Kardin, “Legendy i fakty [Legends and Facts]”, *Novyi mir*, 2 (1966): 237-250. Trifonov read Kardin’s article and stored it in his archive (FSO, f. 220, 4.2.2.33). On the broader significance of this article, see Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi mir*: 263-294, and Polikarpov, Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov i sovetskaia epokha*, 448. On

public culture's ever-tighter embrace of "legends," *Novyi mir* viewed Trifonov's and other writers' "collection of facts and the destruction of legends", along with readers' readiness to be "co-participants in the investigation," as the only way to deepen the "maturation of national memory" (*vozmuzhanie narodnoi pamiati*).¹⁰⁵ Although the authors of these articles may not have known it, this was a very apt description of Trifonov's interactions with his readers at this time.

Yet the dispute between "legends" and "facts" was unevenly matched, and supporters of the former were much closer to the levers of power — and publication — in the 1970s. The dispute over Mironov, for example, intensified at the start of this decade with several high-profile publications by Budennyi and his supporters alleging that *Fireglow* and several other texts had dangerously misrepresented him.¹⁰⁶ These ominous signs prompted one historian and highly decorated Civil War veteran, Gavrilov, to send a series of appeals direct to Brezhnev and Andrei Grechko in the first half of the 1970s; he copied all his correspondence to Trifonov as a fellow victim of the state's apparent turn against truth and justice.¹⁰⁷ These attempts to refute "slandorous" accounts of Mironov and the Civil War combined meticulous detail with broad principles, echoing much of Trifonov's earlier correspondence from readers.

Arguing in general terms against "untruth" (*nepravda*) and for the "objective" treatment of historical sources, as well as for the observation of legal principle in upholding Mironov's rehabilitation, Gavrilov ironically resembled some of the earlier *opponents* of Trifonov's forgiving view of Mironov and Dumenko.¹⁰⁸ In fact, though, Gavrilov sought to dissociate from such partisanship, urging Grechko to "separate yourself from the fact that you are a Buddenyite and we are Mironovites, and instead, relying on historical truth, archives and documents, give us your just and objective view."¹⁰⁹ Gavrilov's more focussed debunking of recently published "historians," meanwhile, recalled the exhaustive corrections and additions sent in by Trifonov's Old Bolshevik correspondents several years earlier. During his 19-page detailed critique of one 1972 article about Mironov, Gavrilov also often cited *Fireglow* itself as a factually accurate account to contrast to the "subjective," "tendentious" Soviet press accounts.¹¹⁰ In all these appeals of the early 1970s,

Trifonov's vexed relationship with *Novyi mir* in the Khrushchev era, and its improvement after Tvardovskii was impressed by *Fireglow*, see "Zapiski soseda."

105. Kardin, "Legendy i fakty."

106. Publications included the ongoing (posthumous after 1973) publication of Budennyi's multi-volume memoirs, and several articles including "Protiv iskazheniia istoricheskoi pravdy [Against Distortion of the Historical Truth]," *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 2 (1970) and "Komandarm 2-oi armii F.K. Mironov," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal*, 10 (1972). For Budennyi's petitioning of the CC to allow him to publish critiques of recent literature and historiography about Mironov and the Don Civil War, see RGANI, f. 5, op. 61, d. 62, l. 5-6.

107. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.5.

108. *Ibid.*

109. *Ibid.*

110. *Ibid.*

Gavrilov still expressed hope that Soviet public culture would revert to justice and Leninist truth, but his intense appeals straight to the top of the party-state conveyed a desperate sense that this might be the last chance to rescue Mironov's reputation, together with the principles that he and Trifonov jointly espoused.

Conclusion: Writers' Choices and Possibilities in the 1970s

By the time that Gavrilov wrote to the CC, many of his contemporaries had already become convinced of the party-state's irrevocable lapse into falsehood, and had retreated into samizdat and tamizdat as the sole realm of historical truth. A particularly instructive example is Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who, like Trifonov, had fluctuated between publication and prohibition in the early years of the Brezhnev era, and had also "expanded" a documentary-fictional text into a much broader project. He used readers' correspondence about *Ivan Denisovich* to initiate his enormous and apparently open-ended "literary investigation" in *The Gulag Archipelago*: "I became the accredited chronicler of labour camp life, to whom people brought the whole truth," he observed of this ongoing gathering of material in 1976.¹¹¹

However, there were telling differences between these two projects and authors, principally because the theme of the Gulag was clearly prohibited from the early Brezhnev era, whereas the revolution remained the principal usable past for the Brezhnev regime. In the 1960s, Solzhenitsyn therefore carried out research with his 227 informants in the strictest secrecy and in the early 1970s the work received its first publication abroad.¹¹² More generally, Gulag memory and history retreated

111. Quoted in E. Markstein, "Observations on the Narrative Structure of *Gulag Archipelago*," in J. Dunlop, M. Nicholson, *Solzhenitsyn in Exile* (Stanford: Hoover University Press, 1985), 179. On Solzhenitsyn's publication controversies in the 1960s (and beyond), see L. Labeledz, *Solzhenitsyn: A Documentary Record* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970); A. Solzhenitsyn, *The Oak and the Calf* (London: Collins and Harvill, 1980); M. Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn. A Biography* (New York: Norton, 1984), 410-696. On readers' letters about *Ivan Denisovich*, see Labeledz, *Solzhenitsyn*, 14-28 (a translation of "Chitaiut Ivana Denisovicha [They read Ivan Denisovich]," originally planned as a section of *Gulag*); Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi mir*: 209-38, and *Dorogoi Ivan Denisovich. Pis'ma chitatelei 1962-1964* [Dear Ivan Denisovich: Letters from Readers, 1962-1964] (M.: Russkii put', 2012). On *Gulag Archipelago*, see the above and n. 112, and also L. Toker, *Return from the Archipelago: Narratives of Gulag Survivors* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000), 101-22 (especially 103, 118 and 122, on open-endedness of text and invitation to future historians to rewrite it). Trifonov also obtained from Medvedev the manuscript of *Cancer Ward*, and believed it should be published (Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov and the Drama of the Russian Intelligentsia*, 65).

112. One of the work's prefaces describes this work with readers' letters and interviews (A. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956* (London: Harvill, 1986, xvii), while its two conclusions suggest both that the 'book has reached the utmost limit' and also that 'all you friends who have survived and know the story well, write your own commentaries to go with my book, correct and add to it where necessary' (Ibid., 471, 470). As in *Fireglow*, too, the main text frequently mentions informants and sources by name. First publication of the text: A. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973). The informants were only named and listed for the first time in a 2007 edition: A. Solzhenitsyn, *Arkhipelag*

entirely into private discussion, samizdat and tamizdat by the end of the 1960s (and until glasnost'), whereas Trifonov and his readers believed and hoped that their discussions of the revolution and civil war could and should be a part of Brezhnev-era literature and public memory.¹¹³

Fulfilment of such hopes was partial and unpredictable, for Trifonov's contemporaries as for the author himself. In the 1970s, texts similar to *Fireglow* did sometimes make it into print: both Anton Antonov-Ovseenko and Leonid Petrovskii published similarly "rehabilitating," document-based biographies of their fathers, both Old Bolshevik victims of Stalinism, albeit under heavy censorship (and in Antonov-Ovseenko's case, a pseudonym).¹¹⁴ On the other hand, Roi Medvedev, one of the contacts whom Trifonov made through publication of *Fireglow*, could not publish his biography of Mironov at this time. Even though his research drew on Trifonov's publications, and made similar use of veteran informants, such as his eventual co-author Sergei Starikov, Medvedev decided that his Civil War research stood as little chance of Soviet publication as his work on Stalinism (such as *Let History Judge*, banned in the late 1960s). Accordingly, Medvedev's and Starikov's biography of Mironov was first published in the US in 1978 though Trifonov was able to read it in samizdat manuscript much earlier.¹¹⁵

Trifonov himself was still able to pursue his intensifying interest in the revolutionary past in public venues. In 1974, he made a speech to the Soviet Writers' Union advertising his determination to forestall the de facto reversal of the rehabilitation of figures such as Mironov.¹¹⁶ Four years later, he made good on his promise with the publication of his novel, *The Old Man*.¹¹⁷ In the text, he greatly expanded his previous representation of Mironov through the thinly veiled character Migulin, incorporating his extensive new archive research and the fruits of his ongoing exchanges with readers and fellow historians.¹¹⁸ Like *Fireglow*, the

GULAG, 1918-1956: opyt khudozhestvennogo issledovaniia [The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation] (Ekaterinburg: U-Faktoriia, 2007): 13-18.

113. S. Cohen, *The Victims Return: Survivors of the Gulag after Stalin* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), esp. 128-139.

114. A. Rakitin, *V.A. Antonov-Ovseenko* (M., 1975); L. Petrovskii, *Petr Petrovskii* (Alma-Ata, 1974). On these biographies, see Cohen, *The Victims Return*, 137. Rakitin/Antonov-Ovseenko's biography sticks closely to the standard chronological biographical narrative, describing party posts held and the growth of the subject's revolutionary consciousness. His death in 1937 is only very briefly described on p. 342 (in contrast to an earlier version of the biography, which contained far more description and condemnation of the terror: A. Rakitin, *Imenem revoliutsii... Ocherki o V. Antonove-Ovseenko* [In the Name of Revolution: Sketches about V. Antonov-Ovseenko] (M., 1965), 178). On the restrictions on this publication, see the revised and expanded edition published during glasnost': A. Rakitin, *V.A. Antonov-Ovseenko* (L., 1989), 5. My thanks to James Ryan for his help with locating the 1975 text.

115. R. Medvedev, S. Starikov, *Philip Mironov and the Russian Civil War* (New York: Knopf, 1978); Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, 562; Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov*, 64-65.

116. *Voprosy literatury*, 1 (1974): 60-63.

117. Iu. Trifonov, "Starik [The Old Man]," *Druzhba narodov*, 3 (1978).

118. Woll, *Invented Truth*, 36. On the continuities between *Fireglow* and *Old Man*, and on recurrent motifs throughout Trifonov's works, see: Trifonova, "O vremeni i sud'be";

text also contains a meta-narrative, typical of late Trifonov fiction's play with time and space, in which the ageing main narrator Letunov recounts his obsessive (and, it transpires, conscience-driven) archival research about Migulin, and also relives Civil War memories triggered by a letter from Migulin's wife who had read one of his historical publications in 1974.¹¹⁹ While there is an autobiographical source for this fictional incident (Mironov's widow and his son both wrote to Trifonov about *Fireglow*)¹²⁰, it also reflects more broadly Trifonov's enduring sense of the power of readers' letters to conjure up the past and to reopen historical narrative to continual revision and rethinking.¹²¹

The Old Man, like the elliptical and polyphonic treatment of Stalinism in the slightly earlier *House on the Embankment*, complicated its narrative voice and perspective to a much greater extent than the meticulous reconstruction of personal history in *Fireglow*.¹²² This facilitated publication of a work whose moral qualms about revolution and celebration of empirical research and mnemonic debate so sharply contrasted to the increasingly monolithic 1970s public memory of the revolution and civil war.¹²³ *The Old Man*, like *Fireglow*, thus stood on the edge of Soviet literature, but it too was not dissident, as the contrast to *Gulag Archipelago* can again exemplify. Although Solzhenitsyn's text was also polyphonic and "literary" in deploying its multifarious sources, its polemic ultimately pointed in one direction only: against the Soviet system as a whole, an attitude consonant with the author's Messianic pursuit of the complete "truth" and excoriation of Soviet "lies" in the early to mid 1970s (and beyond).¹²⁴ Trifonov's attitudes to

Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov*, 160; Vl. Kabakov, "Steklo i srebro: biografiia i vymysel v gorodskoi proze Iu. Trifonova [Glass and Silver: Biography and Fiction in Iurii Trifonov's Urban Prose]," in *Mir prozy Iurii Trifonova*, 45-51; Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 143; I. Sukhikh, "Pytka pamiat'iu [A Trial of Memory]," *Zvezda*, 6: 2002.

119. Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, p. 616.

120. FSO, f. 220, 4.2.1.16; 2.4.41; Shitov, *Iurii Trifonov*, p. 486.

121. On the treatment of history and memory in *Old Man*, see Woll, *Invented Truth*, 53-79 (who concludes, p. 70, that Letunov's "mission [is] to learn the truth by piecing it together out of the shards of the past"); Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov*, 160-176 (who sees the novel as dramatizing a 'restless search for truth', p. 170); Kolesnikoff, *Yury Trifonov*, 99-106.

122. T. Seifrid, "Trifonov's *Dom na naberezhnoi* and the Fortunes of Aesopian Speech," *Slavic Review*, 49, 4 (1990): 611-624; Woll, *Invented Truth*, 16.

123. Maegd-Soep, *Trifonov*, 163; Woll, *Invented Truth*, 70. Cohen describes Trifonov as one of the best 'between the lines writers' of the 1970s (Cohen, *The Victims Return*, 138), and Gillespie claims that texts such as *Old Man* "provide material to support the view that he is at heart a socialist realist... or that he is sympathetic to dissident ideas" (Gillespie, *Iurii Trifonov*, 157).

124. On the literariness of *Gulag Archipelago*, see e.g. Toker, *Return from the Archipelago*, 101-122; S. Richardson, "The *Gulag Archipelago* as Literary Documentary," in Dunlop, Nicholson, *Solzhenitsyn in Exile*, 145-164; N. Pervukhin, "The Experiment in Literary Investigation," *SEEJ*, 35, 4 (1991): 489-502. On the polemical, even sermonic tone that pervades all the different narrative approaches, see e.g. Pervukhin, "The Experiment." On "truth" and "lies," see Solzhenitsyn's 1970 Nobel lecture (http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1970/solzhenitsyn-lecture.html) and his 1974 "Live not by Lies" (<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/arch/solzhenitsyn/livenotbylies.html>).

Soviet ideology and Soviet literature remained more fluid throughout the 1970s, making his complex historical fiction exceptional in the increasingly stagnant Soviet culture of the late Brezhnev era.

University College, Oxford

polly.jones@univ.ox.ac.uk