

The Generation of Allende and Solidarność. Leftist Dissidents, Reform Socialism and the Intellectual Elite in Moscow during the Late Brezhnev Era.

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I, Natasha Wilson, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract.

This thesis presents a cultural history of the Young Socialists, a left-wing dissident circle that was active in Moscow at the end of the Brezhnev era. Mainly from highly placed intelligentsia and party nomenklatura families, the core of the Young Socialists first met as students in the Faculty of History of Moscow State University (MGU) in the early-1970s. At the time of their dissent (1977-1982) the circle's leaders, Andrei Fadin and Pavel Kudiukin, were graduate students at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). The wider circle, which numbered roughly fifty people, were mainly young left-wing intellectuals in Moscow linked by a mix of everyday life associations and underground conspiracy. The Young Socialists published the samizdat journal *Varianty* (Variants), an internally circulated theoretical almanac that was dedicated to the elaboration of a programme of reform for the Soviet Union. The circle's undertakings were both domestic in scope and transnational through their efforts to establish connections with the Polish trade union Solidarność and the Italian Communist Party.

Using oral history sources and archival materials from Russia and a number of European countries, I reconstruct how the Young Socialists' worldviews and cultural practices formed under the influence of Soviet and transnational forces during late stagnation. Locating them at the intersection of reformist cultures in the Soviet political-intellectual establishment, the dissident movement and the social milieu of elite youth of the last Soviet generation, I view the Young Socialists as the second generation of socialist dissent. In doing so, I explore how they drew on the reformist intellectual heritage of the *shestidesiatniki* and used the samizdat networks and other communication channels developed by the first generation of dissidents. In particular, at a time when left-wing ideas had fallen out of fashion among wider society, I focus on the transmission of lived experience from older socialist intellectuals to these younger dissidents to explain the transfer of socialist dissent into the next generation.

Against the backdrop of Soviet decline, the Young Socialists drew inspiration for their views from foreign leftist movements. Viewing the international landscape at the turn of the 1980s, they perceived the existence of a European reformist Left that was loosely linked in an internationalism that was sympathetic to Eastern Bloc

dissent. While emphasising the advanced character of the Young Socialists' understandings of the outside world relative to earlier generations of socialist dissent, my account also considers their limitations. Looking ahead to Perestroika, I consider how the experience of socialist dissent accelerated the former Young Socialists' adoption of social democratic and new leftist identities. This thesis enhances understandings of socialist dissent. It introduces new perspectives on the reformist currents in the Soviet intellectual elite beyond Gorbachev's network of reformers. Finally, it expands understandings of the forms of political engagement that occurred within the last Soviet generation.

Acknowledgments.

For the young Soviet intellectuals at the centre of my story, socialism was a global constellation of revolutionary and reformist ideas and movements that provided inspiration for their dissident project directed towards the reform of the Soviet Union. This thesis is an attempt to reconstruct their intellectual, political and personal journey that occurred in Moscow, yet was influenced by developments in Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, Chile, Spain, France, Italy and Poland and other countries in Latin America and the Eastern Bloc. While documenting these Soviet intellectuals' transnational socialist engagements, this thesis was also shaped by my own experience as a researcher across this collection of locations and others.

The broadest outlines of this thesis were first developed through my hazy ideas on the mutually interacting influences evident in Soviet dissent, the Prague Spring and Eurocommunism that I explored in my Honours thesis at University of Melbourne. Robert Horvath noted my research interests and first told me about the Young Socialists and socialist dissent as an underexplored theme worthy of a PhD dissertation. Since then we have had many coffees and Little Creatures in both Melbourne and Moscow. He is the model of a conscientious scholar and generous mentor to younger researchers and I am very grateful for his enthusiasm and support over many years.

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Soviet Network of the Young Socialists, including *Varianty's* readers.

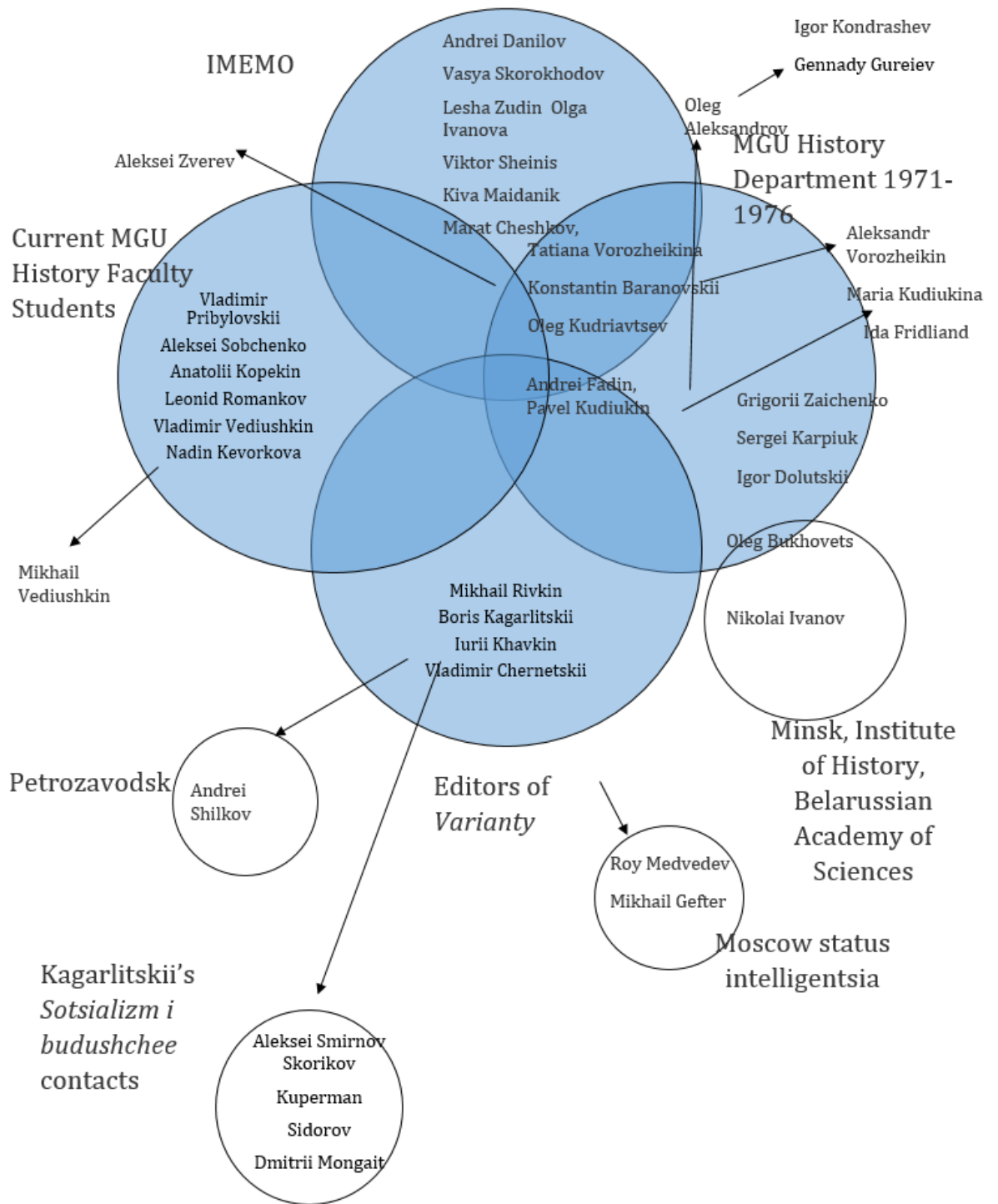


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Introduction.

In 1985, the journal *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* (Problems of Eastern Europe) published a letter that responded to its previous issue's publication of Liudmila Alekseeva's chapter "Socialists" from her now classical work on Soviet dissent. Its anonymous author's purported aim was to shed more light on the Young Socialists, a dissident circle which had been characterised by Alekseeva as "the second generation of socialist opposition in the post-Stalin period."¹ In the letter, which came two years after the criminal proceedings against the Young Socialists had concluded, its author revealed the existence of approaches in the dissident milieu of the late Brezhnev era that anticipated the drive to "renew" socialist ideology as would be publicly called for from 1987 in Gorbachev's "new thinking."² Claiming that the circle had been supporters of "self-governing market socialism," the author summarised: "The specificity of the Young socialists and their qualitative difference from other left-wing circles was that they wanted not only to return to the roots and revive 'true revolutionary values,' but above all they sought to update the socialist ideology itself."³

The tamizdat appearance of a letter from an author intimately familiar with the Young Socialists' dissent hinted at the former circle's far-reaching connections to underground literature and a commitment to its own reputation in the eyes of an international leftist audience.⁴ Launched in 1981 by Czechoslovak reform communist émigrés based in New York, *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* was a socialist forum for the exchange of experiences of reform in the different countries of the

¹ Liudmilla Alekseeva, "Socialisty," (Socialists.) *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* (9-10) (1984), 262.

² Mark Kramer, "The Collapse of East European Communism and the Repercussions within the Soviet Union (Part 2)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6(4) (2004), 6.

³ "Otkliki," (Responses.) *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* (11-12) (1985), 311-312.

⁴ The anonymous author was most likely Boris Kagarlitskii. This estimation is based on the similarities of the content and language in the letter to his later commentary on the Young Socialists and the appearance of other publications that he authored in *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* under pseudonyms and later openly, which establishes that he had connections to the journal (unfortunately, he did not respond to my email request for confirmation).

Eastern Bloc.⁵ At home in this transnational intellectual setting, the anonymous author noted the Young Socialists' unusually expansive collection of foreign ideological influences that included "the currents of Western Marxism (from Bernstein to Gramsci, Sartre, Marcuse)" and "the experience and ideas of the Eastern European reformers (Sik, Brus, Kornai, the reformers of the Prague Spring and Solidarność)."⁶ They were interested "not only in revisionism, but also in reformist traditions of the workers' movement."⁷

Upon their arrests, international reporting evaluated the dissident circle to be "probably the most important underground leftist group since the Union of Communards or Kolokol group was broken up in the late 1960s."⁸ But the anonymous author emphasised the Young Socialists' critical attitudes towards "party-democratic ideology" and "neo Bolshevism," which were the ideological trends that were typically associated with those earlier cycles of socialist dissent. The author also distanced the circle from being purely a mission to return to the spirit of the revolution – an aspiration that for the late socialist years has been tied by historians almost exclusively to the *shestidesiatniki* (people of the sixties) and the political and intellectual life of the period of the Thaw.⁹ By contrast, the Young Socialists' ambitions to "demonstrate the superiority of neo-Marxist methodology and the applicability of socialist principles for solving the country's economic problems" appear as distinctive responses to the decline of the Brezhnev years.¹⁰

⁵ Frantisek Sil'nitskii and Larisa Sil'nitskaia, "Slovo redaktora," (A Word from the Editor.): <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/rus/EEProblems.html>.

⁶ "Otkliki," 311-312.

⁷ "Ibid., 312.

⁸ Bohdan Nahaylo, "USSR – A New Left in Russia," *New Statesman* (10 September 1982). Open Society Archives (OSA), f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 880, folder, *Levyi povorot/Varianty*.

⁹ A state of the field work recently reaffirmed this perception that these impulses, when they took the form of dissent, did not extend beyond the Thaw: "The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia put an end to the rejuvenation brand of dissidence." in Stephen V. Bittner and Juliane Fürst. "The Aging Pioneer: Late Soviet Socialist Society, Its Challenges and Challengers," in *The Cambridge History of Communism. Volume III, Endgames? Late communism in global perspective, 1968 to the present*, eds. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 296.

¹⁰ "Otkliki," 311-312.

This thesis offers a cultural history of the Young Socialists.¹¹ The core of the dissident circle first met as students in the Faculty of History at Moscow State University (MGU) in the early-1970s. The outer circle, which spanned roughly fifty people and stretched all the way to Minsk and Petrozavodsk, mainly included intellectuals who were located around the Faculty of History at MGU and Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). During the years of their dissent, they published two samizdat journals: the small circulation theoretical almanac *Varianty* (Variants) and the popular propaganda journal *Levyi povorot* (Left Turn)/*Sotsializm i budushchee* (Socialism and the Future). Though the letter to *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* above overstated the circle's ideological prowess, its account accurately captured the circle's intended project: the elaboration of a scientific programme for the reform of the Soviet Union. The circle's undertakings were not only domestic in scope but also, as we shall see, transnational in their efforts to establish connections with actors that they perceived to be structured within an international reformist Left.

My thesis locates the circle's years of dissent (1977-1982) within the broader intellectual and cultural contexts of the late-Soviet political-intellectual establishment, the dissident movement and the social milieu of elite youth of the last Soviet generation. I investigate the pre-history of the Young Socialists during their years at MGU, where they encountered formative influences among the swirl of social, intellectual and political currents that were in circulation, that set in motion the critical leftist identities of the circle's leaders. This study then takes its reader inside academic research institutes and to private apartments and Moscow parks to reconstruct how reformist ideas and values were formulated and transmitted back

¹¹ The circle became known as the Young Socialists following international reporting on their arrests in 1982. Accounts of their dissident activities have appeared in the following works: Liudmilla Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 423-426; Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (M. : Svobodnoe marksistskoe izdatel'stvo, 2017), 86-89; Petr Cherkasov, "Chapter nine: IMEMO pod udarom (1982)," in *IMEMO: Ocherk istorii* (M. : Ves' mir, 2016), 429-485; Ewgeniy Kasakow, "Dissens und Untergrund: Das Wiederaufkommen der linken oppositionellen Gruppen in der späten Brežnev-Zeit," in Boris Belge and Martin Deuerlein, eds., *Goldenes Zeitalter der Stagnation? Perspektiven auf die sowjetische Ordnung der Brežnev-Ära* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 88-92; Carole Sigman, *Politicheskie kluby i Perestroika v Rossii: Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva* (M. : Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014), 91-93; Aleksandr Shubin, *Predannaia demokratiia: SSSR i neformaly, 1986-1989* (M. : Izdatel'stvo Evropa, 2006), 17-20.

and forth across these locations by a network of intellectuals to become a project of dissent. It is guided by the belief that the influence of reformist cultures on dissent has been under-represented in the historiography of the later years of the dissident movement. From this develops my claim that socialist idealism and the reformist and internationalist discourses that sustained it provided sources of inspiration for dissent beyond the turning point of 1968.

This thesis also constitutes an exploration of socialist dissent across the years of late socialism. While the major socialist dissident circles of the 1950s and 1960s have been drawn into vignettes in recent cultural histories of the Thaw,¹² these different groups have not been taken together and systematically evaluated as a broader phenomenon.¹³ Though this is not intended to be a comprehensive study, I provide a more systematic treatment by examining the intellectual and cultural practices of socialist dissent spanning the 1950s to the 1980s. The Young Socialists' references to earlier left-wing circle's underground literature in their own samizdat publications and their personal connections to former activists reveals socialist dissent was a living heritage in the Brezhnev years. I approach the phenomenon through the perspective of two generations, who were separated by the break of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which I argue left the younger generation with a more cynical attitude toward the Soviet leadership and made them more likely to find inspiration for their socialist views from leftist movements outside the Soviet Union. Despite the second generation's more hardened oppositional attitude, I view socialist dissent throughout the period as an expression of radical reformism, which

¹² Robert Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev's Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 102-107, 150; Kathleen E. Smith, *Moscow, 1956: The Silenced Spring* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 278-297; Benjamin Tromly, "Intelligentsia Self-Fashioning in the Post-War Soviet Union: Revol't Pimenov's Political Struggle, 1949-1957." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13(1) (2012), 151-176; E.Iu Zavadskaja and O.V Edelman, "Underground Groups and Organisations," in *Sedition: Everyday resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, eds. Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Sergei V. Mironenko (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 293-294, 302; Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 156-157.

¹³ An important exception is Il'ia Budraitskis' recent work on socialist dissent in the Soviet Union, though it is mainly descriptive and is conceptualised by its author as an initiating survey of a topic that has been under-explored. Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (M. : Svobodnoe marksistskoe izdatel'stvo, 2017), 34.

was linked by ideas and contacts to both the wider dissident movement and reformist currents in the political-intellectual establishment.

“Politicised Semidesiatniki” and Generations in Late Soviet Society.

“Twenty years of conscious life, which had begun with the faraway sound of the clatter of tanks’ tracks rattling down Prague’s cobblestoned streets,” summarised Andrei Fadin (b. 1953), one of the leaders of the Young Socialists, as he reflected on the social and political features of the post-1968 landscape that critical intellectuals of his generation grew up with. “Lives which passed while during the day we sat exams on the History of the CPSU, Marxism-Leninism, and god knows what else – while at night we read *Gulag Archipelago* and [*The Life and Extraordinary Adventures of Private Ivan*] Chonkin.”¹⁴ Alexei Yurchak has claimed that it was precisely the lack of political upheaval across the Brezhnev years that created the shared feeling of the “eternal” quality of late socialism that defined the “common identity” of the last Soviet generation.¹⁵ This thesis takes a different perspective, to argue that for a particular subset of this generation, political transformations – invasions, wars, overthrows and uprisings – could pose as unifying events.¹⁶ Within the particular elite Moscow intellectual milieu under examination in this thesis, the founding event within this generational narrative was the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which these individuals witnessed primarily through watching their parents’ reactions, while understanding its larger significance only later. To be sure, the political turning points that stimulated the hopes and disappointments of these often left-leaning intellectuals under study all happened outside the Soviet Union and occurred against the backdrop of stagnation at home. Nevertheless, this political element of their

¹⁴ Andrei Fadin, “Dubcek, Kadar i Jaruzel’ski pered sudom Makiavelli,” (Dubcek, Kadar and Jaruzelski before the Court of Machiavelli.) *Otkrytaia Zona* (Special Prague Spring Themed Issue) (April-December 1988): 166. OSA f. 300, s.f. 85, c. 9 unprocessed fond, published samizdat.

¹⁵ Alexei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever Until it was No More: The last Soviet generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 31-32.

¹⁶ I am drawing on Karl Mannheim’s perspectives on generations, see Karl Mannheim, “The Problem of Generations,” ed. Paul Kecskemeti, *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), 290.

experience, which extended to critical discussions on Soviet decline, distinguished them within their own generation.

This research provides a case study that sketches out some broader contours for the study of critically-minded and politically engaged intellectuals of the seventies generation, who I have termed “politicised *semidesiatniki*.” I view the Young Socialists’ dissent as only one of the many possible forms of active political engagement that occurred among this generation. Broadly conceived, the rest of this small yet influential subsection of the last Soviet generation were intellectuals from the upper strata of Soviet society, who followed international affairs, read samizdat and reflected on political matters in kitchen talks mainly in Moscow and Leningrad in the Brezhnev years. Their behaviours can be conceptualised along a spectrum, where dissidents represented only the tiny proportion of the most radical politicised *semidesiatniki*. The middle ground was occupied by politically active intellectuals, who undertook such actions as joining the party in order to reverse the country’s decline from inside the system. Though the majority were located at the spectrum’s far end and confined themselves to critical discussions among trusted friends.

The Young Socialists, who were more readily visible to the historian’s eye due to the well-publicised nature of their dissident case, represent the tip of the iceberg of politicised *semidesiatniki*, whose less radical members remain a semi-submerged tendency in the cultural history of the Brezhnev era. These intellectuals were sympathisers of dissent, yet had been unwilling to engage in illegal activity that would have derailed often promising careers in academic fields during the Brezhnev years, and most were unlikely to have even contemplated it.¹⁷ Beyond the Young Socialists, other politicised *semidesiatniki* appear in my first chapter as activists in the MGU student collective, the Creative Workshop of Experimental Propaganda (TMEFP) and in my final chapter as the first wave of street-level political activists during Perestroika.

Where else have these critical intellectuals appeared in recent scholarship on the Brezhnev years? Donald Raleigh’s oral history account of the classes of 1967 from privileged magnet schools in Moscow and Saratov overlaps with my account as

¹⁷ Carole Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva: Politicheskie kluby i Perestroika v Rossii* (Opposition without Dissidence: Political clubs and Perestroika in Russia.) (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014), 57, 59-60.

a study of well-educated and critically thinking intellectuals, though only a few of his baby boomers would have seen themselves as politicised *semidesiatniki*. But the oral history evidence in Raleigh's study also gives substance to the broader argument that I am making: there was more political engagement within the last Soviet generation than has been established by the existing literature.¹⁸ Alexei Yurchak's field-shaping study of the last Soviet generation, which presented a *semidesiatnik* who was neither oppositional, nor conformist, but simply disinterested in politics was a timely intervention that challenged earlier liberal assumptions. Yet one of its effects was to push the politically engaged subsection of the last Soviet generation to the edges of scholarly inquiry. Some of the differences in interpretation on the degree of politicisation in this generation may be put down to variations occurring across the age cohort. Yurchak's focus was on the younger end of the *semidesiatniki* generation, which was identified by Russian political scientists as being more likely to have a cynical attitude toward socialist ideology. By contrast, Raleigh's subjects and my own are both located at the older end of the cohort, whose worldviews frequently carried some of the political hues of the *shestidesiatniki*.¹⁹ With this study I therefore aim to add more nuance to the field's understandings of the *semidesiatniki* generation and its range of identities, to create a picture that is able to represent the diversity of experiences across the age cohort.

The *semidesiatnik* has featured prominently in the growing historiography on consumption under late socialism. Recurring themes in this literature have been the post-war generation's fascination with material goods and its rising consumer expectations.²⁰ Scholars contrasted the experience of earlier generations, whose memory of the war determined their higher tolerance for the everyday difficulties posed by the shortage economy.²¹ This generation gap was observed by visitors to

¹⁸ For example, the Saratovite baby boomers referred to political kitchen talks over vodka. Donald Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: A history of Russia's Cold War generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 246.

¹⁹ Vladimir Gel'man, Otar Marganiia and Dmitrii Travin. *Reexamining Economic and Political Reforms in Russia, 1985-2000: Generation, Ideas and Changes* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 22.

²⁰ Natalia Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era* (London: Routledge, 2013), 103.

²¹ John Bushnell, "The New Soviet Man Turns Pessimist," in *The Soviet Union since Stalin*, eds. Stephen F. Cohen, Alexander Rabinowitch and Robert Sharlet (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 188.

the Soviet Union in the 1970s, who viewed Soviet youth's growing material desires as an expression of declining revolutionary idealism.²² The clamour for Western consumer products initially fell into this narrative, though in recent years, scholars have fit these desires into the wider discursive construct of the imaginary West.²³ According to Yurchak, the consumption of foreign films, literature, music and other cultural products in this largely closed society fostered particular imaginings of the outside world, which created a version of the West that existed only in the Soviet mind.²⁴ The allure of the popular culture of the West that led to its absorption and transformation within late Soviet youth culture has been a major focus in recent scholarship on late socialism.²⁵ In my thesis, I map some new imaginary geographies of late socialism beyond the West and into the second and third worlds. In doing so, I explore how influences that came from the outside world not only played a role in fostering alternative cultural identities, but could also be tied to discourses of internationalism that inspired or reinforced political identities among the last Soviet generation.

This study offers a particular window onto the privileged forms of consumption that occurred among elite youth, with dissenting discussions in Moscow apartments occurring over whiskey, cognac and American cigarettes. An unnamed visitor to a social occasion at Andrei Fadin's apartment in the early-1980s recounted its memorable fittings: "We examined Scandinavian souvenirs, which were dotted around his flat: some little toy skier figurines, *trubochki*, floor mats and other things – Andrei's father was a consultant to the Central Committee on Norwegian matters, so it all came from abroad."²⁶ Mainly from elite families of the

²² Georgie Ann Geyer, *The Young Russians* (Illinois: ETC Publications, 1975), 45-46.

²³ Alexandra Oberländer, "Beam Me Up/Out/Elsewhere, Tovarishch: Negotiating the Everyday in Late Socialism." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19(2) (2018), 434.

²⁴ See: Yurchak, "Imaginary West: The Elsewhere of Late Socialism," *Everything Was Forever*, 158-206.

²⁵ On the role of the imagined West for this generation, refer to: Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 155-161; Sergei I. Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, identity and ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk, 1960-1985* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2010).

²⁶ AS. 4692. A. Koropkin (pseudonym), "Stat'ia 'Repressii protiv russkikh sotsialistov,' v chastnosti protiv Andreia Fadina, Moscow," (Article, "Repression against the Russian Socialists," in particular Andrei Fadin.). Open Society Archives (OSA), f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 880, folder, *Levyi povorot/Varianty*.

party nomenklatura and the intelligentsia, the Young Socialists' privileged status was manifested not only through material surroundings and the presence of hard-to-find consumer products, but in their access to the cultural and intellectual resources of late Soviet society.



An evening in Andrei Fadin's apartment on Kutuzovskii in early-1984. This was a year after the criminal proceedings against the Young Socialists had ended and most were facing employment difficulties. Left to right (members of the Young Socialists have an *): Natalia Bandura, Sergei Karpiuk*, Mikhail Vediushkin*, Vera Pimonenko, Irina Korshenbaum, Aleksandr Balashov, Olga Ivanova*, Andrei Fadin*, Igor Pimonenko (Facebook).

Their elite origins assisted in paving the way to MGU, where they were able to cultivate networks that took them further into the upper echelons of the political-intellectual establishment to discover even richer intellectual resources. The regularity of oppositional attitudes among the so-called "golden youth" who actually held political opinions (most were not interested in politics) found its way into literary representations of the period. In the novel set in Moscow in the 1970s, *Illegible*, by Sergei Gandlevskii, a contemporary of the Young Socialists, who studied at MGU in the same years, the narrator recreated the flavour of golden youth: "In the well brought up scion of a distinguished Soviet clan there coexisted— without strain and, one might say, tastefully—seditious opinions and big talk along with a slackly complaisant attitude to the dacha in the exclusive settlement [and other

privileges].”²⁷ In this research, I examine in detail how these elite conditions were able to foster oppositional attitudes and even, in the particular case of the Young Socialists, acted as some of the key ingredients for the perfect storm of dissent.

The Reformist Subject.

This thesis not only explores forms of political engagement in the last Soviet generation, but also seeks to advance understanding of reformist cultures in the political-intellectual establishment. One of the consequences of Western scholars’ search for traces of liberal subjectivities in the Soviet Union was that it obscured the emergence of what could analogously be termed the reformist subject in the post-Stalin years.²⁸ According to Anna Krylova, the Soviet subject was varyingly understood to be uncritically believing, engaging in forms of liberal resistance, or acting in pursuit of cynical self-interest. These categories left no room for the critical believer that had consciously rejected liberal values – the reformist subject.

This had particular consequences for the study of Soviet dissent during the Cold War, when the dissidents were frequently cast by scholars and other commentators “as surrogate soldiers of Western liberalism” locked in a battle against the repressive state.²⁹ This narrative of a lone band of heroes in an otherwise conformist society locked scholars out from analytically tying dissent to the late Soviet social and cultural context from which it developed. In recent years, efforts have been made to re-write this history using approaches that grounded dissent within late-Soviet culture and identity and linked elements of the movement’s practices to value systems that were promoted by the state.³⁰

This study broadly conceptualises the Soviet dissident movement as an extra-systemic movement for reform, while at the same time recognising it as a broad

²⁷ Sergei Gandlevskii, *Illegible: A novel*, trans. Susanne Fusso (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2019), 7.

²⁸ Anna Krylova, “The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1(1) (2000), 120.

²⁹ Benjamin Nathans, “The Dictatorship of Reason: Aleksandr Vol’pin and the idea of rights under ‘developed socialism,’” *Slavic Review* 66(4) (2007), 632-633.

³⁰ Barbara Walker, “Pollution and Purification in the Soviet Human Rights Networks of the 1960s and 1970s,” *Slavic Review* 68(2) (2009), 379-390.

church and one whose views changed over time.³¹ This interpretation places weight on the movement's origins in the impulses for reformist change that were wrought by the Twentieth Party Congress, whose revelations propelled the anti-Stalinist political and literary transformations of the Thaw. In this charged climate, the limited public sphere for civic discussion of de-Stalinisation gave rise to the politically and culturally focused conversations that forged the archetypal reformist subject, the *shestidesiatnik*.³² In the 1960s, viewing the future with optimism, this young Soviet intellectual believed in the superiority of the original "ideal project" of Marxism-Leninism and its promise for a humanist socialism freed from Stalinist deformations.³³

At the end of the Thaw, the loudest voices for reform crossed over into dissent. The stem of this generation that later formed the most visible wing of the dissident movement, the *pravozashchitniki* (rights defenders) had mostly abandoned socialist hopes by the 1970s.³⁴ Scholars have rightly noted that a major trend among these activists was disillusionment at the prospects for reform coming from inside the system – an observation that was substantiated by increasing numbers of the movement going into emigration in the 1970s.³⁵ By contrast, my reading of the dissident movement from the perspective of the lesser known period of the late-1970s and early-1980s, when many of its prominent voices were involved in a renewed search for tactics to generate change, suggests that a number of its

³¹ In fact, it was such a broad church that this thesis is unable to deal in detail with religious or Russian nationalist forms of dissent and these trends are not incorporated into its broader arguments.

³² Roger D. Markwick, "Thaws and Freezes in Soviet Historiography, 1953-1964," in *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinisation: A Social and Cultural History of Reform in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Polly Jones (New York: Routledge, 2006), 179.

³³ Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Soviet Intellectuals and Political Power: The Post-Stalin Era* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1990), 150-151.

³⁴ Benjamin Nathans, "The Disenchantment of Socialism: Soviet dissidents, human rights, and the new global morality," in *The Breakthrough: Human rights in the 1970s*, eds. Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, first ed. 2014), 45-46.

³⁵ Silvio Pons and Michele Di Donato, "Reform Communism," in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, Vol. 3: End Games, eds. Jüliane Furst, Silvio Pons and Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 186.

activists continued to believe in the need for political and economic reforms, even in conditions of diminished hopes for its emergence.³⁶

Interpreting the dissident movement through this broadly reformist lens draws it into my focus on the search that occurred in the intellectual elite for paths to reform in the late Brezhnev era. Placing the dissident movement on a continuum with those *shestidesiatniki* who were part of the academic and party elite, I explore how shared generational experience structured their particular reformist responses to Soviet decline in the under-examined years before Perestroika.³⁷ Moreover, I argue that reformist attitudes were not restricted to *shestidesiatniki* actors. Conservatives forces' opposition to the country's deteriorating position brought them into action during the struggle for the post-Brezhnev leadership succession, a process of elite in-fighting that was a dominating factor in the political landscape at the beginning of the 1980s.³⁸

While the presence of reformist subjectivities in the Soviet dissident movement was camouflaged by scholars' liberal expectations, the contours of the late-Brezhnev era intellectual-political establishment remained opaque to most Western outsiders.³⁹ In a 1981 review essay, R.V. Daniels remarked, "Little is really known, unfortunately, about the inclinations of the middle-aged individuals who are likely to emerge from the party apparatus when the day of the succession arrives."⁴⁰

³⁶ Dissidents' appeals for reform occurred across the 1970s, see, for example, from the beginning of the decade, Andrei Sakharov, Roy Medvedev and Valentin Turchin, "Reformist Program for Democratisation," March 1970, in *An End to Silence: Uncensored Opinion in the Soviet Union from Roy Medvedev's Underground Magazine Political Diary*, ed. Stephen F. Cohen (New York: Norton, 1982), 317-327, and at the decade's end: Charles C. Allen, "A Survey of Economic Samizdat," (12 September 1979), OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 879, folder, Samizdat 1977-1987.

³⁷ These cohorts were previously linked by Philip Boobbyer, who argued that a broadly shared politics of morality developed among both over the post-Stalin decades, see Philip Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

³⁸ Dina Fainberg and Artemy Kalinovskii, "Stagnation and its Discontents: The creation of a political and historical paradigm," in *Reconsidering Stagnation in the Brezhnev Era: Ideology and Exchange*, eds. Dina Fainberg and Artemy Kalinovskii (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016), x.

³⁹ Mark Sandle, "A Triumph of Ideological Hairdressing? Intellectual Life in the Brezhnev Era Reconsidered," in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, eds. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle (Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 136.

⁴⁰ Robert V. Daniels, "Political Change in the USSR: Moving the Immovable," *Problems of Communism* 30(6) (1981), 49-50.

An influential exception was the leading revisionist, Stephen F. Cohen, who in 1979 conceptualised Soviet history as a pendulum swinging between the competing influences of reformism and conservatism.⁴¹ From the depths of stagnation, Cohen argued for an inevitable swing back to reformism, a view that was influenced by conversations on his research trips to the Soviet Union.⁴²



Stephen F. Cohen (sitting) signing a recently translated Russian copy of *Bukharin* at an evening in memory of the victims of political repression at MGIMO, 1988. Former TMEFP activist and MGU historical faculty student, Aleksei Bogantsev (left, bearded) presents his copy for signing. *Bukharin* was read in samizdat form by the wider circle of the Young Socialists already during their years of dissent (Facebook).

In the late-1980s, the original reformist subject, the young Soviet intellectual of the Thaw appeared at the forefront of Soviet history, as an elite party reformer now in their fifties to reinvigorate the Soviet Union with the ideas that had inspired their youth.⁴³ Perestroika revealed the scope of reformist sentiments inside the establishment, just as the end of the Cold War gave scholars access to interviews and

⁴¹ Stephen F. Cohen, "Friends and Foes of Change: Reformism and Conservatism in the Soviet Union," *Slavic Review* 38(2) (1979), 187-202.

⁴² David C. Engerman, *Know Your Enemy: The Rise and Fall of America's Soviet Experts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,), 291.

⁴³ A more thorough treatment of the cultural roots of Gorbachev's reformers can be found in Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*.

memoirs that created renewed possibilities for understanding the reformist subject and their impact on Soviet history.⁴⁴ Probing for the sources of Perestroika, Archie Brown identified the networks of party intellectuals that formed in the Prague based journal *Problemy sotsializma i mira* and Moscow's international relations institutes, who steadily rose through the system in the Brezhnev years, as the foundations of support for Gorbachev's reforms.⁴⁵ In a more detailed study, Robert D. English traced the wider range of influences that were mobilised by the *shestidesiatniki* reformers in the construction of "new thinking," framing its liberalising and integrationist currents within a narrative of Westernising tendencies.⁴⁶ At a greater distance from the collapse of communism, Silvio Pons recently argued that Gorbachev's reformers were inspired by a much more complex heritage than English's essential focus on the democratic West was able to capture. Pons considered Gorbachev's reform socialist thinking to be influenced not only by the reforms of the Prague Spring and Eurocommunism, but also more tangential ideas from the 1970s and early-1980s connected to perspectives of reform, human rights and "third ways," which serves as the baseline for my own understanding of reform socialism in this thesis.⁴⁷

Between Reform and Dissent.

As an investigation into cultures of reform within the intellectual elite, this study shifts focus from the well-established case of Gorbachev's team to examine pockets at its lower levels that blended the activities of academic research with dissenting views. Rather than reading the later triumph of reform back into the late-Brezhnev era, I characterise these years as a time of desperation for would-be reformist actors, who as I will show, were exceptional rather than typical in an environment that was marked by wider disillusionment. One of these active

⁴⁴ See, for example, Stephen F. Cohen and Katrina Vanden Heuvel, *Voices of Glasnost: Interviews with Gorbachev's reformers* (London: Norton, 1989).

⁴⁵ Archie Brown, Chapter Six: "Institutional Amphibiousness or Civil Society? The Origins and Development of Perestroika," in *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 157-190.

⁴⁶ Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, intellectuals, and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 80, 142.

⁴⁷ Silvio Pons, "Gorbachev and the End of International Communism," in *Perestroika and the Party: National and Transnational Perspectives on European Communist Parties in the Era of Soviet Reform*, ed. Francesco Di Palma (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019), 324.

reformist clusters was the Young Socialists, whose dissent ignited an investigation in 1982 at the circle's leaders' place of work, IMEMO, that resulted in the reprimands and dismissals of a number of its researchers.

With the story of the Young Socialists at its centre, the main focus of my dissertation builds from the following research question: how did dissent interact with reformist cultures to produce a second generation socialist dissident circle in Moscow at the end of the Brezhnev era? This question is timely because until recently, the historiography of Soviet dissent implicitly portrayed dissidents as outsiders – isolated from wider Soviet society at least as much as from the institutions of the state. This study of a dissident affair at one of Moscow's premier foreign policy institutes is intended to further scholarly agendas of breaking down the boundaries that separated unofficial and official cultures in the study of late socialism.⁴⁸ In particular, it is guided by the premise that dissident intellectuals' oppositional activities were not a "double life" separated from their academic careers (or "official" lives) but these were indivisible and intertwined.

Re-positioning focus from the senior levels of the political-intellectual establishment to its junior elements allows us to ask new questions of these institutions to understand the range of reformist perspectives that they sheltered, up to and including dissent. The research institutes that provided foreign policy analyses to the Soviet leadership operated in conditions of relative freedom due to the need for reliable forecasting unaffected by heavy handed ideological controls.⁴⁹ During the late Brezhnev years, researchers' access to foreign scholarly journals and international media publications, holdings of specialist Western literature, and white TASS reportage presented a more precise picture of foreign and domestic events than was available to the average Soviet citizen.⁵⁰ Here, my focus shifts from the more general dynamics of the political engagement that occurred in the last Soviet generation to the specificity of dissent. What effect did access to restricted information have on the development of the Young Socialists' dissenting worldviews and how did it factor into the processes involved in their samizdat production and other practical tasks?

⁴⁸ Yurchak, *Everything was Forever, until it was No More*, 4-5.

⁴⁹ Petr Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," *Russian Politics and Law* 43(2) (2005), 32.

⁵⁰ English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 151.

On the list of illegal literature confiscated by the KGB in a search of Young Socialist Iurii Khavkin's apartment at the time of his arrest, Academy of Science publications on contemporary Western European politics and societies marked "for restricted/internal use" were recorded in between samizdat entries.⁵¹ This document prompts questions of how these types of texts that were based on different forms of knowledge production related to each other in the construction of the young dissidents' worldviews. Researchers' analyses that were produced and circulated at IMEMO were informed by Marxist-Leninist methodology, which its scholars wielded in policy debates as they carved out different positions for explaining the dynamics that were at work in global developments. How did the Young Socialists' academic training and participation in these debates intersect with and inform their samizdat explorations? How did they apply the analytical thinking and models that they used to interpret their foreign specialisations – Southern and Western Europe, Latin America and the Third World – to their samizdat project of reform for the Soviet Union?

The Young Socialists' dissident conspiracy reached across different departments and levels of seniority at IMEMO. The hierarchical structure of Soviet research institutes brought different generations together under one roof where relationships could develop among junior and senior researchers. This circumstance facilitated the transmission of lived experience from researchers of the *shestidesiatniki* generation to the younger dissidents. Similar connections also formed between members of the Young Socialists and socialist intellectuals who were part of the first generation of Soviet dissent, who invited the younger dissidents into their apartments for intellectual exchanges. My research takes this transmission of lived experience as one of the most critical factors for explaining the transfer of socialist dissent into the next generation. These *shestidesiatniki* intellectuals' living memories of Soviet socialism's earlier decades of promise and vitality provided crucial emotional sustenance for these younger dissidents in the unappealing environment of stagnation. Their role as carriers of reform socialist and internationalist ideas was critical at a time when these ideas had fallen out of fashion among wider society.

⁵¹ "Protocol Obyska," (KGB Search Protocol.), 6 April 1982, 5. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 103, Iurii Leonidovich Khavkin.

This research probes how this transmitted experience was received by the Young Socialists and was transformed in their own thinking and practices of socialist dissent. In doing so, I consider what set them apart not only from the ideas that some of their *shestidesiatniki* mentors espoused as socialist dissidents during the Thaw, but also the perceptions that those former dissidents held in the late Brezhnev years, when they were middle aged intellectuals. Should the Young Socialists' dissent be taken as a revival two decades later of ideas that emerged from the Thaw, or, as the author of the *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* letter claimed, was their dissent a fundamental renovation of these ideas? In order to answer this question, I point to a revealing element of the Young Socialists' relationships with intellectuals from the first generation of Soviet dissent, which was the role that foreign language expertise played in their interactions, as the younger dissidents assisted the older historians' reading of foreign literature. I look at the ways that détente brought the outside world closer for this younger generation and how this impacted the Young Socialists' dissent by extending their reach to a far richer collection of foreign ideological influences than previous Soviet generations could access.

In accounting for the differences in socialist dissent across the two generations, I also consider the importance of other transformations that occurred in the outside world. The de-Stalinisation processes that were in their infancy among the international Left at the time of the first generation's socialist dissent had matured over the two decades to produce an international communist movement and other newly created leftist organisations that were much more critical of the Soviet Union, whose outlook contained some similarities with socialist dissent. I explore the Young Socialists' reception of the international Left of the 1970s and 1980s, paying particular attention to trends that they derived inspiration from, which influenced the dissidents' construction of their own political identities. I reconstruct their wider understanding of the international environment at the end of détente to illuminate how they perceived the existence of an international reformist Left that was loosely linked in an internationalism that was inclusive of Eastern Bloc dissent. While emphasising the novelty of the Young Socialists' internationalised perspectives relative to earlier generations of socialist dissent, my account at the same time considers the limits to their understandings, including misperceptions, which were influenced by the dissident circle being located in a closed society.

Methodology and Sources.

At the heart of this research is the aim of reconstructing the worldviews and cultural practices of a socialist dissident circle and the Soviet and transnational forces that shaped it during the late Brezhnev era. With these research objectives, I continue down the path embarked on by other historians over the past decade and a half, who have set out to contextualise dissent within the broader social and cultural history of late socialism. In using a microhistorical approach, I seize on Miriam Dobson's recent observation of the potential of this method for engaging in a productive dialogue with Alexei Yurchak's conceptualisations of late socialism, while both challenging and building on existing understandings of the last Soviet generation.⁵²

The Thaw era socialist dissident leader, Valerii Ronkin noted that what the authorities had described in his interrogations as "our underground anti-Soviet organisation" was in fact "if we speak in normal, everyday language, a friendly *kompaniia* connected by generally shared views, mutual trust and sympathy."⁵³ Ronkin's affective terminology points to a way of understanding dissidents beyond their earlier starring roles in outdated Cold War narratives, to relate their experiences to newer scholarship on late socialism that devotes attention to everyday life. This approach was pioneered by Jonathan Bolton in his recent work on Czechoslovak dissent, which my own study draws inspiration from. Bolton called for a more complete picture of dissidents' lives that went beyond entanglements with state security to consider their everyday experiences. He stated:

I will try to reawaken a sense of dissent, not just as a political stance or political theory, but also as a *world*, a form of experience and behaviour. Dissent was a philosophy, but it was also a common set of situations and experiences closely tied to daily life – experiences that had little to do with politics, theory or Western reception.⁵⁴

⁵² Miriam Dobson, "The Post-Stalin Era: De-Stalinisation, daily life and dissent," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12(4) (2011), 921.

⁵³ Valerii Ronkin, "Kolokol," in *Samizdat: po materialam konferentsii "30 let nezavisimoi pečati 1950-1980 gody, St Petersburg, 25-27 April 1992* (St Petersburg: NITs Memorial, 1993), 64.

⁵⁴ Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe and Czech culture under communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 13.

One of the chief questions Bolton asks, which resonates within my own research, is what was the lived experience of dissent? What comes through most clearly in my thesis is that the bonds of friendship were critical to the circle's formation and its operations. Additionally, as we shall see, within the lives of dissidents of the last Soviet generation, the political existed alongside popular culture. The KGB listed not only illegal literature, but also several cassettes of Vladimir Vysotskii during their search of Khavkin's apartment.⁵⁵ In the 1980s, after their dissident affair had concluded, former Young Socialist Aleksei Sobchenko examined photographs from a recent trip to Mexico made by two other members of the circle. While looking at a photo of them standing in front of Leon Trotsky's grave, the fashion conscious dissident was most struck by the reappearance of "the easily recognisable red jacket that Volodia wore way back in 1975."⁵⁶ Moreover, dissent existed alongside dating and other everyday experiences. The unnamed visitor to a social occasion at Andrei Fadin's flat in the early-1980s remembered not only the Spanish fluency that the young dissident displayed in conversation with a Mexican guest, but also made note of Fadin's legendary "success with women."⁵⁷

Oral history and memoirs are indispensable for undertaking a project such as this. The affair of the Young Socialists is sufficiently well-known in recent Russian history that a number of interviews of the circle's members already existed online and in archives that collect materials on dissent. I carried out my own oral history interviews in Moscow in late-2016. My questions aimed at uncovering more details of some episodes that the Young Socialists had already discussed in existing interviews, as well as asking new questions that had been unaddressed. I attempted to explore how the Young Socialists' dissenting views developed under the influences of family, friends, university studies, research institute environments, and wider society. I was also interested in discovering how the dissident circle and its samizdat production practically functioned and existed as an element of the Young Socialists' everyday lives. Other questions attempted to reconstruct interviewees' attitudes to foreign socialist movements, their experiences of arrest and their later

⁵⁵ "Protocol Obyska," 5.

⁵⁶ Aleksei Sobchenko, "Vzgliad s drugoi storony okean," (View from the Other Side of the Ocean.) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (Twice a Dissident: Collection of Memories of Vladimir Pribylovskii.) (St Petersburg: Zvezda, 2017), 103.

⁵⁷ AS. 4692. Koropkin (pseudonym), "Stat'ia 'Repressii protiv russkikh sotsialistov,'" 2.

lives during Perestroika. My interview method was semi-structured. I compiled a list of topics and questions in advance, but allowed room for interviewees to shape their own narratives as far as possible, which yielded some unexpected discoveries.⁵⁸ These initial interviews were usually one or two meetings that each took two hours, which occurred in university buildings, research institutes, trade union offices and private apartments. Numerous informal meetings in Moscow and email follow ups occurred over 2017 to 2020 in order to expand or clarify details when my writing up was underway.

I made contact with members of both the inner and outer circle of the Young Socialists, though there are critical absences. This includes two members of the inner circle, Iurii Khavkin and Vladimir Chernetskii, who authored the social democratic text *The Movement is Everything* that was featured across two issues of the Young Socialists' theoretical samizdat journal, *Varianty*.⁵⁹ Due to Khavkin's death in 2000 and Chernetskii's disinterest, their voices are only present in the thesis through other interviewees' recollections or archival sources. They were known to the rest of the circle only through conspiratorial connections and had their own network of contacts that made up another outer circle, which unfortunately has been lost to my research.

I interviewed both living leaders of the Young Socialists, Pavel Kudiukin and Boris Kagarlitskii, while Andrei Fadin's widow, Olga Fadina provided crucial information on his dissident activities and her own. I interviewed most of the Young Socialists (five out of seven) from the section of the outer circle that studied in the Faculty of History at MGU during 1971-1976 and frequented the dorm room 242, whose testimonies are the source of my first chapter. This first chapter also includes oral history testimonies from twelve former TMEFP activists. I also interviewed Nikolai Ivanov and Aleksei Sobchenko, who were sources for the circle's transnational connections, whose stories feature across the three final chapters. The rest of the outer circle and the final member of the inner circle, Mikhail Rivkin, appear in the thesis as a result of their production of memoir texts, or appear through

⁵⁸ In my approach, I drew inspiration from the interviewing format that was used in the recent oral history project dedicated to chronicling the experiences of 1968-ers across Europe, see Robert Gildea and James Mark, "Introduction," in *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt*, eds. Robert Gildea, James Mark and Anette Warring (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-20.

⁵⁹ Interview with Olga Fadina and Pavel Kudiukin, 9 July 2019.

the eyes of other interviewees. Some former Young Socialists, such as Rivkin, produced an abundance of memoir texts about their dissident activities, while others did not write any, which largely accounts for the different degrees of attention afforded to different actors in the thesis. Viacheslav Igrunov's oral history project that recorded the experiences of dissidents and *neformaly* activists in the 2000s and Vladimir Pribylovskii's memorial publication, which chronicled some of the experiences of the outer circle that studied in the Faculty of History at MGU from 1976-1981, were especially important sources for understanding the lived experience of dissent.⁶⁰

Oral history and memoir texts pose treacherous ground for the historian, especially when attempting to cross the fundamental break opened up by the Soviet and post-Soviet divide. As Polly Jones noted in a recent discussion, oral history, particularly in the post-Soviet context, inevitably constitutes narrative that is primarily shaped by hindsight.⁶¹ For this reason, I share Donald Raleigh's perspective that oral history should be used as an interviewee's "interpretation" of their own life from the standpoint of the present, rather than a factual account of the past.⁶² This understanding allows the historian to draw on these sources to answer questions related to subjectivity – questions that are at the heart of this thesis and its aim of exploring political identities among the last Soviet generation.⁶³ In particular, I have used oral history and memoir texts to access details of everyday experience, which in the absence of diaries, only these types of sources are able to uncover. While using this evidence to construct my own historical narrative, I have

⁶⁰ See "Ustnaia istoriia," (Oral History.): http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remem/ and Anatolii Kopeikin and Leonid Romankov (eds.), *Dvazhdy Dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (SPb. : Zvezda, 2017).

⁶¹ This blog post is part of a larger discussion held by late Soviet specialists on Donald Raleigh's *Soviet Baby Boomers*, which helped to inform my thinking on questions of generation and oral history. See Polly Jones, "Soviet Baby Boomers – some thoughts on oral history and memory," *Russian History Blog* (December 2012): <http://russianhistoryblog.org/2012/12/some-thoughts-on-oral-history-and-memory/>.

⁶² Donald Raleigh, "Soviet Baby Boomers – my differences with Sergei Zhuk on the methodology of oral history," *Russian History Blog* (December 2012): <http://russianhistoryblog.org/2012/12/soviet-baby-boomers-my-differences-with-sergei-zhuk-on-the-methodology-of-oral-history/>.

⁶³ Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), 50.

tried to retain a healthy skepticism, in particular towards some subjects' tendencies to exaggerate the impact of the circle's dissident activities and individuals' ascribing of views that were developed in the later post-Soviet context to earlier actions. Wherever possible, I compared interviewee's accounts with testimonies from other participants in the circle or archival documents.

One of the reasons this thesis is a cultural history rather than an intellectual history is because of the critical absence of the Young Socialists' theoretical samizdat journal, *Varianty* in this research. Intended for small scale circulation only among the circle itself, copies of this journal did not survive to find a place in publicly accessible archives, nor did the former dissidents retain their copies after 1982. This is why the ideological explorations that the *Problemy vostochnoi evropy* letter outlined are not subjected to close analysis. Instead, in order to reconstruct the Young Socialists' intellectual worldviews, I rely on an interview from the summer of 1981 that three of the Young Socialists using the pen name "the editors of *Varianty*" gave to *L'Alternative*, a French publication oriented towards a third way between capitalism and socialism.⁶⁴ The authors, Fadin, Kudiukin and Khavkin, declared their answers to represent a synthesis of *Varianty*'s contributors' views, which they described to *L'Alternative* as ranging from socialist to Eurocommunist and social democratic.⁶⁵ I also use the Young Socialists' popular propaganda samizdat journal, *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* sparingly, in order to sketch the general outlines of the Young Socialists' attitudes and to give a taste of their ideological influences. It is not used more comprehensively due its considerable shortcomings as a source. This publication was dominated by one member of the circle, Kagarlitskii, which privileges his views in this analysis at the expense of the representativeness of the entire circle. The journal contained simplified and propagandised renditions of the Young Socialists' ideas and discussions that Kagarlitskii published with the intention of generating enthusiasm for socialist renewal among a broader public.

⁶⁴ The original article was "L'Almanach 'Variantes,' Une interview de membres de la redaction," (The Almanac *Varianty*, An interview with the editorial staff.) *L'Alternative* (15) (April-May 1982), 7-12. The French-language interview was translated into Russian by Radio Free Europe and published as part of AS 4619 in their *arkhiv samizdata* collection (OSA f. 300, s.f. 85, c. 9 Published Samizdat, box 111, AS 4619) which is the text I have translated into English and relied on in this thesis.

⁶⁵ In a 1994 interview, Fadin stated that the material in the Young Socialists' interview with *L'Alternative* was representative of the general dialogue in *Varianty*. "Andrei Fadin (Samizdat)," Interview by Julia Kalinina on behalf of Metta Spencer, 1994: <http://russianpeaceanddemocracy.com/andrei-fadin-1994/>.

This thesis draws on research from multiple archives across seven different countries. As is suggested by the consultation of such a large number of archives, my sources were at the same time scattered across several collections and thinner on the ground than I had hoped for. Unlike the *pravozashchitniki*, the Young Socialists were not interested in publicising their ideas in the West beyond a select leftist audience, nor was *Varianty* intended to circulate widely in the dissident community. For these reasons, comparatively few of the Young Socialists' documents found their way to the traditional repositories of dissent, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa, Open Society Archives or Memorial. The politicised nature of my topic meant that critical documents were off limits in the Russian state archives. The records of MGU's Faculty of History Komsomol meetings during the dates of Igor Dolutskii's expulsion and MGU party committee documents at the time of the closure of TMEFP were sealed. The Young Socialists' KGB files were also inaccessible to me. Under the influence of the Young Socialists' "legend" that the Eurocommunist parties intervened in their case, I visited the archives of the French and Italian communist party archives and searched for critical sources that I could not find.

So, what *did* I find? The archives held some of the Young Socialists' samizdat texts, which I have pushed to the forefront of my research in order to tether my oral history sources as closely as possible to primary documentation. I introduce the state's perspective with documentation of the Politburo's discussion of the case and the chief investigator's report in a KGB training journal, which addresses the investigative methods that were followed in the Young Socialists' case as a model for future operations.⁶⁶ The Open Society Archives in particular contained useful contextualising sources for the international environment of late stagnation and Perestroika, while St Petersburg Memorial contained archival material for the other socialist dissident circles under examination in this thesis. Finally, my last chapter on Perestroika is an altogether different story, where the transformed political environment equally revolutionised the degree of archival documentation available. This allowed me to base the dissertation's concluding arc not only on oral history and material from repositories of dissent, but also the Moscow party archives and material on independent political movements collected by Western researchers at SSEES during Perestroika.

⁶⁶ My thanks to Pavel Kudiukin for alerting me to this source.

Conclusion and Thesis Overview.

Why did a second generation of socialist dissent appear after 1968? This thesis attempts to answer this question by examining the most consequential case to emerge in the Brezhnev years. The Young Socialists were the largest second generation socialist dissident circle, whose activities occurred over five years – an extremely long time in circumstances where underground circles were typically detected by the KGB after only a few months. They were also the most closely connected to power. In order to understand why they engaged in dissent, I explore not only the causes for alienation that existed among elite youth in late Soviet society, but also the sources that inspired critical-minded socialist beliefs. I examine the future dissidents' formative influences of their families and upbringings through introducing these details as the members of the circle successively enter the thesis, which lends elements of prosopography to this study.

As these individuals entered university, what forms of political engagement were available to them? At MGU in the 1970s, there were students who were drawn to human rights, nationalism and other ideologies – socialism was one of many currents. As a result, one of the key questions of this research is why the *socialism* of socialist dissent persisted into the next generation. This thesis sees the Soviet Union in the early-1970s as an essentially stable political landscape. This was in contrast to the earlier decades of the Thaw, when socialism's direction had been contested under the dynamic of de-Stalinisation. The Young Socialists entered their university years when the dust had already settled on these conflicts. The choices made by the *shestidesiatniki* had created the lasting social formations of the dissident movement and the reformist currents inside the party. In this sense, the Young Socialists entered a pre-formulated reality where the major possible forms of political action had already been established. As we shall see, their attempts to “reform the Komsomol” while they were at university echoed actions that had already been taken by the *shestidesiatniki* during the Thaw.

The early years of Soviet decline coincided with the prominence of Third World revolutionary movements. One of the distinguishing features of the second generation of socialist dissent was its attraction to foreign socialist movements, due to Soviet socialism's apparent lack of dynamism. In particular, this thesis examines the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973 as an event that united politicised

semidesiatniki at MGU. In analysing the concentration of student political engagement around foreign political events, I draw on Yurchak's concept of the "imaginary elsewhere" to suggest that for politicised *semidesiatniki*, the Second and Third Worlds existed similarly to the imaginary West – as locations that were fused to Soviet reality and could act as sources for the construction of identities.

I view the Young Socialists' decision to participate in socialist dissent as a hybrid of the earlier generation's choices, that overlapped with both, though fully aligned with neither. The Young Socialists drew inspiration from the reformist cultures of the *shestidesiatniki*. This included the older generation's commitment to an anti-Stalinist socialism, its critical cultivation of knowledge, its Soviet patriotism and internationalist values and the reformist literature that this generation had produced.⁶⁷ At the same time, the Young Socialists displayed a highly critical attitude to the authorities and drew upon the clandestine methods of communication that the first generation of the dissident movement had already put into practice. In accounting for the Young Socialists' particular choices, I also ask why they believed that their reformist views necessitated action and that they were best suited people to carry out this action. For the answers to these questions, I examine the circle's elite social origins.

During the course of their political and intellectual development, the Young Socialists' perspectives transformed from the revolutionary romanticism of their student years to the more mature reformist perspectives of their years of dissent. I account for this transformation by pointing to the increased scale of resources that were available to them as graduate students at IMEMO and the natural de-escalation of youthful radicalism that occurs as individuals realise the complexity of the world around them. As the Young Socialists' worldviews were refined under the impact of scientific training and access to restricted information, my own methodological approach shifts from an emphasis on imaginary geographies to the study of transnational intellectual entanglements. The Young Socialists' turn from revolutionary romanticism to reformism was also accompanied by a shift in the

⁶⁷ For example, Kagarlitskii and Kudiukin recommended the readers of their samizdat journal to familiarise themselves with well-known economists' articles of the 1960s, including Gennadii Lisichkin's "Plan and Market." Kagarlitskii and Kudiukin, "Soobshcheniia: informatsiia, spravki, rekommandatsii," (Communications: information, notes, recommendations.) *Levyi povorot* (1) (Summer 1979), 15. FSO-01-078 Fond of Viktor Sokirko, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa Archiv.

regional focus of their dissident explorations from Latin America to Europe. This was a product of changing priorities from the internationalist admirations of their student years to the focused search in *Varianty* for ideological models that could apply to the Soviet Union. During Perestroika, this agenda was further transformed as the former dissidents viewed the social democratic tradition as a superior model to reform socialism, when the conditions of approaching political and economic collapse appeared to call not for reform, but systemic transformation.

The first chapter (1971-1976) is a pre-history of the Young Socialists that explores some of the formative influences that the founding members of the dissident circle encountered in their everyday experiences as students of the Faculty of History at MGU. These future dissidents formed close bonds of friendship while living together in a dorm room. Using oral history materials, this chapter examines these young intellectuals as a window onto the sources for politically-engaged subjectivities among elite Soviet youth in the 1970s. It explores the impact of historical studies, while emphasising the influence of Latin America as a field of study, which fuelled anti-capitalist discourses that countered those of the imaginary West. The chapter goes on to examine the internationalist student collective, the Creative Workshop of Experimental Propaganda (TMEFP) and Komsomol-led student culture as places where students tested out developing political identities.

The second chapter (1977-1982) focuses on the lived experience of dissent. It explores how the dissident circle and its samizdat publications took shape in the form of a network of young intellectuals who were united by a mix of friendship, everyday associations at the Faculty of History of MGU and IMEMO and conspiratorial connections. Following Fadin and Kudiukin into IMEMO, I consider how access to restricted information and scholarly training in an environment of creative, Marxist-Leninist informed debate shaped the young researchers' worldviews. I explore the transmission of lived experience that occurred in the relationships the young dissidents formed with senior researchers at IMEMO and older socialist intellectuals in the dissident movement. This chapter reconstructs the Young Socialists' critical attitudes towards the ability of high-ranking liberals within the party elite and the Soviet dissident movement to act as forces for reform in the late Brezhnev years. At the same time, it tracks how the Young Socialists' initial romantic revolutionary sentiment was replaced by growing disillusionment at the

prospects of their own dissent to awaken reformist change in the depths of stagnation.

The third chapter (1977-1982) applies a transnational perspective to socialist dissent. It broadly analyses the internationalist attitudes and forms of engagement with the outside world that occurred in socialist dissident circles across the 1950s-1980s. It then sets the scene of the late Brezhnev era by summarising the transnational networks of samizdat/tamizdat exchange and clandestine communication channels to the West that operated in Soviet society, which had been built by the first generation of the dissident movement at the beginning of the decade. The Young Socialists initially used these existing networks to access left-wing underground literature. Collectively, this reading contributed to their growing perception that a loosely associated reformist Left existed in the international landscape at the turn of the 1980s. In the eyes of the Young Socialists, this community was made up of reform socialists who were united by their opposition to the orthodox Soviet viewpoint – a position that this thesis has called “dissenting internationalism.” It then examines how the Young Socialists put these notions of dissenting internationalism into practice in their communications with Solidarność and the Italian Communist Party.

The postscript to dissent (1982-1983) reconstructs the KGB’s investigation and its effects on the arrested and others implicated as witnesses in the case. Through exploring this particular lived experience of dissent, I reflect on what the tragic outcome of the Young Socialists’ dissident activities reveals about the nature of socialist dissent and its place in the history of opposition to the Soviet state.

The final chapter (1983-1993) examines the afterlives of the Young Socialists’ dissent during Perestroika in order to explore how some of the political and intellectual developments that occurred in the late Brezhnev era became recast in the last years of the Soviet Union. While the intellectual heritage of the *shestidesiatniki* generation had been a formative influence for many politicised *semidesiatniki* in the Brezhnev period, at the end of the 1980s, the relationship between these generations of intellectuals evolved in more complex directions, as the *semidesiatniki* began to create their own political and intellectual spaces. This chapter focuses on how shifting ideas about the essence of Soviet society and socialism transformed the identity of the left-wing of *semidesiatniki*-led political groupings during Perestroika. Its secondary focuses are on the contributions of the

wider circle of the Young Socialists to the transformation of Soviet intellectual spaces and the experiences of those who became part of the tail end of dissident emigration.

Young and Socialist at Moscow State University. On Dissident Subjectivities in the Last Soviet Generation.

Introduction.

When recalling his experience of Moscow State University (MGU) in the early-1970s, the future leader of the dissident circle that was later known as the Young Socialists, Pavel Kudiukin, reminisced about the pockets of revolutionary impulses on the campus, which he had been a part of, “Igor Dolutskii, Andrei Fadin and I discussed, ‘It is necessary to create a new revolutionary party. Will we invite Oleg Kabanov and Misha Ermakov?’ ‘No, they like to drink.’ At the same time in another room of the dormitory, Kudiukin’s course mates, Oleg Kabanov and Misha Ermakov discussed, ‘It’s necessary to create a new revolutionary party. Will we invite Pasha and Igor?’ ‘No, they are too young. It’s a pity to break their limbs.’”⁶⁸

These romantic revolutionary musings appear somewhat out of place by the 1970s, when the dissident movement had largely renounced their socialist beliefs and shifted to human rights based or nationalist orientations, and during a period that has been associated with an increasing retreat of Soviet youth from enthused political engagement to newly carved spheres of alternate interests and practices. Those innovative forms of social and cultural life that took off in the Brezhnev years are now integral to scholars’ reconceptualisation of the era’s long time paradigm of stagnation.⁶⁹ This chapter draws on their insights to return to the political – a category that has moved to the periphery in newer understandings of the Brezhnev years. It takes a fresh look at the last Soviet generation through devoting attention to the more politicised end of its cohort that included committed socialists and dissidents. In this chapter, I propose that one way to understand these politically

⁶⁸ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

⁶⁹ Some recent approaches are, for example: Dina Fainberg and Artemy Kalinovskii, eds., *Reconsidering Stagnation in the Brezhnev Era: Ideology and Exchange* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016); Juliane Fürst, “Where Did All the Normal People Go? Another Look at the Soviet 1970s,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14(3) (2013), 621-640; Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharatfutdinova (eds.), *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013); Alexandra Oberländer, “Beam Me Up/Out/Elsewhere, Tovarishch: Negotiating the Everyday in Late Socialism,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19(2) (Spring 2018), 433-444.

active *semidesiatniki* is by viewing them as younger carriers of earlier forms of subjectivities that recurred among the last Soviet generation in these later years.

Socialist dissidents, who displayed critical attitudes towards both capitalism and Soviet communism, attracted less attention from Western scholars during the Cold War than the *pravozashchitniki*, whose democratic and rights based positions were viewed sympathetically and as largely synonymous with Western liberal subjectivities.⁷⁰ Socialist dissent was considered a renegade offshoot of the revisionist forces that were unleashed during the Thaw, whose potency was confined to the years between the Secret Speech and the fateful end of the Prague Spring.⁷¹ The abandonment of socialism after 1968 by dissidents of the Moscow elite eclipsed from view its revival in the emerging second generation of dissidents. Until recently, post-Soviet scholars who were former participants in the socialist underground of the late Brezhnev era were the most systematic chroniclers of this later period.⁷²

The analytical binaries that flowed from the imposition of liberal categories onto Soviet history during the Cold War, and persisted as insufficiently questioned assumptions in the field, were later roundly challenged by Alexei Yurchak in his portrait of the last Soviet generation.⁷³ From his seminal study emerged a *semidesiatnik* who was neither oppositional, nor conformist, but instead was disengaged from Soviet ideological reality and immersed in alternative cultural pursuits. The extent of this detachment was probed by Benjamin Nathans and Kevin

⁷⁰ Anna Krylova, "The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1(1) (2000), 139.

⁷¹ An important exception to this timeline was scholars and journalists' continued attention to Roy Medvedev throughout the Brezhnev era, but his status within their narratives as the sole spokesperson for socialist dissent only appeared to confirm his isolation.

⁷² Aleksandr Shubin, *Dissidenty, neformaly i svoboda v SSSR* (M. : Veche, 2008); Aleksandr Tarasov, *Levye v Rossii: ot umerennykh do ekstremistov* (M. : Inst. eksperimental'noi sotsiologii, 1997). See also: Liudmilla Alekseeva, "Socialists," in *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 416-427. Important recent works are: Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (M. : Svobodnoe marksistskoe izdatel'stvo, 2017); Ewgeniy Kasakow, "Dissens und Untergrund: Das Wiederaufkommen der linken oppositionellen Gruppen in der späten Brežnev-Zeit," in Boris Belge and Martin Deuerlein, eds., *Goldenes Zeitalter der Stagnation? Perspektiven auf die sowjetische Ordnung der Brežnev-Ära* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 75-96.

⁷³ Alexei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever, until it was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Platt, who questioned how this mode of existence related to dissident behaviours.⁷⁴ Recent scholarship on socialist dissent has begun to address this issue by pointing to the case of the Leningrad Opposition whose new leftist politics overlapped with a countercultural lifestyle that was wholly evocative of what Yurchak has called living *vnye*.⁷⁵

This chapter offers a closer examination of the subjectivities of this generation by considering the formative years at MGU (1971-1976) of a group of friends who formed a socialist dissident circle a year after their graduation. The process of becoming a dissident could arise from a multitude of causes and took many forms,⁷⁶ but much of the memoir literature has conveyed this experience through an individualised narrative that was frequently internally driven – a perspective that was accentuated by the source format, which left its mark on studies of Soviet dissent by creating a sense of its isolation from broader society.⁷⁷ This isolation was observed in another context by Jonathan Bolton, who noted that the shift from viewing socialist regimes as fundamentally repressive to more balanced approaches that included a focus on everyday life and popular culture appeared to render the experience of dissent as somehow unrepresentative or less relevant for understanding late socialism.⁷⁸ He called for a more complete picture of dissidents' lives that went beyond entanglements with state security to consider their everyday experiences, which would draw research on dissent closer to post-revisionism's more nuanced sense of late socialism.

⁷⁴ Benjamin Nathans and Kevin M.F. Platt, "Socialist in Form, Indeterminate in Content: The Ins and Outs of Late Soviet Culture," *Ab Imperio* (2) (2011), 312.

⁷⁵ Juliane Fürst, "We all Live in a Yellow Submarine': Dropping Out in a Leningrad Commune," in Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan, eds., *Dropping Out of Socialism: The creation of alternative spheres in the Eastern Bloc* (London: Lexington Books, 2017), 179-206; Ewgeniy Kasakow and Dmitrii Rublev, "Koleso istorii ne vertelos', ono skatyvalos', Levye podpol'e v Leningrade, 1975-1982," ("The Wheel of History was not Turning, it was Tumbling," the Leftist Underground in Leningrad, 1975-1982.) *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 91 (2013): https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/neprikosnovennyi_zapas/91_nz_5_2013/article/10655.

⁷⁶ See, for some examples, Benjamin Nathans, "Talking Fish: On Soviet Dissident Memoirs," *The Journal of Modern History* 87(3) (2015), 593-595.

⁷⁷ Benjamin Nathans, "The Dictatorship of Reason: Aleksandr Vol'pin and the idea of rights under 'Developed Socialism,'" *Slavic Review* 66(4) (2007), 632.

⁷⁸ Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe and Czech Culture under Communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 35-38.

In this chapter I use oral history interviews as a way to open up these details. Their power in reconstructing subjectivities is constrained by the substantial passage of time between the events and their recollection, and is inevitably affected by the shortcomings of memory and influenced by perspectives of the present. Yet these sources are of value for approaching questions related to subjectivity – for understanding how individuals made sense of their own everyday experiences and interpreted them as contributing to their identity formation and life narrative. The Soviet subject has been examined variously as a “character” constructed from discourses, a modern actor instilled with personal agency, and as a historical personality shaped in a dialogue between the individual and wider social forces.⁷⁹ I draw on this latter approach, understanding subjectivity to encompass an individual’s intellectually and affectively informed worldview and self-understanding, to consider how forces at work in late socialism influenced shifts or continuities in subjectivities across generations.⁸⁰

The turn of events described in this chapter, which was part of the collective political and intellectual development of a group of young Soviet intellectuals, was simultaneously a story of friendship whose arc took place at MGU in the first half of the 1970s. As the Bolshevik revolution entered old age in this decade, the collectivist aspirations from below that had merged the public and private under Stalin were dying out, while processes that had been underway since the late-1950s reached maturity: the state had made a partial retreat from its regulation of private spheres and society’s possibilities expanded to include individualising forms of consumption.⁸¹ As part of this outwardly stabilising consensus of late socialism, many Soviet citizens crisscrossed easily back and forth between personal concerns

⁷⁹ For a recent discussion on scholars’ treatment of subjectivities in the Stalin era and into the late socialist years, see: Anatolii Pinskiĭ, ed., *Posle Stalina: Pozdnesovetskaia sub’ektivnost’ (1953-1985)* (SPb: Izdatel’stvo Evropeiskogo universiteta v Sankt-Peterburge, 2018), 9-38.

⁸⁰ Eric Naiman, “On Soviet Subjects and the Scholars Who Make Them,” *The Russian Review* 60(3) (2001), 313.

⁸¹ On Stalin era subjectivities, see Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 9-10, 86-87. On the development of a partial private sphere, see Nathans and Platt, “Socialist in Form,” 310-312. On the state’s discourse around consumerism allowing space for individualist values and privacy, see Anna Paretskaia, “A Middle Class Without Capitalism? Socialist Ideology and Post-Collectivist Discourse in the Late-Soviet Era, in *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964-1985*, eds. Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013), 52-53.

and engagement with official structures.⁸² By contrast, the reconciling of public and private selves acquired a new urgency among the dissident movement. Arising out of the crucible of de-Stalinising impulses of the Thaw, dissidents' public actions – demonstrations, open letters and press conferences – were the illuminating trail of lights of an inner journey to an individual voice, a process that was intimately connected to overcoming the silence of the collective surrounding repression.⁸³

For those who came of age in the altered context of the Brezhnev years, what, then, were the sources of disaffection, or alternatively, engagement that contributed to the construction of dissenting *semidesiatniki* subjectivities? How did these forms of subjectivity among the emerging second generation of dissidents relate to those of the Thaw era neo-Leninist *shestidesiatnik*, who had in some cases embraced human rights dissent in this later decade, and other members of their own generation? Finally, how were these emerging identities put into action within both official and unofficial student culture at MGU in the 1970s?

Room 242. The Dissident Circle that met in a Dorm Room.

The Young Socialists initially became acquainted in 1971 when its members lived in or regularly visited room 242 on Lomonosovskii Prospekt. The dorm room was within a *khrushchëvka*, a five-story building that had been built in the 1960s where each room was shared by four or five people.⁸⁴ Representative of broader trends brought by the mass construction of housing from the 1960s, this smaller quota of inhabitants enhanced the potential for semi-private discussion relative to the post-war and early-Thaw years when ten or even twenty students occupied a room.⁸⁵ This more intimate living arrangement coincided with an unexpected concentration of political passions among room 242's accidentally assigned

⁸² Stephen V. Bittner and Juliane Fürst, "The Aging Pioneer: Late Soviet Socialist Society, Its Challenges and Challengers," in Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, Mark Selden, eds., *The Cambridge History of Communism. Volume III, Endgames? Late communism in global perspective, 1968 to the present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 299.

⁸³ Nathans, "Talking Fish," 596-603.

⁸⁴ Interview with Sergei Karpiuk, Moscow, 3 November 2016.

⁸⁵ William Taubman, *Gorbachev: His Life and Times* (London: Simon & Schuster Ltd., 2017), 50.

inhabitants, which created conditions for the energetic intellectual explorations that unfolded in the room over five years, often relating to themes that recalled the concerns of the more politicised student milieu of earlier decades.

University studies were room 242's first independent steps away from their families, who up until that point had been a primary influence. As Donald Raleigh has noted, Soviet families acted as repositories of information that could diverge from official histories.⁸⁶ As children of parents that had been socialised in the Stalin era, most of the group recalled memories where their parents had displayed reactions to Soviet repressions. But they also remembered that it had often been not until their university studies that they had properly understood the meaning of what they had heard, or its broader implications sufficiently to assimilate them properly into their worldview. Pavel Mikhailovich Kudiukin (b. 1953) was from an intelligentsia family in Zagorsk (present-day Sergiev Posad), a town in the Moscow region. His father, a war veteran and a party member who taught at the Higher School of People's Art in Zagorsk, had been a pivotal figure in the development of Kudiukin's own critical views. He remembered his father as displaying, "A certain degree of rebellion, characteristic of the *shestidesiatnik*."⁸⁷ Recalling a memory which exhibited this and its effect of complicating his own views of Soviet socialism, Kudiukin remembered that at the age of ten, he had overheard his father and his uncle discussing what he later realised was the Novocherkassk massacre. Kudiukin remembered his own childhood reaction, "I was a normal Soviet schoolboy. I knew that when workers strike – this is good, but those who send tanks against them – they are scum."⁸⁸ A couple of years later on the twentieth anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany, when Victory Day was first celebrated as a state holiday, Kudiukin remembered his father had pinned his medal, which bore Stalin's face, inside out on his chest, proclaiming, "I am unable to forgive Stalin's betrayal of the revolution."⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Donald Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: A History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 16.

⁸⁷ Pavel Kudiukin and Konstantin Morozov, "Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudiukinym o s.d. organizatsii rubezha 70-x-80-x godov," 27 January 2007: http://socialist.memo.ru/1991/kudukin_interview.html.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

Sergei Georgievich Karpiuk (b. 1954) was from a family of skilled workers from Minsk. His sister had already entered the classical studies department of MGU in 1964, and told Karpiuk about the intellectually exciting life of the Soviet capital, which included stories of “dissidents, those who signed petitions of protest, demonstrations and literary polemics.”⁹⁰ Karpiuk instinctively understood that his sister’s gift of a high-quality Ocean transistor radio to their father for his fiftieth birthday was also intended as a way for him to tune into the foreign radio stations. News of Moscow compounded the physical and spiritual restlessness he felt as he lived on the working class margins of provincial Minsk, and he followed her to MGU. Room 242’s eldest inhabitant was Pavel Novosel’skii, a captain who had been discharged from the Soviet army for disloyal thought, and at that time already had connections in dissident circles, though his views were of a nationalist orientation.⁹¹ Grigorii Nikolaevich Zaichenko (b. 1953) was from a family of Ukrainian skilled workers whose factory had been transplanted during the war to Tbilisi, where he grew up.⁹² When Stalin died, his father had said, “Dead at last, piece of shit.” But Zaichenko remembered his more cautious mother, “from the point of security,” as Zaichenko’s brother often said, saying, “Be quiet, Kolia. Be quiet, Kolia. Be quiet, Kolia” when his father discussed politically inadvisable topics. As an early teen, Zaichenko observed his father listening to the foreign radio reporting on the case of Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel’. In later years he join him in listening to the voices, though they were often frustrated by the frequent jamming in Tbilisi.⁹³ His father also shared a samizdat text with him – an excerpt of Prince Feliks Iusupov’s memoirs, but it was only in Moscow that Zaichenko realised it had been forbidden literature. The room’s final member, Oleg Grigor’evich Bukhovets (b. 1949) had also performed army service, notably in Czechoslovakia during the 1968 invasion. He was born in Kazakhstan, and had completed eight years of school before the army. After the conclusion of his service, he relocated to his family’s native Belorussia, where they

⁹⁰ Sergei Karpiuk, “O drevnei istorii s ljubov’iu’, *Mir istorika: Istorigraficheskii sbornik* 10 (2015), 343-344: http://ivka.rsuh.ru/binary/84762_48.1432718399.26352.pdf.

⁹¹ Kudiukin and Morozov, “Beseda.”

⁹² Interview with Grigorii Zaichenko, Moscow, 22 November 2016.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

had returned in the meantime, and passed the final three grades in a single year of night school before being accepted to MGU.⁹⁴

Room 242's inadvertent function as a birthplace of a future dissident circle was a recurrence of what had already taken place in the 1950s and 1960s, when the default meeting place of student-dissident circles was a room in a student hall or a communal apartment. This choice resulted from the earlier circles' considerations that such rooms were a space of comparative privacy – participants came into contact with likeminded peers during conversation in the public settings of the university before inviting them to these more private gatherings where the circles took shape.⁹⁵ By contrast, room 242 was closer to an accidental coincidence because with the exception of the room's three frequent visitors, the members were already preassembled in this semi-private space before they discovered their shared interest in political topics and capacity for close friendship.

Student-dissident circles have been located as a phenomenon that had roots in the social, political and ideological changes of the early Thaw, when the more open public political discussions of early-1956 ceased following the crackdown of the Soviet authorities after the Hungarian uprising, but the desire of youth to hold these conversations persisted, and as a result, these circles formed to accommodate them.⁹⁶ According to Lev Krasnopevtsev, who was the leader of a dissident circle that was uncovered in the MGU historical faculty in the 1950s, in these years the Komsomol structured student collectives were used by students to create tight-knit groupings of close friends, who shared a critical “democratic” mood.⁹⁷ Their

⁹⁴ Novosel'skii does not feature more prominently in this article as he did not take part in the group's later dissident activities, while Bukhovets was ill at the time of my research and unable to be interviewed, and Fadin passed away in 1997.

⁹⁵ Juliane Fürst, “Friends in Private, Friends in Public: The Phenomenon of kompaniia among Soviet Youth in the 1950s and 1960s,” in Lewis Siegelbaum, ed., *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 239.

⁹⁶ Some of these student-dissident circles proved to be incubators for the later emergence of the *pravozashchitniki*. The most well-known socialist groups that were actively dissenting in 1956 were the Krasnopevtsev circle and the circle around Revol't Pimenov: “Vlast' i intelligentsia. ‘Delo’ molodykh istorikov, 1957-1958 gg.” *Voprosy istorii* (4) (1994), 106-135; Benjamn Tromly, “Intelligentsia Self-Fashioning in the Post-War Soviet Union: Revol't Pimenov's Political Struggle, 1949-1957,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13(1) (2012), 151-176.

⁹⁷ “Vlast' i intelligentsia,” 107.

reincarnation in the 1970s points to these circles as an organisational format adopted by critical youth for political discussion that endured throughout the period.

Two of room 242's three frequent visitors were children of highly placed party officials. The third 242 visitor, Igor Ivanovich Dolutskii (b. 1954) lived on the same floor of the dormitory. He came from a military family from Port Arthur, China.⁹⁸ This close knit mix of dormitory dwellers and elite Muscovites was slightly unusual as the two groups tended to be removed from each other as a result of the Muscovites retaining their pre-existing social networks during their university years, while for out-of-town students, the bonds of student collectives within the dorms became socially self-sufficient.⁹⁹ Moreover, the two groups tended to be not only distanced from each other socially, but in degrees of cultural capital, which created an added social distance. This was perhaps best exemplified by the forbidden literature that Muscovites, through their families, had usually already read and critically assimilated into their worldview upon entering the university, whereas the students from the provinces often first discovered access to these texts only in Moscow.¹⁰⁰

The two Muscovite visitors resided in their own family's apartments. Andrei Vasil'evich Fadin (b. 1953) lived in an apartment building located two doors down from Brezhnev's on Kutuzovskii Prospekt. His father worked in the international department as a specialist of Scandinavian affairs, and was responsible for Soviet communications with the Norwegian Communist party.¹⁰¹ Tatiana Evgenevna Vorozheikina's (b. 1953) family lived in a nearby building to the Fadin's on the same street. In her father's capacity as a Swedish specialist, he sat opposite Fadin's father's Norwegian desk, and as a result Vorozheikina and Fadin had been friends since the age of six. Vorozheikina's father was an early MGIMO graduate, who was posted to Stockholm in the late-Stalin years, where he met her mother, who was a stenographer for the Soviet Ministry of Trade. Her father's position in Moscow gave

⁹⁸ Interview with Igor Dolutskii and Tatiana Vorozheikina, Moscow, 21 November 2016.

⁹⁹ Kathleen E. Smith, *Moscow, 1956: The Silenced Spring* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 161.

¹⁰⁰ Kevorkova, "Letopisets," in Anatolii Kopeikin and Leonid Romankov, eds., *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (SPb. : Zvezda, 2017), 120.

¹⁰¹ "Interview with Andrei Fadin," 7 September 1994, in Carole Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva: politicheskie kluby i perestroika v Rossii* (M. : Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014), 74-75.

him privileged access to information, and she recalled some of it was discussed in the family.¹⁰² She had learned about the plight of the Crimean Tatars from her father. He was also the first person to tell her about the Stalinist repressions when she was a preteen. “My father said that there were ways to get people to confess to anything. I learned about torture from my own father.”¹⁰³ While Vorozheikina heard an anti-Stalinist account of the past at home, Fadin’s upbringing involved his rejection of his father’s conservative outlook. Fadin recalled at the age of 15 his father waking him early in the morning of 21 August to tell him, “Our people entered Czechoslovakia.” Andrei recalled he responded with the condemnation, “What right did we have?” and then he immediately realised he and his father were on opposing sides in their reaction to the invasion.¹⁰⁴ The Muscovite visitors, with their exceptional biographies that contained a close proximity to the party elite, had more information on Soviet domestic developments and international affairs than the average MGU student, and they shared this knowledge in conversations in 242, which stimulated the room’s political discussions.

Room 242 had the air of a commune, and was described this way retrospectively by its members. Zaichenko remembered, “We lived amicably, argued, read, exchanged belongings. Did the room resemble a commune? Well, in the first two years, it probably did.”¹⁰⁵ Dolutskii classified himself as a communist in this period, and cited the communal atmosphere of the room as an example of his values. However, this perhaps can be understood as a belated romanticisation of the money saving measures common to student living. Throughout the late socialist period, when low stipends were a uniform fact of life at the university, fuelled by practicality and bonds of friendship, this type of communal living was a common feature among student collectives.¹⁰⁶ These collectives were a staple of late socialist student culture. The Soviet higher learning system divided the student body into groups that lived and studied together, belonged to the same Komsomol cell and participated together

¹⁰² Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Andrei Fadin, “Katastroficheskaia tsena obnovleniia,” http://old.russ.ru/antolog/inoe/fadin_o.htm.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Zaichenko.

¹⁰⁶ Benjamin Tromly, *Making the Soviet Intelligentsia: Universities and intellectual life under Stalin and Khrushchev* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 30-31.

in social events and labour projects with the intended effect of forging socialist consciousness and comradeship among the group.¹⁰⁷

Importantly, not all of the room was socialist, and its occupants' views changed over the course of their university studies, a process which was in part driven by their conversations in the dorm room, as well as encounters with professors and students in the other spaces of learning and socialisation on the campus. Kudiukin entered MGU and was promptly relieved of a high school infatuation with Stalin.¹⁰⁸ Zaichenko recalled early conversations where Kudiukin touted "historical necessity," and the need for "an iron hand into the realm of freedom,"¹⁰⁹ though discussions at the university quickly cured him of those views.¹¹⁰ Recalling this period, Kudiukin more benignly labelled himself an "opposition Stalinist," believing that Stalin's rule had been free of the unfairly distributed privileges of the Brezhnev years.¹¹¹ In the first year, Zaichenko had sympathised with Lenin and admired different portraits of him together with Kudiukin and praised, "This one, where he has such defiantly intelligent and penetrating eyes. Yes, this is the best portrait of Lenin."¹¹² But by the second or third year of study, he had already asserted himself as an anti-communist. As Juliane Fürst has similarly observed of youth opposition circles in the 1950s, these attractions to Leninism and Stalinism in fact suggested their dissatisfaction with the present, and were based on an imagined golden era of Soviet socialism, rather than concrete knowledge of these earlier years of Soviet rule.¹¹³ But as the socialist contingent in 242's awareness of the Soviet past was gradually refined by their study of history, this romantic idea of an ideal socialism did not disappear, but instead shifted away from the Soviet Union to Latin America.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁸ Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Zaichenko.

¹¹⁰ Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

¹¹¹ Email correspondence with Pavel Kudiukin, 21 February 2020.

¹¹² Interview with Zaichenko.

¹¹³ Juliane Fürst, "Prisoners of the Soviet Self?: Political youth opposition in late Stalinism," *Europe-Asia Studies* 54(3) (2002), 366.

Karpiuk remembered the large amount of time room 242 was engaged in political discussion.¹¹⁴ Fervent political discussions in the university dorms were more common in the immediate post-Stalin years, and reached their apex in the years immediately following Khrushchëv's Secret Speech, but were decreasing in intensity by the Twenty-Second Party Congress.¹¹⁵ By the 1970s, independent political discussions in the student milieu were even less frequent, and 242's continued engagement with them marked it out as a distinctive company. Other reminisces of dorm life in the 1970s by former historical faculty students instead recalled the popularity of forbidden literature in the dorms, where uncensored works of Akhmatova, Bulgakov, Mandel'stam and others circulated as samizdat, and the time spent participating in the universal pastimes of student life: love and relationships, practical jokes and charades, guitars, and occasional drinking parties.¹¹⁶ Others recalled the myriad possibilities for dining and entertainment outside in the Soviet capital, where the stretching out of stipends allowed for occasional visits to restaurants, second-hand bookshops, concerts, and fashion purchases.¹¹⁷

Despite not being a socialist and identifying most closely as a liberal, Karpiuk found intellectual engagement during political discussions with his friends in room 242.¹¹⁸ In his last year of high school, Karpiuk with his sister through her Moscow connections had sent an account of a political demonstration in Minsk to *Chronicle of Current Events*, which reported uncensored news of political persecutions in the Soviet Union through samizdat.¹¹⁹ This act reflected his democratic leanings and admiration of the *pravozashchitniki*, but unlike his 242 companions, he was not

¹¹⁴ Interview with Karpiuk.

¹¹⁵ Taubman, *Gorbachev*, 52-53; Tromly, *Making the Russian Intelligentsia*, 190; Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 51.

¹¹⁶ Kevorkova, "Letopisets," 114; Anatolii Kopeikin, "Dni i gody iz zhizni VVP," in Kopeikin and Romankov, eds., *Dvazhdy dissident*, 128; Aleksandr Stoliarov and Olga Kusenko, "Aleksandr Stoliarov: Otvechu Vam sovershenno chestno," *Istoriko-filosofskii ezhegodnik* (2017), 233.

¹¹⁷ Stoliarov and Kusenko, "Aleksandr Stoliarov," 235.

¹¹⁸ Interview with Karpiuk.

¹¹⁹ Email correspondence with Sergei Karpiuk, 22 November 2017. See: "Kratkie soobshchenie," *Khronika tekushchikh sobitii* (14) (30 June 1970): <http://hts.memo.ru/chr14.htm#p5>.

attracted to any particular ideology, and was limited to the desire for more intellectual freedom. Every week Karpiuk visited his sister and her husband, who were active in the *pravozashchitniki* network, in their Moscow apartment until they emigrated to Israel in 1975. This mix of experiences and political views in room 242 meant that, for Zaichenko, “We always argued already knowing each other’s positions, lazily quarrelling and so teasing each other.”¹²⁰ This mood of playful intellectual exploration and informal political debate subverted the authorities’ expectations for the use of this space.

It was the political passions and uniformly close personal relations that came to define room 242. This dynamic reached its height in Fadin and Kudiukin, who would become the leaders of the circle’s dissident activities, and best friends and political collaborators into the post-Soviet era. The two became friends in the second year of their studies during military lessons where males were trained as propagandists to the troops and the enemy population and females were taught to be military interpreters. In a class on party political work for the troops, there was a discussion about the revolutionary processes in the West where both Kudiukin and Fadin expressed their opinions to the class. Kudiukin remembered, “So we found, ‘He thinks like me,’ and it was the beginning of our friendship,” and Fadin becoming a regular in room 242.¹²¹ But room 242 was also distinguished by the diversity of its political views. Karpiuk confirmed, “In Soviet times, we were all opposites, and perhaps this was the overriding characteristic [of our group].”¹²² While Kudiukin, Fadin, Dolutskii and Vorozheikina identified as socialist, the others in the group did not share this orientation. This was commonplace within dissident groupings. As they were unable to publicly declare their political views without risk of persecution, their search for new members was restricted to friends and acquaintances, and as a result, friendship was a more likely basis for recruitment than like-minded political attitudes.¹²³ In a society that was accustomed to the presence of informers, trust was

¹²⁰ Interview with Zaichenko.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Interview with Karpiuk.

¹²³ E. Iu Zavadaskaia and O.V Edelman, “Underground Groups and Organisations,” in Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Sergei V. Mironenko, eds., *Sedition: Everyday resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 286.

vital for the exchanges of personal communication that defined close friendships – a rule which equally applied to clandestine political activities.¹²⁴ These qualities determined the division of labour and the social dynamics of their later dissent where it was the socialists who were committed to the circle's dissident activities, while the other members of the circle were associated because of the degree of trust that existed among them rather than ideological conviction.

Studying History at MGU in the 1970s.

A student of the MGU historical faculty in the mid-1970s later observed that within the course there were those who had entered via the *rabfak*, or graduation from school with a dubiously awarded gold medal, through *blat*, or for unclear reasons, and then there was a contingent of students that “Had realised the dream of their whole lives and gathered in the evenings in the dorm's lobby to hoarsely argue about...[historical questions across different regions and periods]. After class they sped to the library and eagerly leafed through heavy books to find answers to questions that arose during the previous polemic.”¹²⁵ Amidst this atmosphere of spirited intellectual exchange, the motley composition of students that gained admission to this highly competitive course provided a source for Kudiukin's developing alienation. He interpreted some of his more well-connected yet intellectually ordinary classmates to have gained their places through a system of favours or unfairly rewarded privileges. He observed that for every student whose sheer talent had overcome those odds, as was the case with Oleg Bukhovets, many more had not.¹²⁶ The dealings that guaranteed access to resources in conditions of shortage, which enveloped everyday transactions in the late Soviet Union, made an impression of injustice on the young Kudiukin, and developed his thinking in the direction of the circle's later more systematic critiques of the economic inefficiency and the persistence of class hierarchies within Soviet socialism.

¹²⁴ Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Love, Friendship and Marriage in the Soviet Union: Ideals and practices* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 229.

¹²⁵ Aleksei Sobchenko, “Vzgliad s drugoi storony okean,” in *Dvazhdy dissident*, eds. Kopeikin and Romankov, 101.

¹²⁶ Email communication with Pavel Kudiukin, 21 February 2020.

The ideological conditions that applied to the study of the Soviet period in the historical faculty often led students to select specialisations in periods and regions remote from their country's own contemporary history, but equally, the atmosphere of the historical faculty attracted students who were inclined to probe the Soviet past and present in informal discussions. The analytical skills and specialist foreign language training, which were passed on by professors to the ambitious and sometimes critical students that the faculty attracted into its orbit, occasioned creative perspectives that students tested in this arena of intellectual fraternisation. The MGU historical faculty counted a considerable number of participants in the dissident movement among its alumni – a fact which helps to establish it as a location that harboured critical political sentiment. Perhaps the most explicit case was the already mentioned dissident leader, Krasnopevtsev, who according to his own testimony, in anticipation of the course of de-Stalinisation, returned to the historical faculty to enrol in graduate studies in 1955 because he expected that the university would become a locus for society's anti-Stalinist response to these transformative political events.¹²⁷ But this determination to address the legacy of Stalinism became more unusual in a society where, as the Western correspondent, Hedrick Smith, who was based in Moscow at the beginning of the 1970s observed, youth were commonly cut off from this aspect of the recent past of their own society.¹²⁸ These students entered the historical faculty in a decade when the agenda of de-Stalinisation had been officially marginalised and the partial rehabilitation of Stalin had occurred in Soviet public discourse.¹²⁹ But this only underscored to those who held anti-Stalinist perspectives that many of the questions about the causes and consequences of Stalinism that originated during the Thaw remained unresolved. The historical faculty, as a centre for knowledge, was a location that attracted individuals among the next generation, who were invested in the answers.

The faculty's training in the skills of critical evaluation and source analysis played a formative role in the future Young Socialists' transitions from abstract teenaged views to the more mature perspectives they developed in their twenties. During the first two years of study, they engaged with a wide array of subjects, which

¹²⁷ "Vlast' i intelligentsia," 109.

¹²⁸ Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (London: Sphere Books, 1976), 259.

¹²⁹ Polly Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma: Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union, 1953-1970* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 213, 257.

included archaeology, ethnography, the ancient world, art history, several centuries of Russian history, the history of Western and Southern Slavic peoples, and the medieval and contemporary history of Africa, Asia, America and Europe, historiography and historical methodology.¹³⁰ Many hours were devoted to the ideologically charged subjects of the history of the CPSU, scientific communism, political economy, scientific atheism, and the reading of Lenin as a primary source. In some cases, professors' concentrated ideological approaches to their subject obscured students' comprehensive understanding of the historical period being addressed. But at the same time, the tools of source analysis which were used to draw independent conclusions in the less ideologically focused classes could provide students with the means to critically approach the ideological precepts that were encountered and imparted as scientific truths in the faculty's more heavily ideologically oriented courses.¹³¹

Foreign language acquisition was also essential to historical training. The ancient and foreign languages departments within the faculty offered French, German, Spanish, Italian, English, ancient Greek and Latin.¹³² This language training had a considerably larger impact on their worldview than its purely academic ramifications. Recalling his own experience of language learning in the Kyiv historical faculty in the 1950s, Vladimir Shlapentokh reflected, "We saw foreign languages as a window into the unknown and desirable Western world, and knowing these languages would bring us closer to that world."¹³³ The sense of greater access that language skills granted to the outside world was shared by the future Young Socialists, who reached out to Allende's Chile at the beginning of the decade and the Eurocommunist parties towards its end. Their ability to read leftist materials in different languages broadened their perspectives beyond the purely Leninist and Stalinist references of their teens, and deepened the circle's later sense of its inclusion in a global democratic socialist left. This distinctive brand of

¹³⁰ A.S. Barsenkov, Iu.S. Kukushkin, *Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi universitet imeni M.V. Lomonosova istoricheskii fakul'tet* (M. : Izdatel'stvo MGU, 1994), 6-7.

¹³¹ Email Correspondence with Grigorii Zaichenko, 24 August 2018.

¹³² I.V. Shevliagina and A.P. Min'iar-Beloručeva, "Inostrannykh Iazykov Kafedra," in S.P. Karpov, ed., *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar' Moskovskogo Universiteta: Istoricheskii Fakul'tet*, (M. : Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 2004), 150.

¹³³ Vladimir Shlapentokh, *An Autobiographical Narration of the Role of Fear and Friendship in the Soviet Union* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), 80-81.

internationalism from below, which became a defining feature of their later milieu, was also critical for sustaining their dissent when faced with a lack of likeminded socialist allies in their own society.

In conversations recounting their student years at MGU in the 1950s, Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdenek Mlynar remembered the singular influence of their professors in opening up the world of ideas to them. Mlynar, in particular, recalled an Old Bolshevik professor, who stimulated their developing anti-Stalinist perspectives through including his own recollections of the revolutionary era during his lectures.¹³⁴ It is perhaps surprising that there was very little testimony from the Young Socialists that this form of inter-generational transmission of memory impacted their developing worldviews. This may be partially explained by Karpiuk and Vorozheikina's admission that they did not encounter many engaging professors at MGU,¹³⁵ though those comments can also be connected to the demands of conduct in this space. Sergei Zhuk has noted how, in the same years, an MGU professor of American history presented the impression of a "boring orthodox communist ideologist" to his students, while also projecting the drastically different persona of a gregarious and openminded intellectual to American colleagues in the United States.¹³⁶ This is a more extreme example, but it opens up for consideration the possibility that the absence of these relationships was a reflection of professors' caution in the ideologically controlled environment of the university, or even low regard that they may have felt in their interactions with students. Explicitly critical political commentary from lecturers was rarely a feature of the university landscape, while the future Young Socialists seem not to have been especially struck by anecdotal recollections from their professors about the years of Stalinism or the Thaw. The impression that emerges from the collective testimony is that their professors were most influential as teachers of the methodology of historical research, who passed on some of the skills of critical reasoning that the future Young Socialists used to make sense of their own society and the world more broadly.

¹³⁴ Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdenek Mlynar, *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 22.

¹³⁵ Email communication with Karpiuk, 4 August 2018; Email communication with Vorozheikina, 17 June 2019.

¹³⁶ Sergei Zhuk, "The 'KGB People,' Soviet Americanists and Soviet-American Academic Exchanges, 1958-1985," *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 44(2) (2017), 143.

Contrary to the accounts of students from the more immediate post-war decades that depicted their fascination with the older members of the professoriate whose demeanour afforded a glimpse of the pre-revolutionary era,¹³⁷ the future Young Socialists were more likely to look for hints of critical political views among their professors, even if they seldom found them. The most overt example was encountered by Zaichenko, who recalled his professor of historical and dialectical materialism, B.G. Safronov, telling him in the corridor that “ostensibly” socialism was not in the USSR, but in Sweden, and “ostensibly” it was not Marxism-Leninism that scientifically guided Soviet society, but a religion with its own priests, divine services, and icons.¹³⁸ Though most professors’ dispositions were much more opaque. In a conversation with Professor M.G. Sedov about his proposed coursework for a second year class on nineteenth century Russian history, Zaichenko spiritedly defended his choice to study the lesser-known populist revolutionaries, the Black Repartition, as he admired their rejection of terroristic methods to change society.¹³⁹ This selection had the air of a challenge as it diverged from Sedov’s recommendation of the more historically influential People’s Will. Sedov was an authority on this organisation, and had played a prominent role during the Thaw in the “rehabilitation” of the populist revolutionary movement as a topic deserving of a more balanced scholarly inquiry than it received during the Stalin era.¹⁴⁰ As a student, Zaichenko intuited that their conflict over his coursework had the outlines of a debate that Sedov did not directly enter into, over whether revolutionary change necessitated violence or a gradual transformation was more desirable.¹⁴¹ At the time he had been unaware of Sedov’s enormously personal stake in such questions that was apparent from his biography, which contained a rise to the very top of the Komsomol structures in Moscow at the end of the 1930s, and then a steep descent following his arrest in 1943 and twelve years in the camps before being rehabilitated

¹³⁷ Tromly, *Making the Intelligentsia*, 34-38, 45.

¹³⁸ Email communication with Zaichenko, 28 August 2018.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ E.Kh. Mukhina, “Mikhail Gerasimovich Sedov,” in Karpov, ed., *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar’ Moskovskogo Universiteta*, 413.

¹⁴¹ Email Communication with Zaichenko, 24 October 2018.

in 1955.¹⁴² Seen through Zaichenko's eyes, this case is a striking example of the distance exercised by professors, which inhibited the forging of closer connections and communication between generations, and rather created ambiguity as to professors' views. The professoriate was much more attuned to the risk of informers and conscious of the university as a space that was monitored for ideological deviation than less experienced, politically critical students, which structured the possibilities for relationships in the faculty.

Students' focus narrowed when they selected their specialisation from the third year. Karpiuk deliberately pursued ancient history to evade the ideological strictures imposed in other fields. His diploma thesis on Herodotus on ancient Greek tyranny was a source study where he deployed the ancient Greek he had learned and could avoid referring to the Marxist-Leninist classics.¹⁴³ Ancient history was a path chosen by some students as a conscious intellectual escape from ideological rigour, and this choice was comparable to archaeology, where MGU historical faculty students physically escaped on months-long expeditions to rural sites where a more informal environment of intellectual discussion prevailed that included guitar playing, wine drinking and poetry reading.¹⁴⁴

Kudiukin, Dolutskii and Zaichenko chose Soviet history, considering the study of their own society to be of singular importance. Kudiukin had initially transferred from archaeology to Soviet history, and upon Zaichenko's then-inquiry as to why, he had responded, "I don't want to be superficial."¹⁴⁵ Despite the popular characterisation that the professional study of Soviet history in the Soviet Union was a vocation only for careerists, Kudiukin and Zaichenko had opted for direct critical engagement with the present within their studies. The validity of this approach was partially confirmed for them when Kudiukin and Dolutskii studied a second-year course on the history of the CPSU, led by V.I. Tetiushev, a decorated veteran, which addressed the lead up to the Great Patriotic War. Within the class, the "fourth partition of Poland" was raised and within sources the students consulted, there

¹⁴² A.V. Anikin and A.A. Sundieva, "Nekrolog," in *"Budushchego net i ne mozhet byt' bez nauk..." Pamiati professora Moskovskogo Universiteta Mikhaila Gerasimovicha Sedova* (M.: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 2005), 480-482.

¹⁴³ Karpiuk, "O drevnei istorii s liubov'iu," 332.

¹⁴⁴ Kevorkova, "Letopisets," 117.

¹⁴⁵ Interview with Zaichenko.

were quotations from then-Foreign Minister Molotov describing the “joint blows of German and Soviet troops.”¹⁴⁶ They had discovered what Gorbachev later called the “blank spots” of history in plain sight.

The lessons in the faculty provided them with a starting point to consider the contentious aspects of the Soviet past, which spilled over into the idea for Dolutskii and Kudiukin to write “an honest history” of the Soviet experience.¹⁴⁷ This came to them only months before Solzhenitsyn’s tamizdat publication of *Gulag Archipelago* in 1973, though they did not follow through as according to Dolutskii, “There was no time, and there were no documents.” It was a year or two later that Dolutskii read, concealed behind a Spanish language textbook, a samizdat copy of *Gulag Archipelago* that was given to him chapter by chapter by Fadin.¹⁴⁸ Solzhenitsyn’s historical-literary investigation of the Soviet camp system became a source of inspiration for another *semidesiatniki* band of historians, who launched a samizdat journal that addressed the Soviet past, *Pamiat’* in 1976, which signals that Kudiukin and Dolutskii’s drive to write an independent history of the Soviet Union was not unknown to this generation.¹⁴⁹ However, Kudiukin’s diploma thesis, which was a study of the failed Kosygin reforms that attempted to introduce limited decentralisation and market elements into the planned economy in the 1960s, better foreshadowed the Young Socialists’ intellectual output. Prospective paths to political and economic reform in the Soviet Union became the central focus of the circle’s later samizdat, though their intellectual explorations were more often geared to understanding the mechanics of the more desirable reform socialist models outside the Soviet Union. Kudiukin had concluded from his diploma thesis that there was no easy way out from the stagnation of the Soviet party bureaucracy.¹⁵⁰ This belief contributed to the search for external sources of renewal that acquired different forms over the years of the circle’s existence. The early allure of the abroad, before it gave way to more measured reformist perspectives, was heavily influenced by the

¹⁴⁶ Kudiukin and Morozov, “Beseda.”

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Barbara Martin and Anton Sveshnikov, “Between Scholarship and Dissidence: The Dissident Historical Collection *Pamiat’* (1975-1982),” *Slavic Review* 76(4) (2017), 1010.

¹⁵⁰ Petr Cherkasov, *IMEMO: Portret na fone epokhi* (IMEMO: Portrait against the background of an era.) (Moscow: Ves’ Mir, 2004), 491-492.

circle's romantic attitude towards foreign revolutions, which they encountered at MGU through the forms of engagement with Latin America that occurred on the campus.

Latin America in Late Socialist Imaginary Geographies.

MGU's growing scholarly engagement with Latin America coincided with the years that Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government was in power in Chile – a development that generated hopes for democratic socialism among progressive youth in the Soviet Union. At MGU, those sentiments brought politicised *semidesiatniki* together in informal internationalist activism, while in classes on the region, students encountered knowledge that challenged popular perceptions that had developed from the East West divide, which inclined Soviet youth to associate capitalism economically with glossy consumerism. By the early-1970s, links to the outside world had become firmly integrated into the official structures of MGU. The globalised character of the university was buttressed by visits from famous foreigners, international scholarly cooperation and student exchange. In the case of Latin America, in 1972 Chilean leader Salvador Allende visited MGU and received an honorary doctorate from the university.¹⁵¹ In 1973, the university had agreements for inter-institutional cooperation with seventeen foreign universities. This included the University of Havana, where a reciprocal agreement was reached that increased MGU's curriculum focus on Spanish language and literature and the history and economy of Cuba and the countries of Latin America.¹⁵²

This newfound access to Latin America at MGU contributed to leftist students' imaginings of the continent as a location of renewed socialism. This vision existed in parallel with the Soviet imagined West,¹⁵³ and was part of a whole host of imaginary geographies conceived by late Soviet subjectivities. As Alexei Yurchak has described, this "imaginary elsewhere" that understandings of the abroad became under late socialism was the product of the outside world being largely inaccessible. Instead,

¹⁵¹ E.V. Il'chenko et al, eds. *Letopis' Moskovskogo Universiteta*, vol. II (three vols), (M. : Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 2004), 266.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 286.

¹⁵³ See: Yurchak, "Imaginary West: The Elsewhere of Late Socialism," *Everything Was Forever*, 158-206.

particular imaginings of the abroad came to exist as a result of its representation in Soviet news media and the consumption of foreign films, literature, music and other cultural products in late-Soviet society. These imaginings were fused to and dependent on the late-Soviet reality that they were produced within. Charting these imaginary geographies and contemplating the discourses that underpinned plotted locations and motivated their spatial relationships, including change over time, has the potential to reveal much about late Soviet subjectivities.¹⁵⁴

The Latin American studies curriculum at MGU brought with it sources of knowledge that the future Young Socialists used to formulate their developing leftism. Both Vorozheikina and Fadin, directly benefitting from these formal scholarly ties, elected to specialise in Latin American history and studied Spanish. Their interest in Latin America contributed to the critical attitude that they developed not only towards Soviet socialism, but also towards capitalism during their studies at MGU. They had begun to understand the world in the framework of the global north and south, where capitalism could also exist in impoverished, undemocratic conditions. This perception put them at odds with the views of many of their generation, who were more likely to associate capitalism's living standards with the exciting trends of the West. The allure of the popular culture of the West that led to its absorption and transformation within late Soviet youth culture marked it out as a place that had a large influence, albeit indirectly, on the minds of many *semidesiatniki*.¹⁵⁵ That the West was developed by scholars as the original imagined abroad of late socialism attests to its significance for this generation. Western music was a background soundtrack for many while they pursued their own lives away from the political sphere. But for the politically active Fadin and Kudiukin, the

¹⁵⁴ This process has been referred to as "mental mapping." It was first used in political science, see Alan K. Henrickson, "The Geographical 'Mental Maps' of American Foreign Policy Makers," *International Political Science Review* 1(4) (October 1980), 495-530. It has recently found its way into history. See, for example: Jonathan Wright and Steven Casey, eds., *Mental Maps in the Era of Détente and the End of the Cold War, 1968-1991* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). In Russian and Eastern European studies, mental mapping has been used to study the region's discursive relationships to the West, though locations further afield still remain to be plotted, see: Gyorgy Peteri (ed.), "Introduction: The Oblique Coordinate Systems of Modern Identity," in *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 1-4.

¹⁵⁵ On the role of the imagined West for this generation, refer to: Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 155-161; Sergei I. Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, identity and ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk, 1960-1985* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2010).

conception that capitalism could come in undesirable forms, which first arose in their thinking at MGU, became a source for their leftism that extended to the years of their dissidence and beyond the fall of the Soviet Union. This was in marked contrast to their peers, whose romanticised notions of the West gave them a rosier view, as well as many Soviet intellectuals who came to perceive capitalism as a cure for the economic inefficiency of the Soviet system – developments that took on great significance in the changed conditions of the Perestroika years. Fadin and Kudiukin’s graduate studies at IMEMO that devoted attention to dependency theory developed their views further. In the context of the economic decline of the late Brezhnev era, the weight of these perspectives caused the young dissidents to conclude in informal discussions that the Latin American capitalist states’ lower levels of development in fact presented a picture of what a capitalist future might look like in the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁶

These hypothetical capitalist imaginaries were a long way from the popular perceptions of the 1960s when socialism appeared to many in the Soviet Union to be the system of the future that was on the rise across the globe. The spread of revolution abroad was reflected back into the Soviet Union through the transfer of culture from newly socialist states,¹⁵⁷ and it was in this decade that imaginings of Latin America popularly took hold. Soviet perceptions of Latin America were dominated by the interacting tropes of revolutionary romanticism which most powerfully emanated from Cuba and mythical-exoticism, where colourful scenes of flamboyant dancers in a faraway tropical climate came to the Soviet mind, impassioned by the consumption of Latin American music, dancing, film, art and literature.¹⁵⁸ Many Soviet intellectuals and members of the elite were buoyed by the advances made by socialism globally, which coincided with the anticipated success of a de-Stalinised socialism within the Soviet Union – their enthusiastic reception of the romantic revolutionary elements of Latin American culture fed into this worldview. But by the end of the 1960s, the leadership’s retreat from de-Stalinisation largely led the intelligentsia to abandon their faith in the success of a

¹⁵⁶ Email communication with Pavel Kudiukin, 21 February 2020.

¹⁵⁷ Anne E. Gorsuch, “‘Cuba, My Love’: The Romance of Revolutionary Cuba in the Soviet Sixties,” *American Historical Review*, 120(2) (2015), 508.

¹⁵⁸ Tobias Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 80.

reformist Soviet project, and with it, their steadfast commitment to socialist internationalism as one of the values that was a component of that project. Latin America's romantic revolutionary character remained alive in the representations of that culture within the Soviet imaginary elsewhere, but popular commitment to those ideals among the intelligentsia and the political elite had been hollowed out.

Allende's years in power in Chile ignited romantic revolutionary sentiment among the next generation of progressive youth in the 1970s, but for the more critically-minded in this contingent, their enthusiasm was not accompanied by the same optimistic view of Soviet socialism that had typically been the case a decade earlier. Some of the dynamics of this attitude were expressed by Fadin:

It [was] [...] enough just to abandon double-think and to take seriously the values of the system to automatically become its opponent. It's banal. Genuine acceptance of the values of social justice, equality, internationalism, etcetera, inevitably turned any knowledge of the Red Terror, the famine of 1930-1933, the repression or deportation of peoples into motivation for fighting the system [...] But having reached this conclusion, where to seek support? It was obvious for my circle in the...1970s: in a living revolution, there, where the system still had not developed, where "everything was possible." This was Latin America – the revolutionary El Dorado for twenty years, the hero, Che, a figure who simultaneously opposed our system and the bourgeois West.¹⁵⁹

His statement was made from the distance of the early post-Soviet years when totalitarian interpretations of the Soviet system were expressed with less hesitation, though nevertheless Fadin's testimony reflects how the Stalinist past and incomplete de-Stalinisation persisted as a source of alienation beyond the *shestidesiatniki* and into the subjectivities of the politicised *semidesiatnik*. Moreover, it reveals how midway through the Brezhnev years, the Latin American socialist states represented a vital injection of revolutionary romanticism that provided sustenance for the socialist beliefs of these critically engaged youth. In a context where many of their own peers were indifferent to socialist politics, this allowed them to maintain the perception that there was a larger movement behind them, even if it was one that was distantly located. Latin American revolutionaries were all the more welcome as imagined allies in the context of the failure of socialist renewal in the Eastern Bloc, which was made visible by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the dissident movement's turn away from the Left.

¹⁵⁹ Fadin, "Katastroficheskaia tsena obnovleniia."

Internationalism from Below. The Creative Workshop of Experimental Propaganda (TMEFP).

Having set out some of the formative political influences that moulded room 242, this next section will turn to one way in which these developing political convictions were put into action. Revolutionary romanticism from below found its way onto the MGU campus in the grassroots solidarity initiatives that were among the future Young Socialists' first acts of independent civic activism. Dolutskii, Fadin, Kudiukin and Vorozheikina participated in the student collective, TMEFP (The Creative Workshop of Experimental Propaganda), a group that was founded by students of the physics faculty, which contained roughly fifty Soviet and a few Latin American students from the different faculties of MGU, though larger numbers of casual participants passed through during flashpoints of activity. TMEFP's major activities were the staging of propaganda exhibitions and grassroots *subbotniki* in support of internationalist causes. This colourful collective attracted self-defined leftists, who admired the revolutionary fighters of Cuba and Vietnam and the socialist experiment taking place in Chile. Other participants were drawn to TMEFP's unusual self-organised and unofficial format.¹⁶⁰ This feature marked it out as a unique undertaking during the Brezhnev years, when youth culture became more formalised and initiatives from below were discouraged, which was accompanied by the concession from above of greater access to forms of Western cultural consumption.¹⁶¹ The party committee's unusually permissive attitude toward TMEFP, which was registered with the MGU student council, can be linked to the greater indulgence shown to children of the elite.¹⁶² This section is not intended to be an exhaustive history of TMEFP, but a representative portrait of their activities and perspectives. It draws on short memoirs, visual sources and oral history materials, including recollections from a reunion of about fifteen former TMEFP activists that I attended in 2016.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Kudiukin.

¹⁶¹ Gleb Tsipurskii, *Socialist Fun: Youth, Consumption and State-Sponsored Popular Culture in the Soviet Union, 1945-1970* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016), 212-214.

¹⁶² Carole Sigman, *Politicheskie kluby i Perestroika v Rossii: Oppozitsiia bez dissidentsva* (M. : Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014), 83.

TMEFP's unofficial activism was as an unusually politicised response to the gap between state propaganda and Soviet reality that was increasingly visible to this generation.¹⁶³ Their activities illustrate how Yurchak's performative shift was nowhere near universal among elite youth: TMEFP's activists continued to take communist slogans seriously and were invested in restoring their meaning within the wider student milieu. The collective held propaganda exhibitions and self-organised *subbotniki* in support of Vietnam and Chile in the years 1971-1975. These practices of internationalism from below among youth in the Eastern Bloc during the early years of détente have been interpreted as one of the final outbursts of socialist idealism among this generation, though scholars have also noted the potential challenge to the state contained in this activism, due to the critical political sentiment that frequently lay behind this spontaneous expression of official values.¹⁶⁴ In the Soviet context, the uneasy balance of idealistic political engagement against the backdrop of sharpening stagnation carried the possibilities of "other-thinking" (*inakomyslie*) that later developed among some participants – the Young Socialists were not the group's only members to be charged with anti-Soviet agitation for underground socialist activities in the early-1980s.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ For example, Raleigh's Soviet baby boomers communicated their memories of the gulf between Soviet propaganda and the reality they saw around themselves in the 1970s, Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 3-4.

¹⁶⁴ For internationalist attitudes towards Chile, see James Mark and Péter Apor, "Socialism Goes Global: Decolonisation and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956-1989," *The Journal of Modern History* 87(4) (2015), 882-885; Yulia Gradszkova, "The Soviet Union: 'Chile is in Our Hearts.' Practices of Solidarity between Propaganda, Curiosity and Subversion," in *European Solidarity with Chile, 1970s-1980s*, eds. Kim Christiaens, Idesbald Goddeeris and Magaly Rodriguez Garcia (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), 339-340. For the dissident afterlives of internationalism, see: Péter Apor, James Mark, Piotr Osęka and Radina Vucetic, "'We are with you, Vietnam': Transnational solidarities in socialist Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50(3) (2015), 462.

¹⁶⁵ An MGU physics student during his years of participation in TMEFP and later researcher at the Institute of Physics of the Academy of Sciences, Evgenii Andriushin, was sentenced in 1983 to three years in the camps and two years of exile for writing an extended samizdat tract on workers and class relations in the Soviet Union. Andriushin was a fellow golden youth whose father was from a high party family. In addition, several TMEFP members became witnesses in Andriushin's case and the case of the Young Socialists. See issues of *Vesti iz SSSR* (17) (1982): <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/2016/12/13/delo-sotsialistov-1982-17-4/> and (12) (1983): <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/page/18/>.

Echoing the sentiments of pro-Viet Cong youth in other parts of the Eastern Bloc, many TMEFP participants viewed the conciliatory nature of détente with a critical eye, and saw it as confirmation of the state's declining revolutionary idealism.¹⁶⁶ Though fragmentary evidence suggests that this peacemaking initiative found support among many sections of Soviet society, for these politicised *semidesiatniki* it marked a disturbing break in the state's anti-imperialist narrative.¹⁶⁷ From the Soviet side, the build up of momentum for this policy shift came directly from Brezhnev, whose desire to avoid war with the United States carried the imprint of his generation's memories of the destruction of the Great Patriotic War.¹⁶⁸ Yet as the general secretary implied in a report to the Twenty-Fifth Party Congress in 1976, accommodation with the United States did not prevent active support for national liberation movements – a view that was put into practice as Soviet intervention in the Third World decisively increased during this decade.¹⁶⁹ These conflicting policy tracks both found homes in the Soviet establishment as the Foreign Ministry focused on relations with the United States, while the International Department promoted Third World intervention.¹⁷⁰ As seen on the ground at MGU, this jumble of priorities presented a confusing view that was further complicated by the leadership's high degree of secrecy, which left ordinary citizens in the dark on the specifics of their country's foreign policy beyond the inconsistent propaganda line.¹⁷¹

The student radicals of TMEFP made sense of this bewildering picture of contradictory narratives and incomplete information by transferring their

¹⁶⁶ Apor, Mark, Oseka and Vucetic, "We are with you, Vietnam," 457.

¹⁶⁷ Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 225.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 202.

¹⁶⁹ Mark Webber, "Out of Area' Operations: The Third World," in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, eds. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 112, 114.

¹⁷⁰ Artemii M. Kalinovskii, "The Soviet Union and the Global Cold War," in Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, Mark Selden, eds., *The Cambridge History of Communism. Volume III, Endgames? Late communism in global perspective, 1968 to the present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 84.

¹⁷¹ The shortage of information available to the public on the concrete nature of Soviet involvement in the Vietnam War and basic details of Richard Nixon's visit to Moscow in 1972 was observed by foreign correspondent Hedrick Smith. See, Smith, *The Russians*, 463-468.

impressions of the dimming of revolutionary culture that they saw in everyday life to the zone of Soviet engagement with the outside world. As a result, they viewed détente as a more fundamental indication of the Soviet state's ideological position than its sustained support for Third World revolutionaries. TMEFP's more radical moods clashed with the prevailing orientation of those in power – the *vydvizhentsy* generation, who rose through the ranks during years of war, terror and poverty, and came to oversee policies in the 1970s that aimed at domestic and international stability while providing increasingly attractive consumption prospects to Soviet citizens.¹⁷² An uncomfortable byproduct of this aging generation's distinctly post-revolutionary agenda was already apparent in the official celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution, whose messaging emphasised preserving and defending the state's existing accomplishments, which inevitably left little room for continued revolutionary fervour.¹⁷³ This direction was similarly evident in theoretical elaborations of developed socialism, an ambiguous body of thought whose conservative interpretations gained ground after 1968, which emphasised a restrained perfection of elements of the existing system rather than a full-throttle push towards communism as had been championed by Khrushchev.¹⁷⁴ The outlook of these politicised *semidesiatniki* came into conflict with this stabilising direction of late socialism, even as their generation reaped the benefits of postwar prosperity.

The competing concerns of the Soviet state, which had long been present in form of the revolutionary-imperial paradigm, provoked dissatisfaction among these youth when the Soviet leadership appeared to veer to the side of conventional state

¹⁷² On Brezhnev as characteristic of the *vydvizhentsy*, see Donald Raleigh, "'Soviet' Man of Peace: Leonid Il'ich Brezhnev and His Diaries," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 17(4) (2016), 837. On a culture of political stability in the Brezhnev years, see Susanne Schattenberg, "Trust, Familiarity and Care in the Politburo: Brezhnev's Scenario of Power," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 16(4) (2015), 839. On the Brezhnev leadership's pursuit of international stability in the Brezhnev years, see Jeremi Suri, "The Promise and Failure of 'Developed Socialism': The Soviet 'Thaw' and the Crucible of the Prague Spring, 1964-1972," *Contemporary European History* 15(2) (2006), 135.

¹⁷³ Bartłomiej Gajos, "Fading Red October: Soviet Youth and the Fiftieth Anniversary of the October Revolution," *Revolutionary Russia* 31(1) (2018), 119-120.

¹⁷⁴ Mark Sandle, "Brezhnev and Developed Socialism: The Ideology of *Zastoi*?" in *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, eds. Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 169.

interests with détente.¹⁷⁵ As a result of their more pessimistic attitude toward the reformist prospects of Soviet socialism, these politicised *semidesiatniki* felt that there was much more at stake in the success of foreign revolutions than had been the case for the previous generation during the 1960s. Détente became a source of embitterment, a capitulation to the forces of global imperialism. Sergei Pudenko, a former TMEFP activist and student of the physics faculty, later recalled this dynamic, “Détente was called. The discharge of tension. With a capital D. 1972 marked the first arrival of Nixon in Moscow, which coincided with a sharp aggravation of the war in Vietnam with massive raids and a large number of victims. The Komsomol had already begun what you could call ‘a struggle for peace.’”¹⁷⁶ However, in line with the state’s conflicting foreign policy priorities, during this period Soviet newspapers were awash with reporting on the Vietnam War that emphasised Soviet support for the beleaguered revolutionaries.¹⁷⁷ Over the course of the conflict, the Soviet public was bombarded with publications and broadcasts condemning the crimes of American imperialism.¹⁷⁸ The frequency of this coverage was illustrated by responses that TMEFP received in an impromptu poll that it conducted in 1972 in the MGU dorms on student attitudes to the Vietnam War, where a regular answer to their question on the poll participant’s awareness of the conflict was, “What, are you crazy, who does not know about this!”¹⁷⁹ Mass meetings that condemned imperialist violence, sessions with invited Vietnamese speakers, and fundraising for Vietnam were regular occurrences.¹⁸⁰ At MGU, *subbotniki* and evenings in solidarity with

¹⁷⁵ On the revolutionary-imperial paradigm, which refers to the demand of the balancing of conventional foreign policy concerns with revolutionary ideology, see Zubok, *A Failed Empire*, x.

¹⁷⁶ Sergei Pudenko, “Otryvok diskussii s ’30-letnimi’ – vospominaniia o TMEFP,” (Excerpt of the Discussion from ‘30 years’ – Memories of TMEFP.), 2003: <http://www.tmefp.com/Person/Pudenko/Pudenko.html>.

¹⁷⁷ Robert Hornsby, “The Post-Stalin Komsomol and the Soviet Fight for Third World Youth,” *Cold War History* 16(1) (2016), 97.

¹⁷⁸ Il’ia V. Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Inc., 1996), xi.

¹⁷⁹ Georgii Schalike, “Vecher pamiati Ernesto Che Guevary v MGU,” 15 June 2009: <http://born-in-ussr.livejournal.com/99417.html>.

¹⁸⁰ G. Popov and A. Serov, *The Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1975), 21.

Vietnam were organised by the Komsomol.¹⁸¹ Wider evidence suggests that the Vietnam War was a cause that elicited popular sympathy among youth across the Soviet Union.¹⁸² Though at MGU already in the mid-1960s, the American graduate student William Taubman observed a mass rally protesting US intervention in the Vietnam War made up of both Soviet and foreign students, and was struck by the evident disinterest on the part of the Soviet students.¹⁸³

TMEFP's activists considered Soviet news reporting and state sponsored forms of solidarity to be heavily routinised to the extent that they fostered indifferent or half-hearted attitudes to internationalist causes among their peers. Their dormitory polling picked up on the prevalence of what they regarded to be forms of "tokenistic" solidarity – writing wall newspaper articles or collecting wastepaper – or more often none at all.¹⁸⁴ These young radicals calculated that the main reason that the Vietnam War had not found greater resonance among other youth was due to the insincerity, or even duplicity, of the state's revolutionary rhetoric, which they perceived to have reached its height in the "double-dealing" of détente.¹⁸⁵ The US president's first visit in 1972 made a great impression on TMEFP's activists from their frontline view in Moscow. As the Western correspondent Hedrick Smith observed, along with citywide renovations and cleaning, even whole blocks of old apartments were burned down and taken away in an effort to showcase the Soviet capital to the Americans.¹⁸⁶ This was accompanied by Soviet newspapers temporarily toning down their criticism of the United States and its involvement in Vietnam.¹⁸⁷ The anti-imperialist student collective found themselves unwittingly

¹⁸¹ "Protokol no. 19, zasedaniia biuro komiteta VKLSM MGU," (Protocol no. 19, Session of the Bureau of the Komsomol Committee.), 29 March 1971, Central State Archive of the City of Moscow (OKhDOPIM), f. P-6083, op. 1, d. 182, l. 8-9.

¹⁸² Robert Hornsby, "The Enemy Within? The Komsomol and Foreign Youth Inside the Post-Stalin Soviet Union, 1957-1985," *Past and Present* (232) (2016), 251.

¹⁸³ William Taubman, *The View from Lenin Hills: Soviet Youth in Ferment* (London: H. Hamilton, 1968), 62.

¹⁸⁴ Schalike, "Vecher pamiati Ernesto Che Guevary v MGU."

¹⁸⁵ These sentiments echoed the perceptions of Hungarian politicised youth that Hungary and the Soviet Union were withholding adequate military assistance to Vietnam, Apor, Mark, Osęka and Vucetic, "We are with you, Vietnam," 452.

¹⁸⁶ Smith, *The Russians*, 19.

¹⁸⁷ Dimitri K. Simes, *Détente and Conflict: Soviet Foreign Policy 1972-1977* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1977), 11.

caught up in this performance when TMEFP activists from the historical faculty were assigned to a *subbotnik* that involved cleaning Leninskii prospekt, which they deduced with some outrage was in preparation for Nixon’s visit.¹⁸⁸



TMEFP’s Vietnam Exhibition, May 1972. The slogan reads, “The war is not there, in Indochina, but here, on our Earth.” The exhibition included paintings of American fighter planes leaving craters on the landscape of Indochina and a list of aggressive acts committed by the US between 1898 and 1972. (Personal archive of former TMEFP activist, Georgii Schalike.)

Evgenii Andriushin later recalled that on the eve of Nixon’s arrival, TMEFP activist Viktor Khlebnikov had romantically cried, “I will take the Vietnamese flag and throw myself under Nixon’s car!” But this unbridled romanticism was not standard within TMEFP’s milieu. More characteristic was Fadin’s measured dismissal as he reminded Khlebnikov that he would not be able to get anywhere near the motorcade and would probably just wind up in a *psikhushka*.¹⁸⁹ Instead of engaging in acts that contravened the acceptable boundaries of youth activism, this independent student collective was a conscious attempt to reinject ideological vitality into political culture. TMEFP’s activists attributed the relative apathy towards political causes that they encountered among the student body at MGU to

¹⁸⁸ Aleksei Bogantsev, TMEFP Meeting, Moscow, 20 November 2016.

¹⁸⁹ Evgenii Andriushin, TMEFP Meeting.

the failure of state propaganda to resonate with the Soviet public, in spite of the constant stream of internationalist reporting coming from the media. Evidence of its diminishing impact was also a concern of the state propaganda organ, Politizdat throughout the Brezhnev years, which identified the elimination of grey “schematic” language and the reversal of widespread disengagement from propaganda to be its most urgent task, even as it failed to successfully tackle these issues.¹⁹⁰

TMEFP’s activists responded by creating their own propaganda – an intent made clear in the student collective’s name, which consciously sought to evoke a sense of continuity with the experimental culture of Moscow in the 1920s and such names as the revolutionary poet Vladimir Maiakovskii and theatre director Vsevolod Meierhold.¹⁹¹ Despite this call back to the early-Soviet years, the forms and content of TMEFP’s propaganda were firmly located within late socialist culture. Drawing on entirely orthodox themes, the collective aimed to breathe new life into internationalism through exhibitions that were variously centred on the Paris Commune, the Spanish Civil War, Communism in Cuba, the Vietnam War, the Italian Communist Party and the Chilean events of 1973 – topics that were all enshrined in the Soviet internationalist canon.¹⁹² According to former TMEFP activist and student of the economics faculty, Aleksandr Surmava, these exhibitions, which were held in the main thoroughfares of MGU, were designed to appeal to students by “attracting their mind and touching their heart.”¹⁹³ TMEFP replaced what they saw as uninvigorating state propaganda with a colourful, Mexican muralist aesthetic – an artistic form that had entered popular culture during the Soviet revolutionary romance with Latin America during the 1960s.¹⁹⁴ Surmava later explained, “The place of the exposition, the selection of materials, and the style of decoration were chosen by us not accidentally, but as a defiantly democratic antithesis to the

¹⁹⁰ Polly Jones, “The Fire Burns On? The ‘Fiery Revolutionaries’ Biographical Series and the Re-thinking of Propaganda in the Brezhnev Era,” *Slavic Review* 74(1) (2015), 35.

¹⁹¹ Interview with Aleksandr Surmava, St Petersburg, 8 November 2016.

¹⁹² Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina; Pudenko, “Otryvok diskussii s ’30-letnimi.”

¹⁹³ Interview with Surmava.

¹⁹⁴ Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 109.

conventional Soviet ideological glamour.”¹⁹⁵ Unlike other unofficial artistic initiatives in the Eastern Bloc in this period whose intended audiences remained limited to circles of acquaintances, TMEFP’s centrally located propaganda displays aimed to mobilise a wider public.¹⁹⁶ This was reinforced by their drive to attract new members, which they succeeded in doing through their exhibitions and by posting signs around MGU inviting those who wanted “concretely help” Chile in the aftermath of the Pinochet coup. The potential of Chilean socialism to ignite strong feelings at MGU was observed by the visiting American graduate student Lewis Siegelbaum, who noticed a number of Soviet students weeping throughout a Chilean folk music performance shortly after the fall of Allende in 1973.¹⁹⁷

The shortlived Chilean experiment illustrated how the bipolar logic of the Cold War acted as a stranglehold on attempts to find a parliamentary road to socialism – a reality that would equally apply to Eurocommunism later in the decade. Allende’s years in power had stimulated the hopes of those on the global Left who were engaged in a search for a democratic socialism that would pose a genuine alternative to the Marxist-Leninist model.¹⁹⁸ This international attention registered with Kudiukin, who recalled in the year after the coup attentively reading the Italian Communist Party leader, Enrico Berlinguer’s reflections in the British communist publication *Marxism Today* on the lessons of Chile for building democratic socialism.¹⁹⁹ Allende’s violent overthrow in September 1973 amid the rise of a right-wing military dictatorship further captured the attention of this democratic Left and

¹⁹⁵ Aleksandr Surmava, “Ot Parizhskoi Kommuny do TMEFPa,” (From the Paris Commune to TMEFP.), N.D.: avramus.com/александр-сурмава/тмэфп/от-парижской-коммуны-до-тмэфпа.

¹⁹⁶ Rebecca Clifford, Juliane Furst, Robert Gildea, James Mark, Piotr Oseka, Chris Reynolds, “Spaces,” in *Europe’s 1968: Voices of revolt*, eds. Robert Gildea, James Mark, and Anette Warring (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 186-187.

¹⁹⁷ Lewis Siegelbaum, *Stuck on communism: Memoir of a Russian historian* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019), 52-53.

¹⁹⁸ Sebastian Hurtado-Torres, “The Chilean Moment in the Global Cold War: International Reactions to Salvador Allende’s Victory in the Presidential Election of 1970,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 21(3) (2019), 29.

¹⁹⁹ Email correspondence with Pavel Kudiukin, 21 February 2020; Enrico Berlinguer, “Reflections After the Events in Chile,” *Marxism Today* (February 1974), 39-50.

became a focus for its international solidarities,²⁰⁰ which were expressed in demonstrations, lobbying of governments for sanctions against the military junta, musical concerts and connections to Chilean exiles across the 1970s and 1980s.²⁰¹



TMEFP activist, Sergei Pudenko at the exhibition to commemorate the first anniversary of the Chilean coup d'état, Moscow State University, 11 September 1974. (Personal archive of former TMEFP activist, Georgii Schalike).

The Chilean events were also a defining moment for TMEFP. Some of the sharp emotions that its activists experienced were expressed by Evgenii Bunimovich, a TMEFP activist and student of the mathematics faculty, who recorded in his diary, “12 September 1973, Wednesday. What an agonising morning! Today we have Wednesday! We have calamity! I was unable to understand what to do! Blunt, persistent pain. Then – Chile. I want to go to Chile and fight.”²⁰² These politicised *semidesiatniki*'s agonised reactions to the crushing of this democratic socialist experiment echoed the *shestidesiatniki*'s response to the Soviet invasion of

²⁰⁰ Kim Christiaens, Magaly Rodríguez García, Idesbald Goddeeris (eds.), “A Global Perspective on the European Mobilisation for Chile (1970s-1980s),” in *European Solidarity with Chile, 1970s-1980s* (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), 20.

²⁰¹ Jan Eckel, “Allende’s Shadow, Leftist Furor, and Human Rights: The Pinochet dictatorship in international politics,” in *European Solidarity with Chile*, eds., Kim Christiaens, Magaly Rodríguez García, Idesbald Goddeeris (Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), 74-75, 86.

²⁰² A. Aronov, “Eto mnogo ili malo?” (Is this too much or not enough?) *Moskovskii komsomolets* (19 January 1975). [This is an article that interviews Bunimovich as a poet.]

Czechoslovakia five years earlier.²⁰³ Though in contrast to the aftermath of the Czechoslovak events in the Soviet Union, when a turning point for that generation's journey into dissent occurred, the right-wing suppression of socialism in Chile relieved these *semidesiatniki* of similarly difficult decisions and validated their protest in the eyes of the state. The Chilean cause was adopted by the Komsomol, who organised a largescale solidarity campaign that presented the Pinochet regime as a "fascist" dictatorship with a narrative that drew parallels between the struggle of the Chilean people and the Soviet fight against fascism during the war.²⁰⁴ At MGU, in the weeks after the coup a solidarity meeting was held that was accompanied by a university-wide *voskresnik* whose proceeds went to the Fond of Peace.²⁰⁵

At the same time as these official displays of solidarity occurred, the fall of Allende also connected politicised *semidesiatniki* in unofficial activism within the student milieu. According to Pudenko, who kept a record of new faces, 88 students became associated with TMEFP during the flashpoint of September 1973.²⁰⁶ The collective responded to the Chilean events by organising their own *subbotniki* and fundraising for Chile. This frenzy of unofficial activity at MGU marked the revival of the internationalist feeling of the 1960s within this small community. Though TMEFP's emotionally charged activism should at the same time be associated specifically with the fully-fledged character of MGU's links to the outside world, which had occurred by the 1970s, as the highly personal nature of their solidarity was connected to the relationships that they had formed with foreign students. In contrast to some Soviet youth, who viewed students from the Third World as a physical illustration of the state's financing of unreliable internationalist causes at their own expense, Soviet participants of TMEFP were particularly intrigued by this category of foreigner.²⁰⁷ A student of the biological faculty who belonged to TMEFP,

²⁰³ The parallels between successive generations' receptions of Dubcek's Czechoslovakia and Allende's Chile also occurred elsewhere in the Eastern Bloc, see: Mark and Apor, "Socialism Goes Global," 883.

²⁰⁴ Gradskova, "The Soviet Union: 'Chile is in Our Hearts,'" 334.

²⁰⁵ Il'chenko et al, eds. *Letopis' Moskovskogo Universiteta*, 280.

²⁰⁶ Pudenko, who kept a record, recalled that he personally noted 88 people passing through in the immediate aftermath of the fall of Allende. Sergei Pudenko, TMEFP meeting.

²⁰⁷ Constantin Katsakioris, "Burden or Allies?: Third World Students and Internationalist Duty through Soviet Eyes," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 18(3) (2017), 564.

Klavdii Kispoev recalled how he actively sought out the company of Third World students in order to learn more about their home countries, where he imagined there were “real communists, fighters against colonialism and American imperialism.”²⁰⁸

The friendships that developed between Third World students and Soviet participants of TMEFP created what Christina Schwenkel has called “affective solidarities,” a term that captures how these emotionally driven experiences played a role in fostering the internationalist convictions of political *semidesiatniki*.²⁰⁹ Due to the Soviet Union’s internationalist commitments of higher education and specialist training for its Third World and revolutionary allies, university campuses were a prime setting for these contacts between Soviet and Third World youth.²¹⁰ Connections extended to socialising between Soviet and Third World students in the dorms. A student of the historical faculty who belonged to TMEFP, Aleksei Bogantsev, recalled that regular social interactions with his Vietnamese neighbours, which included observations of the hardships in their letters from home, personalised the conflict for him and intensified his opposition to the Vietnam War.²¹¹ Though a majority of Third World students travelled to the Soviet Union purely for the valuable educational opportunities on offer, a minority were passionate supporters of the second superpower’s revolutionary ideology.²¹² The Latin Americans that gravitated towards TMEFP, whose anti-American sentiments were particularly strong, were a radicalising force for the student collective and

²⁰⁸ Email correspondence with Klavdii Kispoev, 7 January 2017.

²⁰⁹ Christina Schwenkel, “Affective Solidarities and East German Reconstruction of Postwar Vietnam,” in *Comrades of Colour: East Germany in the Cold War World*, ed. Quinn Slobodian (New York: Berghahn Press, 2015), 269-270.

²¹⁰ Hornsby, “The Enemy Within? The Komsomol and Foreign Youth Inside the Post-Stalin Soviet Union, 1957-1985,” 261; Katsakioris, “Burden or Allies?” 540-541, 546. At the same time, the KGB kept a cautious eye on these incoming foreigners, see: “Vopros min-va gradzhdanskoi aviatsii i KGB SSSR. Post. Sta TsK. v VUZakh MGA, gde obuchaiutsia inostrannye spetsialisty,” (Matter of the Ministry of Civic Aviation and the KGB of the USSR. Resolution of the Central Committee Secretariat. In Higher Education Institutions of the Ministry of Civic Aviation where Foreign Specialists Train.) April 1979. Soviet Archive of Vladimir Bukovskii, Fond 1.4 Internal Party Affairs. Document ST 154/42: <https://bukovsky-archives.net/pdfs/ideolog/ct154-79.pdf>.

²¹¹ Bogantsev, TMEFP Meeting.

²¹² According to Rupprecht, documents indicate that as a result of the selection procedures that were overseen by communist parties and friendship societies in their own region, Latin American students were more likely to be actively engaged leftists than students from Asia and Africa. See Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 197.

instigated its more daring actions.²¹³ Their presence heightened the Soviet participants' sense that those nations were outposts of revolution. This affective solidarity that Chile had belatedly conjured can also be found in a cycle of TMEFP activist, Bunimovich's poetry. Celebrated by TMEFP, "Spanish Lesson" contained the following lines:

A thin tiny ribbon
of a strange land,
it is as distant
as a crescent moon,
it is as splendid
as shooting stars,
and it is as sad
as birds' nests in winter.
Your young people
came to us,
they were wearing the same shaggy
the size of a half of a room
flares,
they had the same fate
and the same songs...
Mad news
is coming:
"Five days
(and it means five years)
the university in Santiago
was standing."
Hundreds were killed,
but the songs still could be heard from the cells.
They passed this exam.
Chile
had a Madonna-like oval face.
Chile
with whom I was dancing.
Chile
that used to sing so well,
maybe right now this Chile
is waiting
to be executed
by a firing squad...
With Chile we were shouting:
"NO PASARAN!"
Chile,
we will survive even with a thousand of wounds.
Hear me,
Earth,

²¹³ Pudenko, "Otryvok diskussii s '30-letnimi' – vospominaniia o TMEFP."

we did not grow weaker!
The ribbon of Chile
is like a wound from a sabre.²¹⁴

TMEFP's *subbotniki* for Chile approximated these activists' understandings of the ideal voluntary working day. "For the first time in my life, I found myself at a *subbotnik*" that lived up to state propaganda, later recalled Aleksei Bogantsev, a student of the historical faculty who belonged to TMEFP, unlike "our official Soviet *subbotniki* [which] by this time had already degenerated."²¹⁵ Beyond the work ethic, TMEFP's *subbotniki* were all about propaganda: Chilean students brought their national flags, volunteers displayed badges and armbands, guitars and music from spontaneous agitprop brigades played, and activists brought Soviet and foreign newspapers for information on the latest developments in Chile.²¹⁶ TMEFP went around the opaque Soviet foreign aid organisation, the Fond of Peace to hand their *subbotniki* earnings directly to Chilean nationals with connections to left-wing political parties, which was an unorthodox practice.²¹⁷ The badges that the activists wore to the *subbotniki* doubled as an additional fundraising effort and were sold at MGU for 50 kopecks.²¹⁸ They were decorated with pictures of Allende and Luis Corvalan, the Chilean communist leader, though Pudenko remembered that ninety percent of their badges were of Che Guevara, whose romantic revolutionary image was perpetually in demand.²¹⁹ Future Young Socialist, Vorozheikina who was on the TMEFP *subbotniki* organising committee emphasised the determined planning and negotiations with construction site managers that occurred to ensure that the volunteers were enthused by decent salaries and good working conditions – Vernadskii prospekt and Begovaia metro were two of the sites of TMEFP's *subbotniki*.²²⁰

²¹⁴ Aronov, "Eto mnogo ili malo?"

²¹⁵ Bogantsev, TMEFP Meeting.

²¹⁶ Tatiana Vorozheikina, "TMEFP Voskresniki": http://www.tmefp.com/Person/vorozhejkina/vorozhejkina_tatyana.htm.

²¹⁷ Interview with Kudiukin.

²¹⁸ Schalike, TMEFP Meeting.

²¹⁹ Pudenko, TMEFP Meeting.

²²⁰ Vorozheikina, "TMEFP Voskresniki." On the locations, Andriushin and Irina Bogantseva, TMEFP Meeting.

The strict ideological direction of these initiatives was at odds with other forms of organised youth labour in this period. Though official student construction brigades (SSOs) occasionally donated portions of their earnings to internationalist causes, they were more typically vehicles for students to earn their own wages carrying out summertime work, which the state welcomed as a cheap pool of labour, especially at harvest time.²²¹ This transactional nature of SSOs reached its height in the major youth construction project of the Brezhnev years, the building of the Baikal-Amur Railway, where youth were attracted to work in haphazard conditions by an overblown propaganda campaign and incentives of foreign travel, lucrative bonuses and automobile vouchers.²²² Youth labour was routinely deployed as a stopgap to satisfy the demands of the poorly organised Soviet economy, while considerations from above on whether the SSO format effectively indoctrinated youth or encouraged ideological activism were relegated to the background.²²³ By the beginning of Perestroika this treatment reached such proportions that, according to his aide, Anatolii Cherniaev, Gorbachev criticised the party's "users' attitude," which glibly treated youth as a handy source of menial labour, at a Politburo meeting in 1985.²²⁴ The often alienating character of this work was a thread that ran all the way through the late socialist years, though the wider circumstances of ideological disengagement that occurred under Brezhnev exacerbated its effects from the 1970s. At MGU, students' detached response to the demands of SSO labour was noted by TMEFP activist and chemistry faculty student Georgii Schalike in a report for his scientific communism class. Referencing the discussions of a general faculty meeting that highlighted the problems of "a psychology of self-interest" and "violations of discipline" among chemistry SSOs, Schalike outlined TMEFP's experimental construction brigade format as a potential solution.²²⁵

²²¹ Gradskova, "The Soviet Union: 'Chile is in Our Hearts,'" 338.

²²² Christopher J. Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly: The building of BAM and Late Soviet Socialism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 127.

²²³ Steven L. Solnick, *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 114.

²²⁴ The Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, August 27 1985.

²²⁵ Georgii Schalike, "Osnovnye voprosy organizatsii eksperimental'nogo SSO – studencheskoi trudovoi internatsional'noi brigady (STIB)." (Basic Questions of the Organisation of an Experimental Student Construction Brigade – Student International Labour Brigade.), Report prepared for Department of Scientific Communism, 1974, 1. Personal Archive of Georgii Schalike.

What was behind TMEFP's attempts to reinvigorate student political culture, yet without carrying out any significant reinvention of the Komsomol format? At first glance, their drive to inject greater sincerity into already established forms of student activism tempts us to associate their activities with what some other scholars have ascribed to the Soviet dissident movement – a lack of imagination in calling for the improvement of the existing system instead of proposing a genuine alternative.²²⁶ But TMEFP's spirited re-enactment of official forms of activism occurred precisely because its activists did not see their intentions – revitalisation rather than rebellion – in terms of dissent and were conscious of avoiding such accusations. According to Aleksandr Surmava, the group was determined “comprehend and understand” rather than “rush to sit in a *psikhushka* or a prison cell.”²²⁷ Instead, TMEFP used traditional forms of student political mobilisation to bring publicity to internationalist causes that in their eyes countered the stagnation of Soviet socialism. More promising means of contextualising their actions may be found by looking further afield to East Central Europe where scholars have traced the life paths of particular dissidents, whose earliest experiences of autonomous political activity were inspired by the internationalist causes of Vietnam and Chile, before they evolved to anti-socialist positions from the late-1970s.²²⁸ This sense of a political and intellectual journey, where TMEFP can be conceptualised as a turning point in an evolution towards more critical political positions equally applied to the experience of these activists, who in some cases discovered socialist dissent later in the decade or began political careers during Perestroika.²²⁹

²²⁶ See, for example, Serguei Oushakine, “The Terrifying Mimicry of Samizdat,” *Public Culture* 13(2) (2001), 198-199.

²²⁷ Aleksandr Surmava, TMEFP Meeting (participating via Skype).

²²⁸ James Mark, Artemii M. Kalinovskii and Steffi Marung (eds.), “Introduction,” in *Alternative Globalisations: Eastern Europe and the Post-Colonial World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 19.

²²⁹ Though many former TMEFP activists entered *neformaly* politics during Perestroika, two of those who attained significant standing were Irina Bogantseva, who became a deputy of the Moscow Soviet, and Iurii Mitiunov, who was a leader of the anti-totalitarian Democratic Union.



Che badge #1: Georgii Schalike with Bamori Diarra and Maiga, Moscow 1975 (VK).



Che badge #2: Aleksandr Surmava with his mother, Tbilisi, 1974. (Facebook).



TMEFP's mural, which was part of their exhibition to commemorate the first anniversary of the Chilean coup d'état, Moscow State University, 11 September 1974. (Personal archive of Georgii Schalike).

The orthodox format of TMEFP's activism, which granted its activists access to the public spaces of MGU, was able to disguise notes of dissatisfaction in its ranks, which were brought out by the clash of their idealism against the backdrop of an aging socialism. This particular ambiguity that was present in TMEFP's internationalism from below was most visible at their largest event, an evening in memory of Che Guevara, when the group's romantic revolutionary mood occupied the space of MGU for one night. Coordinated jointly with the Komsomol, the evening of Che Guevara was organised by Fadin and fellow TMEFP activist, Fernando Callery-Salas, a Peruvian student known to his friends as Mario, who studied in the biological faculty and was the son of one of the founders of the Peruvian communist party. The evening took place on 8 October 1972, which coincided with the fifth anniversary of Che's assassination and the annually celebrated Day of the Heroic Guerrilla in Cuba.²³⁰ Che's memory was commemorated that night by representatives from the Soviet intellectual elite. Kiva Maidanik, the famous Latin Americanist was invited by the well-connected Fadin to speak, and Sergo Mikoian,

²³⁰ Schalike, "Vecher pamiati Ernesto Che Guevary v MGU."

Latin Americanist and son of former Soviet Politburo member Anastas Mikoian, shared his recollections of meeting Che Guevara. The evening was also marked by the attendance of the Cuban and Vietnamese ambassadors.²³¹

Highlighting their engagement with official spaces rather than the retreat from them, Vorozheikina later remembered how deeply the evening struck a chord with her, “The largest hall of MGU was absolutely full. I came, and Mario met me and told me, ‘This is the first liberated territory of the university.’”²³² Though, the entanglement of their romantic revolutionary passions with the university’s officialdom points to the accommodation their initiative found within the sphere of officially promoted internationalism. This spontaneous engagement with socialism among elite youth appeared to be a stabilising force that outwardly affirmed the continued vitality of Soviet internationalism. But conversely, this enthusiasm could also harbour disruptive energies for student political culture. Fadin’s activism progressed from his organisation of Che Guevara’s memorial to his prominent role a year later in the future Young Socialists’ attempted reform of the Komsomol that resulted in the expulsion of one of their number from the university.

Prelude to Dissent. The wall newspaper episode.

In his address to the Twenty-Fifth Party Congress that took place during the future Young Socialists’ final year at MGU in 1976, Brezhnev criticised Komsomol activists’ “bureaucratic approach” and formalism that “extinguished the flame” of communist enthusiasm in the hearts of youth.²³³ The stolid character of the organisation of student political culture that attracted Brezhnev’s rebuke was accompanied by two more adverse trends that were on the rise in the Komsomol in these years. Policies of mass participation were bloating the organisation with a largely apathetic membership, while the increasing regularity of Komsomol recommendation as the path to party membership had marked it out as a haven for careerism rather than ideological conviction.²³⁴ The MGU historical faculty had presented a problematic setting for the Komsomol as early as the late Stalin years,

²³¹ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Solnick, *Stealing the State*, 70.

²³⁴ Ibid., 77, 98.

when its organisers had declined to hold political seminars owing to their “waste of time.”²³⁵ In spite of the seemingly unpromising possibilities for generating ideological enthusiasm in this space, or perhaps precisely because of their drive to change that, the future Young Socialists chose the Komsomol as a base from which to agitate their critical socialist views, with the broader aim of the reforming Soviet socialism from within its own structures at a grassroots level. Following discussions in the dorm room, Dolutskii, Fadin and Kudiukin put themselves up for election to the historical faculty’s Komsomol committee in mid-1973, towards the end of the second year of their studies. The committee, elected annually at a general Komsomol meeting of the faculty, was composed of seven to thirteen members, who led student activism and oversaw the everyday social life of the faculty.²³⁶ The trio’s efforts were moderately successful: Dolutskii was elected to the editorship of the wall newspaper, though Fadin and Kudiukin did not win sufficient votes to join the committee.

Active participation in the Komsomol and the expression of reform-minded views in this official forum were a well-trodden path for those who later engaged in dissent.²³⁷ The Komsomol’s potency as a space that attracted individuals who expressed critical reformist views reached its height in the aftermath of the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956.²³⁸ The unlikely renewal of its pull fifteen years later can be attributed to the fact that the Komsomol continued to be the only real game in town for student political activity. But evidence of a qualitatively different political life outside of the university came to the future Young Socialists that summer and fall in the form of press reports on the trial of Piotr Yakir and Viktor Krasin and their televised repentance for their dissident activities, which Kudiukin

²³⁵ Juliane Fürst, *Stalin’s Last Generation: Soviet Post-War Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 2010), 322.

²³⁶ G.P. Oprishchenko, “Biuro VLKSM,” in Karpov, ed., *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar’ Moskovskogo Universiteta*, 65.

²³⁷ See, for example, Sergei Kovalev’s testimony in Gleb Morev, *Dissidenty: Dvadsat’ razgovorov* (M. : Izdatel’stvo AST, 2017), 44-45; Leonid Pliushch, *Na karnavale istorii* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1979), 26: <https://www.sakharov-center.ru/asfcd/auth/?t=book&num=2056>; Valerii Ronkin, *Na Smenu dekabriam prikhodiat ianvari...* (M. : Zven’ia, 2003), 120: <https://www.sakharov-center.ru/asfcd/auth/?t=book&num=1757>. The use of the Komsomol as a space to champion reformism during the Thaw applied not only to future dissidents, but was also a notable feature of the biographies of leading intellectuals of the Perestroika era, see: Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 68-69.

²³⁸ Robert Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev’s Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 34.

recalled did not disgrace the dissidents in his eyes, but rather discredited the regime for breaking these individuals.²³⁹

As the emergent second generation of the dissident movement, the future Young Socialists observed its pioneers from a distance. Jan Wielgohs and Viktor Voronkov have argued that the development of the human rights movement should be understood as an outcome of the particular generational experience of the *shestidesiatniki*.²⁴⁰ The second generation's return to socialism may be explained by their comparative distance from the abuses of the Stalin era and the inconsistencies of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation, which preserved the ideology for them. But the *semidesiatniki*'s coming of age after the invasion of Czechoslovakia also meant they had less illusions about the Soviet leadership. This allowed them to dissent with greater ease than the previous generation, who had undergone a long and painful coming to terms, which had resulted in the complete rejection of socialism for some. The *semidesiatniki*'s rediscovery of this ideology as a language of dissent was due to their belief that socialism contained as yet unrealised potential, but it was also based on what the revolution had already accomplished, even if this was not admitted as often. They were born in the years when the Soviet Union was already a superpower and war victor, and grew up during the most stable and prosperous period of its existence when living standards were visibly on the rise, and socialism was spreading in potentially inspiring forms across the globe.²⁴¹ The constant presence of socialist slogans and ideology throughout Soviet society, and especially in the educational system, made it the most natural belief system for politically engaged *semidesiatniki* to seize upon. Midway through the Brezhnev years, this ideology still retained the power to attract critical youth from the elite.

The future Young Socialists' wall newspaper articles were first of all propaganda efforts that were intended to secure broader support for their critical views at the university. This was in contrast to the wall newspapers of the early-Thaw, whose editors were caught up in the consequences of the Twentieth Party

²³⁹ Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

²⁴⁰ Viktor Voronkov and Jan Wielgohs, "Soviet Russia," in Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgohs, eds., *Dissent and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe: Origins of Civil Society and Democratic Transition* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), 106.

²⁴¹ On the character of this generation and its stake in the Soviet system, see, David L. Ruffley, *Children of Victory: Young Specialists and the Evolution of Soviet Society* (London: Praeger, 2003), 11-13; Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 218-219.

Congress and the reactions it caused that rippled down to the everyday life of the faculty.²⁴² The atmosphere of stability under Brezhnev gives the future Young Socialists' actions a more calculated air than the earlier generation who were led by events. What emerged from their wall newspaper was a critical commentary of the organisation of student life under Soviet socialism. They operated within a specific press genre of late-Soviet culture that structured the delivery of their message, while an audience of fellow history students tempered their choice of subjects, language and allusions. Wall newspapers ranged from being bland and perfunctorily composed to artistic and literary, or even gossipy in content. Those more creative in form contained agitprop poetry and satirical anecdotes.²⁴³



Pavel Kudiukin, Andrei Fadin and Igor Dolutskii during a historical faculty archaeological expedition in Novgorod, July 1973 during the time they edited the wall newspaper of the Komsomol cell of the historical faculty (VK).

²⁴² On wall newspapers at MGU during the Thaw, see Olga Gerasimova, "Ottepel'," *Zamorozki," i Studenty Moskovskogo universiteta* (M. : AIRO-XXI, 2015), 331-354.

²⁴³ Catriona Kelly, "A Laboratory for the Manufacture of Proletarian Writers': The Stengazeta (Wall Newspaper), Kul'turnost' and the Language of Politics in the Early Soviet Period," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 54(4) (Jun. 2002), 579.



Pavel Kudiukin, September 1973 (VK).

Under Dolutskii's editorship, the poetic and satirical forms that occupied the more ambitious end of the wall newspaper genre were used to great effect to target what they considered to be poorly organised ideological features of Soviet life that were experienced by MGU students. The first of these that was addressed in the wall newspaper was the *subbotnik*, where it was purported that this voluntary working day was considered an unnecessary ritual by a majority of students, and the way the Komsomol organised it further discredited it.²⁴⁴ By targeting the *subbotnik*, the future Young Socialists concentrated on a matter that directly affected their readership, and made use of the wall newspaper as a propagandising platform to find backing among the course for their broader views.

Rather than amassing support for their critical views, Kudiukin admitted that instead their editorship of the wall newspaper had immediately caused irritation amongst their course mates, who were exasperated by their "clever" tone and unnecessary zealotry for Komsomol work that nobody else took seriously. The wall newspaper was officially entitled *Your Opinion*, but as the editors, they had added an epigraph from Aleksandr Griboedov's nineteenth century satire, *Woe from*

²⁴⁴ Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

Wit, quoting from two characters, Molchalin and Chatskii, “In my years, I daren’t have my own opinion,” and “I beg your pardon, we are not kids. Why should only the opinions of others be respected?” The quotation drew parallels between Molchalin and his sycophantic and ultimately self-serving attitude and the mindless ideological parroting motivated by careerism often found in the Komsomol, while at the same time juxtaposing Chatskii’s real interrogation of values, which were presumably in line with the mission of the wall newspaper’s editors. The epigraph was also an implied criticism of what the editors perceived as the Soviet regime’s practice of instructing citizens’ attitudes from above rather than allowing them to spontaneously form from below.

The third issue was a creative literary reconstruction of recent events in the historical faculty, which turned into the future Young Socialists’ first brush with dissent. The idea for the issue originated in September 1973 at the beginning of their third year when the course returned from the *kartoshka*, a colloquialism for students being sent to collective farms to gather the harvest alongside the farmers. Kudiukin remembered the atmosphere, “The coup d’etat in Chile, this *kartoshka*, old Brezhnev, ‘*Dorogie tovarishchi*’” (“Dear comrades,” which was pronounced with slurred words by Kudiukin – a reference to the speech patterns of Brezhnev in his old age)²⁴⁵ galvanised them.²⁴⁶ What resulted was Kudiukin’s account of TMEFP’s *subbotniki* for Chile. Karpiuk wrote an article about the *kartoshka*, which concluded with the phrase, “In ancient Rome there were no potatoes...” The allegorical meaning was that both potatoes and slavery existed in the Soviet Union in the form of the *kartoshka*. His article called attention to how this practice was ineffective as a mechanism of instilling socialist values in students, which was not an entirely controversial viewpoint as it had also found a platform in *Komsomol’skaia Pravda* in 1971, when a letter to the editor suggested the reconsideration of this practice due to its harmful effect on the ideological outlook of youth.²⁴⁷

These criticisms of the organisation of student culture were an echo of the wall newspapers of 1956, though the editors from this earlier era targeted the Komsomol in particular, and the question of its democratisation or independence

²⁴⁵ This is in fact an example of false memory as Brezhnev was not yet slurring in 1973.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Kudiukin.

²⁴⁷ Ruffley, *Children of Victory*, 107.

from the party.²⁴⁸ Instead of debating the Komsomol's reform within their wall newspaper, the future Young Socialists had forged ahead with its infiltration. Their actions marked them out as less self-conscious and contemplative than the *shestidesiatniki*, who had been grappling with questions of the party's post-Stalin capacity for reform. These answers were more readily apparent for these emerging dissidents of the next generation, who had connected the unengaging organisation of student life to the stagnation of Brezhnev era socialism.

The final item in the wall newspaper that satirised the Soviet leadership tipped the issue into dissent. It may be argued that caught up in their own cleverness and taken by a sense of glamour that dissent held, these naive youth intended to provoke in a manner that brushed against its edges, but they became carried away and unintentionally risked the bright futures that MGU graduates could expect. The emerging second generation of dissidents were not as unschooled as the first, who had no precedent with which to estimate the post-Stalin authorities' response to acts of dissent. But their cynical attitude towards the leadership and its reformist capabilities, which distinguished these critical youth from those of the previous generation, burst through in a satirical portrayal of the Soviet leaders that criticised the disappearance of genuine socialism after Lenin. This was a poem written by Dolutskii named *Mamlet*:

From the editors: In this issue, we are introducing a literary column in our newspaper, and we introduce a parody. Author's introduction: The act takes place in a country where, after the victory of the revolution, reaction comes to power. The people are silent.

Mamlet Act 1, Scene 1:

Scene one at the entry to the palace cavern with two mammoth-sentries.

First sentry: "Since the death of mammoth number one, there has been no truth in our coniferous forest, and some flora and fauna have greatly changed. Something is rotten in our kingdom."

The second mammoth: "Only the fir rots, dumped by the tusk. Everything is as according to the will of Heaven."

The first mammoth: "Then there is no truth in Heaven, when at first all were ruled by only one, the Great Mammoth, then he was replaced by some Wild Mammoth that more closely resembled an elephant of the epoch of the Pliocene tertiary period than the leader of two-tiered giants. Now a new leader has appeared – so where is the truth?"

²⁴⁸ Gerasimova, "Ottepel'," "Zamorozki," i *Studenty Moskovskogo universiteta*, 332-334.

The second mammoth: “Eh, my friend, those jokes do not suit you - for this it is possible end up in a hole, large and deep, with a broken scruff, without wool and without tusks.”

They leave.

The end. To be continued.²⁴⁹

The mammoths were allegorical; mammoth one being Lenin, the great mammoth Stalin, Khrushchev was the wild mammoth and the new leader was Brezhnev.²⁵⁰ Karpiuk’s allusion to ancient Rome and Dolutskii’s satirising of Shakespeare coupled with the elaborate literary device of the mammoth illustrated a shared habitus in the MGU historical faculty where the wall newspaper editors intended for their readership to understand their allusions to classical English literature and ancient history to refer to contemporary Soviet reality. But rather than securing the support of their peers, this act of dissent contravened the permitted discourses of the space of student activism, and the future Young Socialists encountered the repressive mechanisms that existed at the edges of everyday life at the university.

As earlier socialist dissident circles had encountered, the authorities responded particularly ferociously to what were perceived as personal attacks on the leadership. Biographies of the Soviet leaders that made clear their complicity in the crimes of the Stalin era were published by the Leningrad socialist dissident circle, Union of Communards in the early 1960s in their samizdat journal, *Kolokol*. In a later recollection, one of the circle’s leaders, Valerii Ronkin, detailed that upon learning about his own biography, Politburo member Mikhail Suslov intervened to give the Leningrad authorities permission to impose upon at least the leaders the “maximum term.”²⁵¹ Though Dolutskii’s transgression did not attract ire on the same scale, the wall newspaper was only briefly displayed before it was removed by one of the Komsomol Committee members, and disciplinary measures commenced. The newspaper was taken to the Party Committee of the historical faculty, which was

²⁴⁹ This text is from Kudiukin’s memory and translated by me. He recited *Mamlet* nearly identically in his interview with Konstanin Morozov in 2007 and myself in 2016. There was one complete copy of the wall newspaper that was confiscated by the party committee. The original copies of *Mamlet* written by hand and typewritten were destroyed by Dolutskii during the time of the Young Socialists’ arrests during 1982.

²⁵⁰ Interview with Kudiukin.

²⁵¹ Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sdredi dissidentov*, 56.

later followed by a Komsomol meeting of the historical faculty. A motion to expel Dolutskii from the Komsomol was passed despite some resistance from his course mates.²⁵² Dolutskii was later quietly expelled from the university over the winter break.²⁵³ For their role in the affair, Fadin and Kudiukin suffered severe reprimands, while Karpiuk was issued with a warning.

Conclusion.

What does the future Young Socialists' everyday life at MGU tell us about the origins of socialist dissent among *semidesiatniki*? How did their experiences at MGU contribute to the intellectual and organisational format of their later dissent?

The MGU years of the Young Socialists illustrate the continued presence of politicised subjectivities among the last Soviet generation. The views that were expressed in room 242, which varied from liberal-leaning, to anti-communist, to socialist, demonstrate some of the range of this decade. These orientations were reflective of the more diverse ideological currents in circulation in Soviet society after 1968, which found their way to MGU from sources as varied as the influence of families, the educational system, the dissident movement, sentiments in the party and intelligentsia, and from abroad. The socialist majority in room 242, who were committed to this ideology and at the same time critical of the Soviet leadership, were a minority among their generation. In many ways their worldviews were closer to the subjectivities of the *shestidesiatniki*. This outcome was partially fostered by the continuity of the spaces of student culture that recreated a 1960s *kompaniia* in a 1970s dorm room.

The political discussions in room 242 had a mobilising effect on its socialist inhabitants, and they spread these critical attitudes to the activist settings of TMEFP and the Komsomol. Their confrontations with the authorities – camouflaged during TMEFP's evening of Che Guevara and open in the Komsomol wall newspaper – were based on their determination to assert their own understandings of socialism and socialist student culture. Staging these challenges in prominent spaces of MGU, which were ideologically significant and closely monitored by the authorities,

²⁵² Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda."

²⁵³ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

resembled the *shetidestiatniki's* similar contestations during the years of de-Stalinisation rather than the behaviour of their own generation, who treated these spaces as immutable and unchanging. Yet these politicised *semidesiatniki's* attitudes were responses to the conditions of the 1970s, when they observed with dissatisfaction the growing ideological detachment of their peers that occurred alongside the slowing of the tempo of political life in the country.

The year after their graduation, they returned again to political action. During the summer months of 1977, at Fadin and Kudiukin's instigation, the group transformed from a critical-minded company of friends into an underground dissident circle. This evolution reflected their continued determination to influence change, coupled with their conclusion following the wall newspaper affair, that these activities should not be carried out openly where they would immediately attract the eye of the KGB. The romantic revolutionary mood that the circle discovered in its encounters with Latin America at MGU was critical as the motor that powered the Young Socialists' dissent in its early years. But as they matured, their Third Worldist passions increasingly gave way to the more intellectualised, reformist influences of Eurocommunism and *Solidarność*, which they distinguished as having greater application in Soviet conditions.

Not all of room 242 followed Fadin and Kudiukin into dissent. In some cases, their will foundered in the face of changed priorities or new attitudes. Vorozheikina had become a Latin American specialist at the prestigious Institute of World Economy and International Affairs (IMEMO), and was more committed to the politics of that region rather than the domestic environment of the late Brezhnev years.²⁵⁴ She and Dolutskii had married and had a daughter. After his expulsion, Dolutskii served in the army, later returning to MGU where he graduated from the historical faculty in 1979. As a high school teacher, he found teaching his values to youth to be a meaningful form of civic activity, and lost interest in other channels.²⁵⁵

The two distinctive drives of ideological passions and friendship that had animated room 242 came to determine the structure of their dissident circle. When the network expanded in the late-1970s, as their number of politicised acquaintances grew while they were junior researchers at IMEMO, Fadin and

²⁵⁴ Email Communication with Vorozheikina, 17 June 2019.

²⁵⁵ Email Communication with Dolutskii, 17 June 2019.

Kudiukin, together with four new conspirators were at its centre. They were distinguished by their determination coupled with ideological positions that were located across the leftist spectrum. The rest of room 242 became part of the outer circle, and were readers of their samizdat, but were primarily associated with the circle because of the degree of trust that existed among them rather than ideological conviction. Both graduate students at MGU, Karpiuk was immersed in ancient history, while Zaichenko continued his nonconformist intellectual explorations, and became connected with religious dissent.²⁵⁶ But despite their distance from the illegal activities of the centre of the circle, all of room 242 fell under KGB scrutiny due to their close personal relations.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Zaichenko.

“The Anti-Soviet Mood of the Scientific Workers.” Cultures of Reform and Dissent within the Soviet Intellectual Elite.

Introduction.

In a session of the Politburo on 8 April 1982, then-Chairman of the KGB, Yuri Andropov, disclosed information that state security had collected on the “anti-Soviet mood of the scientific workers,”²⁵⁷ who he named as Andrei Fadin and Pavel Kudiukin, both junior scholars at the prestigious Moscow-based research institute, IMEMO (Institute of World Economy and International Relations), who were then being interrogated in Lefortovo prison. Andropov outlined their perceived anti-Soviet activities and located them at the centre of a wider circle of young, privileged and well-educated Soviet intellectuals that had been engaged in the production of samizdat. He reported that the KGB believed their aim to be “replacing the existing system in the USSR with so-called ‘democratic socialism in the interests of all workers,’” and, further remarked, “In matters of practical activities, the group raises the task of uniting disparate groups into a single organisation to secure a broad communication between the masses within the country and abroad.”²⁵⁸ In a report issued two months after the arrests, the newly appointed chairman of the KGB, Vitalii Fedorchuk, emphasised the conspiratorial reach of the two junior researchers within IMEMO through their dissemination of their own samizdat publications and anti-Soviet literature to other scholars at the institute,²⁵⁹ who in turn failed to report Kudiukin’s and Fadin’s anti-Soviet views to the authorities.

²⁵⁷ “Session of the Politburo TsK CPSU, 8 April 1982,” cited in Petr Cherkasov, *IMEMO: Portret na fone epokhi* (IMEMO: Portrait against the background of an era.) (Moscow: Ves’ Mir, 2004), 492.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ The scholars that Fedorchuk named were Latin Americanist, member of the CPSU and Fadin’s supervisor, Kiva Maidanik; Doctor of Science and CPSU member Viktor Sheinis; scientific researcher and member of the Komsomol committee, Olga Ivanova (later Fadina, Fadin’s future wife); Tatiana Vorozhkeina; Candidate of Science, who was sentenced in 1958 for anti-Soviet activity, Marat Cheshkov, and the researchers Grigorii Rzheshhevskii, Viktor Danilov, and Vasili Skorokhodov, in Vasili Fedorchuk, “O khode sledstviia po ugovnomu delu na Fadina, Kudiukina, i dr.,” (On the progress of the Investigation into the Criminal Case against Fadin, Kudiukin, and others.), cited in Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 496.

The arrest of the Young Socialists occurred in the context of broader moves by conservative forces that were designed to undermine the liberal currents within the party elite, and to suppress the dissident movement at the end of the Brezhnev era. The case was used to compromise the authority of the liberal-thinking institutes during the ensuing struggle for leadership succession, and was also part of the KGB's final blow against the dissident movement. In the early-1980s, at the endpoint of Brezhnev's long ill health, politically attuned liberal and conservative forces alike had become conscious of the decline occurring in the country and recognised that with the approaching end of Brezhnev's rule, the country was at a crossroads for its future.²⁶⁰ Against the backdrop of the power vacuum created by the absence of Brezhnev and other senior Politburo members due to old age and sickness, conservative "second tier" Politburo figures and hard-line senior Central Committee members launched attacks against the establishment liberals, which were intended to counter reformist initiatives and to clear the path for a conservative drive to determine the agenda of the country after Brezhnev's exit.²⁶¹ Simultaneously, Andropov was positioning himself to succeed as General Secretary with a KGB supported agenda that prioritised a platform of law and order, anti-corruption policies, and an anti-Western outlook coupled with dedicated domestic vigilance.²⁶² The conservative foreign policy troika of Gromyko, Andropov and Ustinov successfully championed military intervention in Afghanistan, which attracted widespread international condemnation and ended the détente of the 1970s.²⁶³ Freed from the constraint of the leadership's sensitivity to Western public opinion following the decline in international relations, the KGB had freer hands to increase its persecution of dissidents. The war in Afghanistan, the Moscow Olympics and the Polish crisis of 1980-1981 all created an environment of heightened domestic vigilance that fed into conservatives' desires to contain unreliable elements.²⁶⁴ The

²⁶⁰ Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, intellectuals, and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 160-161.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 169-170.

²⁶² Simon Young, "An Honourable Task for Chekists,' The Moscow Olympics and the Role of the Security Services in Late-Soviet Politics, 1975-1980," *Russian History* 43 (2016), 411.

²⁶³ Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 260.

²⁶⁴ Peter Reddaway, "Can the Dissidents Survive?" *Index on Censorship* (4) (1980), 29.

jamming of foreign radio stations that had been minimised in the years of détente was again ratcheted up after the invasion.²⁶⁵

It was in these conditions that the KGB under Andropov initiated a campaign designed to completely suppress dissent, which commenced with Andrei Sakharov's exile to Gorkii in 1980.²⁶⁶ Over the course of that year, the internationally known Initiative Group for the Defense of Human Rights in the USSR and the Working Commission to Investigate the Use of Psychiatry for Political Purposes stopped functioning as a result of the persecution of their members.²⁶⁷ From 1979-1982, dissident arrests tripled from their levels in the mid-1970s.²⁶⁸ After the KGB subdued the most active *pravozashchitniki*, their net extended to nationalist and religious groupings whose breaking was presented on screen with Father Dmitrii Dudko's televised repudiation of his "anti-Soviet" statements in June 1980 after five months of imprisonment.²⁶⁹ By 1984, virtually no dissidents remained active inside the Soviet Union.²⁷⁰

The Young Socialists were arrested on 6 April 1982 in a sweep that Western journalists interpreted to be a new phase in the campaign against dissent that followed the arrests of the most prominent human rights groups, which targeted "obscure political... groups that have had virtually no contact with the West."²⁷¹ On this day in Moscow, on a scale unprecedented in the post-Stalin era, more than fifty apartment searches were carried out and twelve arrests were made in connection

²⁶⁵ Peter Reddaway, "Soviet Policies towards Dissent, 1953-1985," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 24(1-2) (2012), 60.

²⁶⁶ There is variation among historians on the precise KGB action that marked the beginning of the campaign to crush dissent, but the significance of Sakharov's exile is common to all accounts. Aleksandr Shubin, *Ot "Zastoiia" k reformam SSSR v 1917-1985 gg.* (M.: Rosspen, 2000), 476; Peter Reddaway, "Soviet Policies towards Dissent, 1953-1985," 60; Liudmilla Alekseeva, *Istoriia inakomyслиia v SSSR*: <http://old.memo.ru/history/diss/books/alexeewa/index.htm>.

²⁶⁷ Shubin, *Ot "Zastoiia" k reformam SSSR*, 479.

²⁶⁸ Reddaway, "Soviet Policies towards Dissent, 1953-1985," 60.

²⁶⁹ Nicholas Ganson, "Orthodox Dissidence as De-Atomisation: Father Dmitrii Dudko and his battle with *rabzobshchennost'*," *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* (40) (2013), 91.

²⁷⁰ Shubin, *Ot "Zastoiia" k reformam*, 482.

²⁷¹ Robert Gillette, "A Hidden Facet of Soviet Dissent," *Los Angeles Times* 3 August 1982. OSA f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

with samizdat.²⁷² While the Young Socialists were remote from the radar of the mainstream Western press, their status as IMEMO researchers placed them at the centre of these campaigns targeting the liberal establishment and the dissident movement.

What made these privileged young intellectuals take up and continue their dissident activities for five years in the climate of increasing repression at the end of the Brezhnev era? What were the sources for the circle's socialist orientation in the late-1970s at a time when, according to most narratives, this ideology had been discarded by the Soviet dissident movement and was losing relevance among the Young Socialists' own generation? This chapter addresses these questions through locating the circle's development within the environment of the Soviet intellectual elite. The particular character of the Young Socialists' milieu was forged by the frequency of its inhabitants highly placed intelligentsia origins, and their access to economic and cultural resources. The pluckiness required to dissent came from their "golden youth" status that stimulated the group's confidence in their own cleverness and critical-minded daring, and initially convinced them of the broader social momentum that would build from their activities.

The Young Socialists assessed the Soviet Union of the late-1970s to be in a state of economic decline and in urgent need of democratisation and reform. They were driven to dissent due to their skepticism that change could occur at the elite political level without outside impetus. Their dissident activities were a reaction against the in-system reformism of the high-ranking Soviet liberals that the Young Socialists observed from a distance as junior researchers at IMEMO. This cohort's loyalty to their aging superiors while promoting progressive views in a limited fashion appeared to the Young Socialists to have reached a dead end in the late Brezhnev years. The Young Socialists' activism in the socialist underground was also a reaction against the *pravozashchitniki* and their absence of a political programme. They interpreted the *pravozashchitniki*'s tactics of open activity and appeals to the West to have left them isolated from the Soviet population, vulnerable to repression, and to be incapable of triggering meaningful change.

²⁷² Liudmilla Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary movements for religious, national, religious and human rights* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1995), 376-377.

The Young Socialists considered their most immediate task to be the publication of their samizdat journal, *Varianty* (Variants), which was a forum for intellectual exploration that was aimed at developing the group's scientific understanding of the processes at work in Soviet society. In these years, members of the circle became junior researchers at IMEMO, and the project received stimulus from their access to the institute's *spetskhran* (special storage section) that contained foreign publications and white TASS. This information, which presented a more precise picture of foreign and domestic events than was available to ordinary Soviet citizens, enriched the Young Socialists' perspectives. The training in development and transition theories that the young researchers encountered in their studies of Latin America and post-Franco Spain at IMEMO broadened their analytical tool kit to develop comparative perspectives for Soviet development. The worldviews of the circle were also developed through their interactions with senior researchers at IMEMO including Kiva Maidanik, Marat Cheshkov, Viktor Sheinis and Georgii Mirskii and the famed dissident historians, Mikhail Gelter and Roy Medvedev. These *shestidesiatniki* intellectuals communicated elements of their lived experience, and passed on contacts, knowledge and aspects of their generation's intellectual heritage to the young dissidents. This assortment of intellectual influences and personal connections all played a role in contributing to the maturation of the Young Socialists' worldview over the years of the circle's dissident activities. But paradoxically, as their perspectives sharpened, the circle's revolutionary romanticism, which had been a key force for powering their activities, was dampened and their hopes that conditions for reform would emerge continued to fade.

The Circle of the Young Socialists: Beginnings, Dissident Practices, and Community.

In the summer of 1977, a year after their graduation, at the initiative of the circle's nucleus, Fadin and Kudiukin, the group transformed from a critical-minded company of friends who knew each other through their studies in the Historical Faculty at MGU into a dissident circle. The circle's network broadened and the core began to adopt new functions. The immediate spark that ignited the transition to underground activity was a likely KGB provocation in the form of Fadin and

Kudiukin's newfound acquaintance from Voronezh, Vladimir Budkov,²⁷³ who had been introduced to the pair by the former TMEFP member, Oleg Aleksandrov.²⁷⁴ The closed KGB archives have limited understandings of the role and scale of activities of informers in the Moscow-based dissident movement, which leaves this suspicion unconfirmed. In his observations of the Soviet Union in the 1970s, Western journalist, Hedrick Smith noted the concern expressed by his intellectual acquaintances about the presence of informers within their social circles, and the cautious attitude that coloured their social interactions with less familiar people, which suggested the existence of informers was perceived as a regular fact of life.²⁷⁵ But Fadin and Kudiukin, limited by inexperience and emboldened by their critical outlooks, eagerly responded to Budkov's encouragement. He appealed to the incautious young graduates' intellectual vanity and persuaded them of the momentum their ideas would acquire when broadcast in written form to a wider audience, and schooled the pair in conspiracy tactics and counter surveillance techniques.²⁷⁶ In contrast to many Soviet youth, who consciously retreated into smaller communities of private discussion to explore interests that were rarely political, Kudiukin recalled the duo's desire for their ideas to reach a broader public:

We could discuss our ideas, our hopes, our hesitations about the Soviet reality in very close friends' circles...These conversations in closed circles might be quite endless – until the end of the Soviet Union...But it was a push for more dangerous activities... It was some feeling of necessity to do something. And when we prepared the first issue of *Varianty* [in autumn 1977] and it circulated, we also began to search within a wider community.²⁷⁷

²⁷³ Among the circle there was later speculation after their arrests that Budkov was in fact a provocateur sent by the KGB, who were already aware of Fadin and Kudiukin's political views following the wall newspaper affair at MGU. Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

²⁷⁴ Oleg Aleksandrov was later killed in a motor accident after leaving a KGB interrogation following the sweep of arrests that included the Young Socialists in 1982. Pavel Kudiukin and Konstantin Morozov, "Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudiukinym o s.d. organizatsii rubezha 70-x-80-x godov," 27 January 2007: http://socialist.memo.ru/1991/kudukin_interview.html.

²⁷⁵ Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (London: Sphere Books, 1976), 142.

²⁷⁶ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

²⁷⁷ Interview with Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

The two leaders' search for other members to participate in the inner circle occurred over the coming months. Their decision to find participants outside of their MGU circle of friends reflected the duo's desire to collaborate with other young intellectuals who shared their orientation and commitment. Their MGU friends from room 242, who were part of *Varianty's* readership and were later witnesses in the criminal case, were part of the wider circle and maintained close personal relations. However, they were distanced from the heart of Fadin and Kudiukin's dissident endeavours due to differences in views and lack of interest in underground activities.



Andrei Fadin, likely late-1980s (Moscow Memorial).



Pavel Kudiukin, July 1981 (Facebook).

The inner circle first expanded in January 1978 when Fadin was introduced through a school friend, Andrei Kaplin, whose father was the Soviet ambassador to Ireland, to the mining engineer, Mikhail Germanovich Rivkin (b. 1954). Rivkin was told by Kaplin that Fadin had the bold intention to “attempt to organise in the country a deep conspiratorial underground organisation of opposition.”²⁷⁸ He later recounted that he had been searching for an active human rights-oriented organisation to join, but had been unable to make contact. Rivkin did not share Fadin’s socialist views, but was struck by the desire to translate his feelings of opposition to the Soviet system into action.²⁷⁹ In their first meeting, Rivkin recalled Fadin’s bursts of radicalism that gave the impression that, “He was ready to go to the barricades with whoever wanted to follow him.”²⁸⁰ The sense of immediacy of action that Rivkin gleaned from Fadin’s revolutionary rhetoric attracted him into the circle’s orbit. Rivkin remembered, “By that time, I was already tired of chatter.”²⁸¹ Kitchen talk that was critical of the regime was a regular feature of conversation within companies of elite youth in Moscow in the 1970s, but it was almost always uttered without any further intent.²⁸² Among Donald Raleigh’s Moscow based baby boomers, most reported sympathy for the dissident movement, but were never driven to participate themselves.²⁸³ By contrast, Rivkin had strongly admired the dissidents from an early age. He remembered, “It seemed to me that this was some kind of ‘Order of the sons of the light’ and to join it was the highest honour and

²⁷⁸ Mikhail Rivkin and Andrei Shilkov, “Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov,” (The Affair of the Moscow Socialists.) *Glasnost’* (29) (1989), 238.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 239.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 238.

²⁸¹ Mikhail Rivkin, “Interv’iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda (s kommentariiami M. Rivkina ot dekabria 2007 g.) (Interview with Aleksei Piatkovskii and Marina Perevozkina from 1990 (With Commentary of Mikhail Rivkin from December 2007): <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1200923212.html>.

²⁸² The inclination towards this behaviour can be observed in the following account of the MGU History Faculty in the 1970s: Aleksandr Stoliarov and Olga Kusenko, “Aleksandr Stoliarov: Otvechu Vam sovershenno chestno,” *Istoriko-filosofskii ezhegodnik*, (2017), 232.

²⁸³ Donald Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: An oral history of Russia’s Cold War generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 245.

happiness.”²⁸⁴ He reserved particular adoration for Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn whose acts of public opposition, rather than his literary publications made an impression on him. Rivkin had been fifteen years old when he first heard a foreign radio broadcast of Solzhenitsyn’s open letter on the occasion of his expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers. He recalled, “[It was] like hearing a favourite poem as he repeated the lines of the letter: ‘The blind are leading the blind,’ ‘Your watches are behind the times.’”²⁸⁵ The dissidents’ defiance contrasted with the inaction that Rivkin saw in everyday life. Into adulthood he observed that despite the critical attitudes of his elite friends and family, they would continue to live the “normal” lives of the Soviet intelligentsia – his friends would pursue careers and find success within the system, and in time would occupy the position of their parents.²⁸⁶

Rivkin’s generation had characteristically turned to self-interest rather than self-sacrifice in the name of public, societal goals.²⁸⁷ The *Washington Post* correspondent who was stationed in Moscow in the 1970s, Robert G. Kaiser, similarly observed that Soviet intellectuals were frequently focused on the pursuit of individual interests that enriched their private lives, while those who considered the need for changes to the political system were usually convinced that protests were doomed to failure, which made Rivkin’s outlook truly exceptional.²⁸⁸ Because Rivkin was neither a socialist, nor a writer, he did not contribute to the Young Socialists’ intellectual work, but was a driving force behind the practical tasks of the circle: the conspiratorial training of new members and the facilitation of samizdat exchanges and clandestine communication.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁴ “Otvety na voprosy P. Butova,” (Answers to the Questions of P. Butov.) Interview with Mikhail Rivkin (2007): <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1185817264.html>.

²⁸⁵ “Otvety na voprosy P. Butova, chast’ 2,” (Answers to the Questions of P. Butov, Part Two.), Interview with Mikhail Rivkin (2007): <http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1189496360.html>.

²⁸⁶ “Otvety na voprosy P. Butova.”

²⁸⁷ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 265.

²⁸⁸ Robert G. Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power* (New York: Athenaeum, 1976), 448.

²⁸⁹ Rivkin, “Interv’iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda; Rivkin and Shilkov, “Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov,” 241.

The next recruits to the inner circle occurred in the summer. Fadin was at a birthday party of a friend from his first year at MGU when he was enrolled in the evening course. At the party, a fellow guest, Lena, asked him conspiratorially if he was “doing business” and shared with him that she had some friends that were doing the same.²⁹⁰ Through this connection, the Kudiukin and Fadin met Iurii Leonidovich Khavkhin (b. 1949) and Vladimir Nikolaevich Chernetskii (b. 1950) in a clandestine meeting in the countryside where the young people exchanged views and realised that they were in step. Chernetskii and Khavkin, both scientific researchers at Moscow institutes, were school friends, who held right-social democrat views.²⁹¹



Left to right: Alena Chernetskaia, Vladimir Chernetskii, Viktor Davidov, Iurii Voronin and Marina Voronina not long after Chernetskii’s release from Lefortovo in 1983 (Facebook).

The inner circle was joined in autumn 1978 by the younger Russian Institute of Theatrical Art (GITIS) student, Boris Iul’evich Kagarlitskii (b. 1958). He was engaged in his own search for people who shared his oppositional socialist outlook, when he was introduced to the group by a member of the outer circle, Fadin’s friend

²⁹⁰ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

²⁹¹ Email Communication with Pavel Kudiukin, 21 February 2020; “Chernetskii, Vladimir Nikolaevich,” Record of St Petersburg Memorial: <http://arch.iofe.center/showObject/94767683>; “Khavkin, Iurii Leonidovich” Record of St Petersburg Memorial: <http://arch.iofe.center/showObject/94762391>.

from the MGU Historical Faculty, Aleksei Sobchenko.²⁹² Kagarlitskii and Sobchenko had met through their mutual acquaintance, Viktor Miziano, who was a student of the MGU Historical Faculty and the grandson of one of the founders of the PCI that had found refuge in Moscow in the 1920s.²⁹³ Kagarlitskii was from an elite intelligentsia family: his father was a theatre critic and H.G. Wells specialist, who taught as a professor at GITIS, while his mother was a translator of classical English literature.²⁹⁴ Boris grew up speaking English in an environment where the well-known British theatre directors, Peter Brooke and Trevor Nunn, were guests when they were in Moscow. The neo-Leninist kitchen table introspections of his parents and their *shestidesiatniki* friends about how the full potential of socialism could be realised in the Soviet Union had a strong influence on him.²⁹⁵ The leftism of this generation was transferred to the younger Kagarlitskii and parsed with the Western neo-Marxist influences that he sought out to expand his analytical worldview. The potency of his leftist views caused him to view the dissident movement's turn away from socialism with a critical eye. From the distance of Perestroika, he confided to a Western leftist journalist:

I was not attracted to the dissidents. I respect Sakharov, for example, very much, but he made declarations in the 1970s that seemed to justify the United States policy in Vietnam and this made me very angry. Solzhenitsyn began to express his reactionary views and this also disgusted...[me]. There was a contempt for democracy and enlightenment in his ideas that was reminiscent of the Party ideologists.²⁹⁶

The members of the inner circle, Fadin, Kudiukin, Rivkin, Kagarlitskii, Chernetskii and Khavkin, who were all later imprisoned in Lefortovo, were the editors and most active contributors to the group's theoretical samizdat journal,

²⁹² "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," interview of Boris Kagarlitskii by Aleksei Sochnev: <https://rusplt.ru/society/delo-molodyih-sotsialistov-14624.html>.

²⁹³ Interview with Boris Kagarlitskii, Moscow, 28 November 2016.

²⁹⁴ Interview with Boris Kagarlitskii by A. Raskin, 28 April-5 May 1992. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 155, folder, Boris Iul'evich Kagarlitskii (62), d. A11, 3.

²⁹⁵ Interview with Kagarlitskii.

²⁹⁶ "Boris Kagarlitskii, One of the Leaders of the Left-Wing Opposition, speaks to Robin Blackburn," *London Review of Books* 10(21) (24 November 1988): <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v10/n21/boris-kagarlitsky/boris-kagarlitsky-one-of-the-leaders-of-the-left-wing-opposition-in-the-soviet-union-talks-to-robin-blackburn>.

Varianty, and their popular-propaganda samizdat journal *Levyi povorot*. They were also the driving force behind other initiatives such as the recruitment of members and development of contacts, the Young Socialists' appeals to Solidarnosc and the Italian Communist Party, and the intention to create the Organising Committee for the Federation of Democratic Forces of a Socialist Orientation. The outer circle contributed to the content, preparation and distribution of the group's samizdat journals as well as being their readers, and discussed ideas and exchanged other samizdat with the circle both in conspiratorial and everyday settings. The circle was concentrated in Moscow, but its reach stretched to young historians in Minsk and Petrozavodsk – locales which will be featured in the upcoming chapters.

The inner circle and members of the outer circle, who were mainly young intellectuals associated with the History Faculty of MGU or IMEMO, devoted considerable time to training in underground practices, though the compartmentalisation of contacts and knowledge, which was central to the conspiracy, was complicated by co-conspirators often already knowing each other through regular social networks. The circle's underground methods also extended to the use of fake names between members of the circle who were not already known to each other, the invention of cover stories for purely underground associations, and codes for meeting times and places.²⁹⁷ They also practiced counter surveillance exercises against the KGB by tailing each other and challenging the followed individual to escape their surveillance.²⁹⁸ A snapshot of how this conspiracy functioned in practice was illustrated by Vladimir Valerianovich Pribylovskii (b. 1956), a member of the outer circle, who shared the group's socialist orientation and participated in the circle's activities to further his interest in fuelling samizdat

²⁹⁷ Rivkin and Shil'kov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," 241, 244; "Inakomysliashchaia zhizn' v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Moskva, 1970-1980e" (Dissident Life in the Era of the Decline of Developed Socialism, Moscow 1970-1980s), Interview of Vladimir Pribylovskii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, 25 July 2005: <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/smysl/1058065392/1123140153.html>; Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, 19 September 2016.

²⁹⁸ Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, 19 September 2016; Vladimir Pribylovskii, "Aleksei Sobchenko i evrokommunisty," (Aleksei Sobchenko and the Eurocommunists.) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (Twice a Dissident: The Collection of Memories of Vladimir Pribylovskii.), ed. Anatolii Kopeikin and Leonid Romankov (St Petersburg: Zvezda, 2017), 93.

reading and distribution.²⁹⁹ He contributed to *Varianty*, and reproduced the group's samizdat and distributed it at MGU,³⁰⁰ where he was a historical faculty student and keen archaeologist with a samizdat library located in his dorm room.³⁰¹



The MGU historical faculty students, Igor Torbakov (left), Vladimir Pribylovskii (centre) and Anatolii Kopeikin (right) at the end of 1982 or early 1983 – Pribylovskii and Kopeikin were both members of the outer circle of the Young Socialists (Facebook)

Pribylovskii's "underground" contacts in the inner circle included Kagarlitskii, who using the invented name Volodia briefed him on conspiratorial techniques. His second "underground" contact was Rivkin, where the two had a standing appointment at the statue of a man with a grenade at Kresnopresnenskaia metro twice monthly to exchange samizdat.³⁰² Pribylovskii's friend Sobchenko punctured the conspiracy and exposed its ordinariness to him when he informed him that his MGU course mates, Vladimir Vediushkin and Nadin Kevorkova, were also involved, and Kudiukin, who he knew as a former fellow member of the faculty's film

²⁹⁹ "Inakomyshliashchaia zhizn' v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Moskva, 1970-1980e," Interview of Pribylovskii by Piatkovskii.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Aleksei Sobchenko, "Vzglyad s drugoi storony okean," (View from the Other Side of the Ocean.) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (Twice a Dissident: Collection of Memories of Vladimir Pribylovskii.) (St Petersburg: Zvezda, 2017), 103.

³⁰² "Inakomyshliashchaia zhizn' v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Interview of Pribylovskii by Piatkovskii; Rivkin and Shilkov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," 244; <https://felshinsky.livejournal.com/63230.html>.

club, was their leader.³⁰³ This “double life” of conspiracy amid the normality of everyday routine was part of their lived experience of dissent, which was closely incorporated into the circle’s participants’ everyday lives at MGU and IMEMO.

The most important source for the dissident activities of the Young Socialists and their underground format was the elite intellectual milieu the group inhabited, which granted access to the economic and cultural resources that stimulated their ideas and eased their rebellion.³⁰⁴ Youth from less privileged backgrounds, and especially those from the provinces, were less likely to step out of line for fear of losing the momentum of upward mobility to destinations that the elite took for granted.³⁰⁵ As a professor in the similar environment of MGIMO, Georgii Mirskii observed the ease which accompanied the young elite, where “the offspring of Soviet nobles openly reached out to everything American – from rock music, slang, demeanour to ‘glad rags’ – how they easily told anti-Soviet jokes and listened to the songs of Galich and Vysotskii.”³⁰⁶ While the circle of the Young Socialists and their acquaintances were not moved in the same way by the Western popular culture that captured the imagination of many of their peers, they shared their carefree confidence in their own cleverness and critical-minded daring. This was what enabled the wider network of friends and acquaintances to push their risk-taking friends in Fadin and Kudiukin’s direction, which was a precondition for the circle taking shape. This was accompanied by the inner circle’s assurance of their own intellect, which was a powerful force for convincing them that their ideas would find wider resonance. The members of outer circle were more likely to be attracted by the principles of friendship and the intellectual engagement brought by samizdat exchange and discussion.

³⁰³ “Inakomyshliashchaia zhizn’ v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Interview of Pribylovskii by Piatkovskii.

³⁰⁴ Nikolai Mitrokhin, “Elita ‘Zakrytogo obshchestva’: MGIMO, mezhdunarodnye otdely apparata TsK KPSS i prosopografiia ikh sotrudnikov,” (The Elite of the Closed Society: MGIMO, the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Prosopography of their Employees.) *Ab Imperio* (4) (2013), 146.

³⁰⁵ Peter Reddaway, *The Dissidents: A memoir of working with the resistance in Russia, 1960-1990* (Brookings Institution Press, 2020), 39.

³⁰⁶ G.I. Mirskii, *Zhizn’ v trekh epokhakh* (Life in Three Epochs.) (Moskva: Letnii Sad, 2001), 217.

The experience of the circle demonstrates that there was more direct engagement with socialist ideas among the last Soviet generation than was previously considered by scholars. The circle's existence brings to light the presence of pockets of political activity in an unlikely place. The group contained more than a few "golden youth," a pejorative label in Soviet society for the children of the elite, who pursued a Bohemian lifestyle while benefiting from their families' privileges and connections.³⁰⁷ This affluent cohort played an outsize role in the transmission of foreign influenced trends in the university setting.³⁰⁸ However, golden youth were almost never interested in politics, which set the group apart from their peers, who were more often characterised by their enthusiastic consumption of Western cultural products as was observed by Mirskii above. It also distinguishes them from conceptions of the last Soviet generation, which were popularised by Aleksei Yurchak, where this generation was characterised by its disengagement from socialism, and its members' pursuit of non-political escapist interests and lifestyles.³⁰⁹ By contrast, the circle of the Young Socialists were driven by their sustained commitment to socialist ideas and political interests demonstrated by their enthusiastic reading and reproduction of political samizdat texts.

The decision to establish conspiratorial measures may be understood in the context of the young people's desire to safeguard the professional futures that their elite status promised. At the same time, the move to conspiracy placed them within a longstanding revolutionary tradition, which was romanticised by the state itself through its celebration of the Bolshevik legacy,³¹⁰ and was a continuation of the underground socialist circles of the Thaw that the group admired.³¹¹ Moreover, they

³⁰⁷ Nikolai Mitrokhin, "Corridors of Opportunity' for Children of TsK KPSS Staff 1950-1985: Education and Professional Self-Realization," (ASEEES Paper, 2013), 1.

³⁰⁸ Juliane Furst, "Swinging Across the Iron Curtain and Moscow's Summer of Love: How Western Youth Culture went East," in *Transnational Histories of Youth in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Richard Ivan Jobs and David M. Pomfret (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 248.

³⁰⁹ Aleksei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever until it was no more: The last Soviet generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

³¹⁰ E. Iu. Zavadskaia and O.V Edelman, "Underground Groups and Organisations," in *Sedition: Everyday resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, eds. Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Sergei V. Mironenko (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 286-287.

³¹¹ "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," interview of Kagarlitskii; Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudiukinym."

had observed the severe sentences of prison and exile levelled at the publicly active dissidents throughout the 1970s. Their calculations of the state's response, for which the parameters were well-established by the late-1970s, influenced the group's selection of its activities. One of the main acts that socialist dissident circles carried out in the 1950s and 1960s was the distribution in public spaces of oppositional leaflets that aimed to win wider support for their ideas.³¹² These groups were harshly repressed by the KGB typically after a few months of existence, whereas the Young Socialists evaded arrest for five years. The circle stopped short of such actions, partially as they believed the conditions did not yet exist for these initiatives to find support among the working class, and also because they accurately predicted that they contained a high likelihood of detection and arrest.³¹³ The KGB largely regarded samizdat to be an undesirable phenomenon, but one which was contained to the intelligentsia,³¹⁴ while attempts to reach the wider Soviet public through leaflet distributions provoked concerted reaction. The glamour of the underground and the selection of activities that contained lower calculated risk helped to maintain the fiction that what they were doing would not be regarded as seriously anti-Soviet by the state, and contributed to the group's unfounded belief that they had limited the risks of their activities.

The format of a socialist underground circle was remote from the more visible trends taking place in the dissident movement in Moscow in the late-1970s. In response to the appearance of the humanitarian articles of the Final Act of the Helsinki Accords in Soviet newspapers, the *pravozashchitniki* reorganised to form the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group in 1976, which monitored and publicised Soviet human rights violations.³¹⁵ This was a continuation of the spiritual journey that this generation of dissidents had travelled in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which had led to their abandonment of socialist ideals and the

³¹² Robert Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev's Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 101.

³¹³ Rivkin and Shilkov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," 252.

³¹⁴ Alexander Griбанov, "Samizdat According to Andropov," *Poetics Today* 31(1) (2009), 90.

³¹⁵ Liudmilla Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary movements for religious, national, religious and human rights* (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1995), 335.

embrace of the moral code of human rights.³¹⁶ A different path was taken by Russian nationalists, who were a growing movement in many different spheres of Soviet society the late-1970s. The dissident adherents of Russian nationalism, whose spiritual leader was Solzhenitsyn, with tones of authoritarianism regarded the return to traditional forms of ruralised Russian culture and the renewal of faith in Orthodox Christianity to be the balm for the ills facing Soviet society.³¹⁷ In the late-1970s the dissident groupings of Russian nationalists were in the throes of a religious revival whose most visible centre was the Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR.³¹⁸ While these larger movements had turned away from socialist influences, a development in the late-1970s that has not yet received much attention in the historiography of dissent, was the emergence of groups that focused on workers' rights and labour violations and aspired to form Soviet independent trade unions.³¹⁹ The most well-known of these organisations, the Free Inter-Professional Association of Workers (SMOT) was formed in October 1978 at the same time as the Young Socialists were entering into dissident activities.³²⁰ SMOT aimed to fulfil similar functions to the successful example of the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) in Poland, which had been established two years earlier, through the provision of legal, moral and financial help to its members, though due to repression and its limited network, these aspirations remained unfulfilled.³²¹ Its main activity was the publication of a bulletin that reported on socioeconomic issues such as workers' rights violations, food shortages and rationing, police abuses, and elite privileges and corruption, and later dedicated attention to the rise of Solidarnosc.³²² Among its founding members, who were mainly intellectuals, was the

³¹⁶ Benjamin Nathans, "The Disenchantment of Socialism: Soviet dissidents, human rights, and the new global morality," in *The Breakthrough: Human rights in the 1970s*, eds. Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, first ed. 2014), 43.

³¹⁷ Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent*, 447.

³¹⁸ Peter J.S. Duncan, *Russian Messianism: Third Rome, Revolution, Communism and After* (London: Routledge, 2002), 104.

³¹⁹ Alekseeva, "The Free Trade Union and Other Groups," in *Soviet Dissent*, 406-416.

³²⁰ Linda J. Cook, *The Soviet Social Contract and Why it Failed: Welfare policy and workers' politics from Brezhnev to Yeltsin* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 74.

³²¹ Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent*, 409-410.

³²² Cook, *The Soviet Social Contract and Why it Failed*, 74.

lawyer Vsevolod Kuvakin, who had contact with the Young Socialists through Kagarlitskii.³²³

In the autumn of 1978, Kuvakin requested the group to document their own understanding of the most immediate tasks that faced intellectuals who were attempting to create a successful worker-intellectual alliance. Kudiukin responded to this call and authored a program that was an early expression of the Young Socialists' ideas.³²⁴ Kudiukin's analysis reflected his perceptions of the difficulties that Soviet conditions posed for the creation of a workers' movement. He understood the initial challenge to be the workers' own lack of understanding of their class as a subject of historical action, which required their self-education and the intervention and education of workers by intellectuals, and this needed to be linked to the broader goal of the democratisation of society.³²⁵ He attributed the workers' own absence of activity in the late-1970s to the lack of an existing tradition of a Soviet labour movement that had exacted concessions from the state. This was related to what he perceived to be the second challenge, which was the repressive apparatus of the state where, "any active form of struggle, even for particular demands, leads to a total collision with the full power of the system," which was on display in Novocherkassk in 1962, and continued to limit prospects for independent activity to the present day.³²⁶ Kudiukin proposed three courses of action: workers' struggle for the democratisation of official trade unions, the formation of committees from below that would negotiate their legality and attach themselves to the official trade unions, and the creation of illegal or semi-legal trade unions. While the Young Socialists had identified the working class as a force within Soviet society that had the potential to mobilise into a broad movement for reform, the missing link was how to reach the workers themselves in the context of their own disinterest, and the mechanisms of repression in place that prevented making contact. The group anticipated an approaching economic crisis in the Soviet Union that would be accompanied by mass

³²³ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

³²⁴ This document was later published in the samizdat journal, *Levyi povorot*: Pavel Kudiukin, "Programma ekonomicheskoi bor'by rabocheho klassa, blizhaishie trebovaniia," (Program for the Economic Struggle of the Working Class, Immediate Demands.) *Levyi Povorot* (2) (Autumn 1979), 2-4. FSO-01-078 Fond of Viktor Sokirko, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa Archiv, Bremen.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

social unrest, which they considered would create the conditions to establish contact with the workers,³²⁷ but it had not yet arrived.

In these circumstances, the Young Socialists instead concentrated their practical efforts on the publication of their samizdat journal, *Varianty* (1977-1982). Rivkin later outlined its intended purpose:

As a result of the exchange of views through the almanac – theoretical elaboration, as a result of some kind of debate, discussion, we would already have had a solid theoretical base on which we would be able to build a scientific program, not just a cry of the soul, but a scientific, well-grounded program. This was a matter for the distant future. This was understood as the final phase of work.³²⁸

The journal was an annually produced professionally stitched and interlaced leatherette notebook of approximately 100-150 pages per issue.³²⁹ The circle produced six copies of each issue,³³⁰ which were created according to the typical samizdat practice of one round of typing with six thin tissue papers inserted into the typewriter to produce six copies of the same page at a time.³³¹ The main typist was Ivanova, who produced the issues on her own fancy East German-made Erika in her family apartment.³³² She took on the task after Fadin had alarmed her with his recklessness by initially intending to contract the work to a paid typist. Kudiukin's neighbour, Ida Fridliand and Kudiukin's younger sister, Maria, who was an MGU History Faculty student in those years were also typists.³³³ Over the life of the circle, four issues were produced. Two more issues reached preparatory stages, but the first, which addressed problems of culture, was destroyed by the group in 1980 in advance of an expected search, and the second, which was to be the fifth issue of

³²⁷ K. Aleksandrovskii (pseudonym of Kagarlitskii), "Net sotsializma bez samoupravleniia." (No to Socialism Without Self-Government) *Sotsializm i Budushchee* (1) (March 1980), 19. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, F. 128 Collection of Roy Medvedev.

³²⁸ Rivkin, "Interv'iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda."

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

³³¹ Ann Komaromi, "The Material Existence of Soviet Samizdat," *Slavic Review* 63(3) (2004), 599.

³³² Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin; "Delo sotsialistov," *Khronika tekushikh sobitii* (64): <http://hts.memo.ru/>.

³³³ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

Varianty was seized by the KGB upon the circle's arrest. The Young Socialists intended the small circulation of six copies per issue to be a size whose distribution could be monitored.³³⁴ *Varianty* was conceptualised as an intellectual project and stimulant for discussion whose readers were their own circle, which developed their understanding of the processes at work in Soviet society while awaiting the conditions through which momentum for a reform movement would build.

The Young Socialists' secondary samizdat publication was *Levyi povorot* (Left Turn) (two issues in 1979-1980) and *Sotsializm i budushchee* (Socialism and the Future) (fourteen issues, 1980-1982). These were the same publication, which was simply renamed and even continued without changing the issue sequence, in response to the KGB's detection of *Levyi povorot*.³³⁵ As a consequence of the KGB's interest, in January 1980 Kagarlitskii was called in for a prophylactic chat. Prophylactic measures were an increasingly favoured tactic of the KGB to contain dissent.³³⁶ They were designed to caution people against the "politically harmful" nature of their actions before they escalated to a level of "criminal intent" that necessitated arrest and imprisonment.³³⁷ Kagarlitskii was told to stop publishing *Levyi povorot*. As a substantive warning measure to prevent further activity that could attract his arrest, he was expelled from GITIS and the CPSU, which had made him a candidate member the previous year at the age of nineteen.³³⁸ The circle reacted by destroying the material it had prepared for the fourth issue of *Varianty*,³³⁹

³³⁴ Their monitoring turned out to be unsuccessful as during the criminal case, Kudiukin discovered that the KGB had only an operational copies of some issues of *Varianty* that they had copied from the original, and then returned while the group was still unaware of its detection. Ibid.

³³⁵ Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (Dissidents among Dissidents.) (Moskva: Svobodnoe Marksistskoe Izdatel'stvo, 2017), 86.

³³⁶ To give an idea of the scale of people subjected to prophylactic measures, Edward Cohn calculated that one in every 2000 citizens in the Soviet Union had undergone *profilaktika* in the period 1966-1974, which did not include more informal chats given by parents, teachers, trade union secretaries, Komsomol leaders and workplace supervisors that had been carried out for the same purpose. Edward Cohn, "A Soviet Theory of Broken Windows: Prophylactic Policing and the KGB's Struggle with Political Unrest in the Baltic Republics," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19(4) (2018), 779.

³³⁷ Reddaway, *Soviet Policies Towards Dissent*, 65-66.

³³⁸ Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," interview of Kagarlitskii; Rivkin, "Interv'iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda."

³³⁹ Interview with Kudiukin and Fadina.

but when no further repercussions occurred, they resumed their activities. In his new career as a postman, Kagarlitskii had more time to dedicate to underground activities and renamed and resumed the samizdat journal. His continuation in the face of a KGB warning that had already lost him his social standing may be understood as an act of naïve misunderstanding of the logic of the KGB. Rivkin later characterised Kagarlitskii as a person who was “rebellious with a party card in his pocket.” He considered that Kagarlitskii had estimated that because he had been a party member, he was friends with Eurocommunist figures, and he had seen how Roy Medvedev had never suffered any persecution as a socialist dissident figure that his case would be dealt with via internal party discipline, and he never expected actual arrest.³⁴⁰



Boris Kagarlitskii, mid-1980s (Google).

As the KGB had ascertained, the initiative for *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* came from Kagarlitskii. He conceptualised the group’s second samizdat journal as “something more frequently issued, activist-oriented, and above all, popular.”³⁴¹ These journals were more propagandistically focused and simply written, though they remained restricted to circulation amongst the intelligentsia.

³⁴⁰ Rivkin, “Interv’iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda.”

³⁴¹ “Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov,” interview of Kagarlitskii.

Visually, they were minimalist in appearance, typewritten and varyingly single and double-spaced on tissue paper. By 1982 between all of the issues of both journals, approximately one hundred copies existed.³⁴² According to Western reporting of the prosecution's case against the Young Socialists, by April 1982 copies of the journals had been found in Leningrad, Kiev, Smolensk and Petrozavodsk as well as in Moscow.³⁴³ At the beginning of the 1980s, Pribylovskii wrote a review of *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* that was intended for publication in *Varianty*, which established and differentiated between some of the perspectives that were contained within both publications. Pribylovskii's commentary praised *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee's* propagandistic intent to reach a broader public, while at the same time criticising its staunch leftism ("Is it worth it... to compete with *Pravda* in a common critique of American imperialism?") and limiting sectarian vocabulary.³⁴⁴ His review illuminated some of the features of socialism were attractive to the Young Socialists, as well as their perspective of the nature of its reformist potential:

It is hard to object to socialist ideas of economic collectivism, justice and political equality, or indeed to the theory of class struggle...if in general any reforms in our country are possible, then in the foreseeable future they are only conceivable within the framework of IDEOLOGY. If we understand ideology...[to be] genuine Marxism, a system of positive political and economic viewpoints worthy of discussion. Marxist collectivism itself does not contradict either democracy or economic efficiency.³⁴⁵

³⁴² Liudmilla Alekseeva, "Sotsialisty," (Socialists.) in *Istoriia inakomyслиia v SSSR: noveishii period* (The History of Dissent in the USSR: The more recent period.): <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/books/alexeewa/>].

³⁴³ Julia Wishnevskaiia, "Young Socialists to go on Trial in Moscow," (14 February 1983). Open Society Archives (OSA), f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 880, folder, *Levyi povorot/Varianty*.

³⁴⁴ Vladimir Pribylovskii, "Retsenziia "O zhurnale *Levyi Povorot/SB*, prednaznachennia dlia publikatsii v samizdat'skom zhurnale *Varianty*," (Review of the Journal *Left Turn/Socialism and the Future* designated for publication in the journal *Varianty*.) (Dated by RFE as before April 1982), 2, 4, 5. OSA f. 300, s.f. 80, c.1, box 880, folder, *Levyi Povorot/Varianty*.

The review was anonymous, but both Pavel Kudiukin and Pribylovskii himself later identified Pribylovskii as the author. Vladimir Pribylovskii, "Aleksei Sobchenko i evrokommunisty," (Aleksei Sobchenko and Eurocommunists.) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (Twice a Dissident: Collection of Memories of Vladimir Pribylovskii.) (St Petersburg: Zvezda, 2017), 95.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

Above all, Pribylovskii's analysis underscored that the group's orientation was attached to their conviction that socialism was organic to Soviet society, and that it was the only ideological banner under which the public could be rallied towards widespread support for democratisation:

It is precisely a program in socialist colours that has or could have some chances of public sympathy; more so than any other program. The immediate task now is to win the support of the "silent majority," even if this support is, in the first instance, passive...Our population is used to thinking in Marxist categories...The rejection of the capitalist system is a characteristic feature of the worldview of the Soviet citizen. Anti-socialist propaganda is futile.³⁴⁶

But Pribylovskii shared the calculations of the other Young Socialists that the conditions for the path to reform that was propagated in *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* did not yet exist in Soviet society:

While [*Varianty's*] editors do not rule out any potential path or form of renewal, at the forefront of their system of priorities is the basic idea, "REFORM FROM ABOVE UNDER PRESSURE FROM BELOW." This is an irrefutable thesis, although frankly it is unlikely that it will soon become a social reality.³⁴⁷

This statement captured the tension that was at the heart of the Young Socialists' activities, which would become more pronounced over time. *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* was an outlet for the Young Socialists' youthful enthusiasm and revolutionary romanticism. But this mood was out of sync with the group's own analysis of Soviet society, where they did not foresee real prospects for their dissident activities until broader economic and social crises developed.

The lack of practical application for the agitprop contained in *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* accounted for why so few members of the circle participated in this secondary project. Kudiukin and Kagarlitskii were the sole authors of *Levyi povorot*, and Kudiukin typed the original copies of the issues. The first issue of the journal was typed by Kudiukin in Kagarlitskii's apartment when his parents were out of town, and the second was typed in Kudiukin's apartment. Kagarlitskii was responsible for producing *Sotsializm i budushchee*.³⁴⁸ *Sotsializm i*

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 3.

³⁴⁷ Pribylovskii, "Retsenziia," 2.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

budushchee contained a lot of information on the Soviet economy, which was communicated in conversation to Kagarlitskii by Kudiukin's later co-worker at IMEMO, Andrei Danilov,³⁴⁹ who was the son of the famous Soviet historian of collectivisation, Viktor Danilov. The end of 1978 saw the two leaders of the newly formed dissident circle enter IMEMO as graduate students. At IMEMO, Kudiukin and Fadin's network expanded to include senior researchers of the *shestidesiatniki* generation, who shared valuable intellectual and experiential knowledge with them. The group's intellectual explorations in *Varianty* also received a new stimulus from the greater levels of access Kudiukin and Fadin had to information on Soviet society and the outside world through the institute's *spetskhran*.

The Reformist Milieu of IMEMO.

In the post-Soviet era, IMEMO was popularly remembered by Soviet intelligentsia figures as an "island of academic freedom" in the late-Soviet Union.³⁵⁰ It was the first research institute for foreign affairs that was opened as a result of the Soviet Union's renewed engagement with the outside world following the Twentieth Party Congress amid the post-Stalin leadership's recognition of the urgent need for new expertise in foreign affairs.³⁵¹ IMEMO was a resurrection of the interwar Institute of World Economy and World Politics (IMKhMP) that had been closed in 1947. Under the directorship of Hungarian born economist Evgenii Varga, IMKhMP had provided Stalin with cautious prognoses on the fate of the capitalist economies during the years of the Great Depression that contrasted with the louder ideological narrative of impending capitalist collapse, and remarkably drew on the thinking of

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Petr Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," *Russian Politics and Law* 43(2) (2005), 32.

³⁵¹ Georgi Arbatov, *The System: An insider's life in Soviet politics* (New York: Random House Inc., 1992), 70.

The other institutes that were founded over the next decade and after the end of the Thaw and on the eve of détente included the Institute of Economics and Industrial Organization (IEOPP) in Novosibirsk in 1961, the Central Economic-Mathematical Institute (TSEMI) in 1963, the Institute of the International Workers' Movement (IMRD) in 1966, the Institute of the United States and Canada (ISKAN) in 1967, the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist Systems (IEMSS) in 1968, and the Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences (INION) in 1969, cited in English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 70.

American economists even in the climate of ideological dogmatism and Soviet international isolation of the 1930s.³⁵² According to Kyung Deok Roh, the institute had played an important role in providing expert economic knowledge that informed Stalin's foreign policy thinking, and its closure at the beginning of the Cold War was not the result of the Soviet leader turning against the institute's theoretical perspectives as had been erroneously assumed by earlier historiography. Instead, the closure occurred within the broader Soviet domestic context in the 1940s of Russian nationalism, Soviet patriotism, generational rivalry and anti-foreign feeling. This atmosphere drove Andrei Zhdanov and his followers to target the institute because of its "cadre problem," as its researchers were largely of the generation who came of age before the revolution and were foreign born or educated abroad.³⁵³ In these late Stalinist years, the expert knowledge produced by the institute's researchers became collateral damage of the anti-cosmopolitan campaign.

The impulses of isolationism and suspicion of the outside world, which figured in the *Zhdanovshchina*, and active engagement in global affairs, coexisted in the Soviet project.³⁵⁴ The major shift in Soviet ideological and foreign policy thinking toward peaceful coexistence that was signalled at the Twentieth Party Congress embodied this second trend, and created the conditions for the reestablishment of the institute.³⁵⁵ A key Politburo supporter of de-Stalinisation Anastas Mikoian,³⁵⁶ who as Minister of Trade required expertise on foreign trade with the second and third worlds to inform the ministry's policy, oversaw the reorganisation of the

³⁵² Chris Miller, "Economic Ideas Crossing Borders: The Transnational Turn in Soviet Economic History," *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* (46) (2019), 58-59.

³⁵³ Kyung Deok Roh, *Stalin's Economic Advisors: The Varga institute and the making of Soviet Foreign Policy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 147-148, 173.

³⁵⁴ See, "Introduction: Intellectuals, ideas and identity in the sources of international change," in English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 1-15.

³⁵⁵ Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, *Red Globalisation: The Political Economy of the Soviet Union from Stalin to Khrushchev* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 86-87; Oded Eran, *Mezhdunarodniki: An Assessment of Professional Expertise in the Making of Soviet Foreign Policy* (Tel Aviv: Turtle Dove Publishing, 1979), 78.

³⁵⁶ Mikoian was also not only a supporter of the scholarly underpinnings of peaceful coexistence, but was also a leading force in recognising the role academia had to play in Soviet responses to decolonisation, which led to the expansion of the Oriental Institute. David C. Engerman, "The Second World's Third World," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12(1) (2011), 203.

institute.³⁵⁷ IMEMO's first director, Anushavan Arzumian (1956-1965), had close ties to Mikoian, and from 1952 had worked with Varga at the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Sciences.³⁵⁸ Together with Varga and several former researchers of IMKhMP as well as a younger generation of recently graduated economists and historians, Arzumian's newly established IMEMO performed policy consultancy for foreign trade before the institute expanded its focus to analyse broader world affairs.³⁵⁹

During the institute's initial years, Arzumian navigated the dogmatic ideological thinking that persisted in the Soviet late-1950s with the mission of renewing the culture of the critical, evidence based Marxist analyses of foreign affairs that had guided the output of the earlier Varga years. The institute was tasked with providing accurate information to the International Department of the Central Committee for the construction of Soviet foreign policy, which necessitated researchers distancing themselves from the hostile, propaganda-influenced understandings of the outside world that had been infused into Soviet society during the Stalin era.³⁶⁰ This evolution was a process that occurred in tandem with Khrushchev's limited de-Stalinisation of Soviet domestic politics that awakened a generation of Soviet intellectuals to anti-Stalinist and reformist convictions, which found resonance among IMEMO's researchers. Nonetheless, the often opposing concerns of ideologically correct thinking and the critical evaluation of global affairs continued to factor as a challenge for the work of the institute until late Perestroika. Tensions between the mission of the Ideological Department of the Central Committee and IMEMO's production of scientifically calculated information for the International Department occasionally arose, as when its researchers predicted the continued existence of capitalism in the year 2000 in the 1960s,³⁶¹ but largely the institute continued to submit its findings to the leadership, and pursued its research without great problems until the affair of the Young Socialists.

³⁵⁷ Roh, *Stalin's Economic Advisors*, 44.

³⁵⁸ Jerry F. Hough, "The Foreign Policy Establishment," in *Soviet Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, eds. Robbin F. Laird and Erik P. Hoffman (New York: Walter De Gruyter, 1986), 150.

³⁵⁹ Roh, *Stalin's Economic Advisors*, 44; English, *Russia and the idea of the West*, 70.

³⁶⁰ Arbatov, *The System*, 73.

³⁶¹ "Interview of Viktor Sheinis by Metta Spencer and Julia Kalinina," 1993: <http://russianpeaceanddemocracy.com/victor-sheinis-1993>.

Under the institute's second director, Nikolai Nikolaevich Inozemtsev (1966-1982), IMEMO was one of the primary sources of support for Brezhnev's turn to détente in the 1970s. In these years the institute accumulated political, social and economic knowledge of the outside world that steadily built on the foundations of the Thaw.³⁶² Inozemtsev (b. 1921) was a decorated war veteran who joined the party at the front, and was part of the idealistic *frontoviki* contingent that entered Soviet higher education after the war.³⁶³ He graduated as an Americanist from the newly established Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) in 1949, which was a year that produced an exceptional number of the key policy advisers of the Brezhnev period.³⁶⁴ Inozemtsev's career followed a rapid upward trajectory. He entered IMEMO in 1957 as head of the Department of International Relations, and two years later was made deputy director of the institute.³⁶⁵ He was evaluated by the leadership as highly ideologically reliable, and at forty years of age was made deputy editor of *Pravda* in the final years of the Thaw.³⁶⁶ By 1971, he was a candidate member of the Central Committee.³⁶⁷ Inozemtsev was a Soviet patriot who had substantial experience abroad. He was a frequent traveller in Soviet scholarly and press delegations to both the socialist countries and the West in the 1950s and 1960s, and by the late-1970s his foreign trips were most frequently as a representative of the Supreme Soviet to conduct relations with governmental representatives or foreign socialist and communist parties.³⁶⁸

³⁶² English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 117.

³⁶³ O.T. Bogomolov, "Grazhdanskoe muzhestvo uchenogo," (Civic Courage of the Researcher.), in *Nikolai Inozemtsev: Lichnost' i vremia* (Nikolai Inozemtsev: Personality and Time.), ed. M.M. Maksimova, (M. : Ekonomist', 2004), 38.

³⁶⁴ Hough, "The Foreign Policy Establishment," 148.

³⁶⁵ "Osnovnye daty zhizni i deiatel'nosti N.N. Inozemtseva," (Key Dates of N.N. Inozemtsev's Life and Activities), in *Nikolai Inozemtsev: Lichnost' i vremia* (Nikolai Inozemtsev: Personality and Time.), ed. M.M. Maksimova, (Moscow: Ekonomist', 2004), 362.

³⁶⁶ Georgii Arbatov, "Nedovostrebovannyi potentsial," (An underrated potential.), in *Nikolai Inozemtsev: Lichnost' i vremia* (Nikolai Inozemtsev: Personality and Time.), ed. M.M. Maksimova, (Moscow: Ekonomist', 2004), 23.

³⁶⁷ "Osnovnye daty zhizni i deiatel'nosti N.N. Inozemtseva," 367.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 362, 363, 372.

Inozemtsev's career had reached the heights of what was possible for a liberal scholar in the political establishment of the Brezhnev era.³⁶⁹ As a personal advisor and speech writer for Brezhnev, Inozemtsev was well-versed in the political culture of the top Soviet leadership and was privy to information that presented an overall picture of the state of the country. According to Margarita Maksimova, Head of the Department of External Economic Problems of Capitalism at IMEMO in these years and Inozemtsev's wife, Inozemtsev's familiarity with the Politburo leaders led him to consider Brezhnev as far from the worst possibility for the top position, a perception was determined by his strong support for Brezhnev's commitment to détente, and his awareness of the hard-line tendencies within the leadership that Brezhnev kept in check.³⁷⁰ In the final Brezhnev years, Inozemtsev's high political status afforded him a front row seat to observe the aging Politburo's stubborn inability to face the mounting problems in the country. An entry of Anatolii Cherniaev's diary in 1980 documented Inozemtsev's exasperation at the Politburo's unwillingness to accept uncomfortable facts in their response to a draft of Brezhnev's report on the 1981 plan to the Central Committee plenum, which Inozemtsev had prepared together with the other high-ranking liberals, Georgii Arbatov and Aleksandr Bovin. The speechwriters did not gloss over the realities of the food problem and the decline in agriculture with the usual platitudes of victories. For the first time in thirteen years, Brezhnev categorically rejected the text, and passed on his views to the Politburo members that he could get on the telephone, who returned their copies of the draft with the critical remarks crossed out and insertions of "Komsomol style enthusiasm for grandiose achievements." At the plenum Inozemtsev complained quietly to his sympathetic colleague, Cherniaev, "They cut off our balls."³⁷¹ Despite Inozemtsev's high-ranking status, he had negligible success in the communications of his perspectives to the leadership on the declining domestic and international situation that the Soviet Union was facing at the beginning of the 1980s. This was echoed by the broader failure of IMEMO and the

³⁶⁹ Arbatov, "Nedovostrebovannyi potentsial," 24.

³⁷⁰ Cherkasov, "The Twilight of the Brezhnev Era," *Russian Politics and Law* 43(6) (2005), 78.

³⁷¹ A.S. Cherniaev, "Entry for 21 October 1980," in *Sovmestnyi iskhod: Dnevnik dvukh epokh, 1972-1991* (Joint Exodus: A Diary of Two Eras.) (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), (1980), 35-36.

other research institutes that provided foreign policy recommendations to influence the leadership to alter the hard-line course it pursued in Afghanistan and Poland.³⁷²



Nikolai Inozemtsev (Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences).

Inozemtsev's biography was a representative portrait of the broader cohort of Soviet liberals who had risen to the highest levels of the party and academic establishment in the Brezhnev years. This group owed its success in the system to the onset of de-Stalinisation and the state's demand for educated specialists to contribute to the managing of relations with the outside world.³⁷³ These Soviet liberals had developed faith in the theories of Marxism-Leninism and the reformist potential of Soviet socialism in their youth, when this was a widely held view among their intelligentsia peers during the Thaw. Their convictions persisted into the early-1980s, despite the fact that by these years these beliefs no longer possessed a commanding influence in the Soviet intelligentsia, nor were they popular within the upper reaches of the establishment. But their journey through party and state institutions had led to the understanding that the post-Stalin era portended increasing complexities for the governance of the Soviet economy and society. They were convinced that their role as carriers of Marxist Leninist ideas and their practical

³⁷² English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 162.

³⁷³ Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 289.

experience could help the country to face these challenges.³⁷⁴ In his evaluation of Inozemtsev's life, the Director of ISKAN and a fellow Soviet liberal, Georgii Arbatov, explained the cohort's perception of their own role in the system:

[The outlook of the high-ranking Soviet liberal was to] to understand and accept the "rules of the game," penetrate the system, and rise in it as high as possible so as to try and influence its evolution from inside, gradually changing the vector of movement, putting the brakes on the negative impulses and promoting all that was positive and innovative.³⁷⁵

These high level officials were in a position to intercede in disputes in the cultural and academic spheres. They acted as patrons for the cultural Left at the Taganka theatre when it was under fire in 1968, and found shelter for critical-minded intellectuals in their institutes.³⁷⁶ In the foreign policy sphere, they used their expert stances to promote the course of détente. At the same time, they acted cannily with awareness of the limitations of their power and the boundaries for the expression of critical attitudes. Broadly, they tried to humanise the system and to increase its efficiency as far as their limited influence could reach. These high-ranking liberals rejected the need for the party's tight ideological controls, and the rigid attitudes and dogmatic approach of the leadership, but they fully accepted the legitimacy of the system.³⁷⁷ Historians have conclusively argued that this highly placed cohort constituted the "backstory" of Perestroika,³⁷⁸ whose presence in the establishment

³⁷⁴ Ibid., 289.

³⁷⁵ Georgii Arbatov, "Review: Nikolai Inozemtsev: A Personality and the Times, Remembrances," *Herald of the Russian Academy of Sciences* (2006) 76(1), 102.

³⁷⁶ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 289-290, 325; English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 113; Strobe Talbott, "Introduction," in Georgii Arbatov, *The System: An insider's life in Soviet politics* (New York: Times Books, 1992), xvi.

³⁷⁷ My understanding benefitted from comments about Soviet liberals made by Pavel Kudiukin and Olga Fadina in Moscow in July 2019.

³⁷⁸ This backstory has been most thoroughly elaborated by Archie Brown, who identified the office of the Prague based journal *Problemy mira i sotsializma* (Problems of Peace and Socialism) as a place where many prominent Perestroika era reformers formed connections and exchanged views in this more liberal environment outside Soviet borders, which allowed them to act once their generation came to power. See: Archie Brown, Chapter Six: "Institutional Amphibiousness or Civil Society? The Origins and Development of Perestroika," in *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 157-190.

While Inozemtsev did not live to see Perestroika, he also spent time in Prague at *Problemy mir i sotsializma*, as did Arbatov.

provided the support for Gorbachev's reforms.³⁷⁹ But in the final years of the Brezhnev era when the country had reached a state of visible decline, the Soviet liberals' two decades of hopes for a return to the course of the Twentieth Party Congress remained unrealised. The early-1980s, when the outlines of Perestroika were far from visible, constituted dismal years for this group, and none more so than Inozemtsev.

IMEMO was one of the "oases" identified by Vladislav Zubok where critical intellectuals could find a haven populated by like-minded individuals within state structures,³⁸⁰ which continued to function in part due to Inozemtsev's role as a moderator between IMEMO researchers' critical output and the more conservative tendencies of the leadership. What contributed to the preservation of this milieu until the case of the Young Socialists was its inhabitants' understanding of its limits, and their own active measures to quell any potentially dissenting actions and remain within accepted boundaries. Most researchers cautiously manoeuvred within the sphere of autonomy allotted to them, and guarded against any behaviour by colleagues that overstepped the perceived permitted boundaries for fear that the negative attention of the authorities could usurp this limited freedom even further. In line with these practices, Inozemtsev oversaw the institute according to a "gentlemen's agreement,"³⁸¹ as it was described by Petr Cherkasov, the institute's official historian, where researchers understood a freethinking atmosphere was able to prevail without interference from outside conservative elements, insofar as they did not engage in "reckless behaviour," which Inozemtsev personally monitored and cautioned. This behaviour took the form of such activities as unauthorised meetings with foreigners,³⁸² and extended to the research produced by the institute. German Diligenskii, who headed the Department of the Socio-political Problems of Capitalism that Kudiukin worked for, and was forced to leave IMEMO for the IMRD in the wake of the affair of the Young Socialists, recalled Inozemtsev's cautious attitude to contentious findings. In one memorable episode, Inozemtsev criticised Diligenskii's

³⁷⁹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Cultivating their Dachas: Review of Vladislav Zubok's *Zhivago's Children: The last Russian intelligentsia*," *London Review of Books* (September 2009): <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n17/sheila-fitzpatrick/cultivating-their-dachas>.

³⁸⁰ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 322.

³⁸¹ Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," 32.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 35.

group for not seriously addressing the issues of the international communist movement in their research. The researchers responded by putting together an entire monograph, which Inozemtsev received enthusiastically, and then permanently locked in a safe due to his concerns that “they wouldn’t be able to accept it.”³⁸³ These actions prioritised the preservation of pockets of liberalism at the expense of attempting to enlarge them for fear of losing them altogether, and they acted as a self-censoring stopgap against the development of dissent or any challenges to the authorities from their ranks.

During his later KGB interrogation, in contrast to Inozemtsev’s careful perception of the fragility of the institute’s freedom, Kudiukin characterised IMEMO as an environment where samizdat could be fearlessly offered to ninety percent of the institute’s researchers.³⁸⁴ Inozemtsev’s accountability to the leadership from the top of the institute was remote from the everyday of these young dissident-minded researchers, who were far less attuned to the strength of the KGB and the party’s conservative forces. The Young Socialists found employment at IMEMO through the intelligentsia connections they had formed during their studies at MGU, which was characteristic of the primacy of contacts and social networks for status mobility in late Soviet society. Tatiana Vorozheikina was invited to IMEMO by Kiva Maidanik, who had supervised her diploma thesis, and entered the graduate school of IMEMO directly in the graduate distribution from MGU in 1977.³⁸⁵ Andrei Fadin arrived one year later after an invitation from Maidanik with Vorozheikina’s recommendation.³⁸⁶ According to the best traditions of *blat*, Ivanova was accepted to IMEMO on the merit that her mother was Inozemtsev’s secretary.³⁸⁷ Konstantin Baranovskii and Oleg Kudriavtsev, who were course mates of the group in the historical faculty at MGU and later part of the wider dissident circle of the Young Socialists, were already at

³⁸³ G.G. Diligenskii, “Nash direktor,” (Our Director.), in *Nikolai Inozemtsev: Lichnost’ i vremia* (Nikolai Inozemtsev: Personality and Time.), ed. M.M. Maksimova, (Moscow: Ekonomist’, 2004), 54.

³⁸⁴ Viktor Sheinis, “Poezdka v gorod Chekhov,” (Trip to the Town of Chekhov.) *NG Ex Libris* 13 May 2004: http://www.ng.ru/ng_exlibris/2004-05-13/3_chehov.html.

³⁸⁵ Interview with Olga Fadina and Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 9 July 2019.

³⁸⁶ Interview with Olga Fadina and Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 9 July 2019; “Zhizn’ v trekh epokhakh,” Tatiana Vorozheikina, Andrei Ostal’skii and Vladimir Kara-Murza Discuss Georgii Mirskii’s Legacy, *Radio Svoboda*, 26 January 2016: https://carnegie.ru/2016/01/26/ru-pub-62599_.

³⁸⁷ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

IMEMO when they told Kudiukin in the spring of 1978 that Diligenskii's department was looking for an aspirant to research the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party. Kudiukin passed the entrance exam and was interviewed by Petr Cherkasov and Andrei Klimov, who were acting as representatives for the IMEMO graduate school admissions. Klimov had been Kudiukin's third year professor of political economy at MGU, who had praised Kudiukin's paper on workers' participation in the management of self-government at an MGU student conference, and had sympathetically inquired to him about Dolutskii in the wake of the wall newspaper affair.³⁸⁸

The Young Socialists encountered an intellectual haven at IMEMO whose exceptional status was bolstered by access to restricted information on the Soviet Union and the outside world. The years of détente were accompanied by an increase in the international affairs research institutes' subscriptions to foreign scholarly journals and international media publications, holdings of specialist Western literature, and the distribution of white TASS reportage, which all presented a more precise picture of foreign and domestic events for researchers than had been available to previous Soviet generations of scholars.³⁸⁹ In their everyday research duties, the Young Socialists had access to these resources with their permits for *spetskhran*, the restricted room in the IMEMO library.³⁹⁰ The hierarchised control of information was an aspect of Soviet life that was keenly observed by Western correspondents. In his account of the Soviet Union in the 1970s, Hedrick Smith described the classifications of news bulletins that were distributed to different groups in Soviet society. These included red TASS that contained extremely sensitive reporting which was intended for the highest levels of the party and government. One level below was white TASS, which was available to IMEMO researchers as well as government ministries and party headquarters. It included more comprehensive Soviet and foreign accounts of global and domestic affairs than regular blue and green TASS media reporting for the Soviet general public, which was affected to a greater degree by propaganda influenced narratives and censorship.³⁹¹ According to post-Soviet recollections of employees of the Central Committee, white TASS

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 151.

³⁹⁰ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

³⁹¹ Smith, *The Russians*, 433-434.

extended to articles from the foreign press that reported negatively about the actions of the Soviet Union and its leadership.³⁹² The contributors to *Varianty* absorbed the wider range of information that they encountered within *spetskhran* and everyday conversations at IMEMO, and incorporated it into their own thinking when they wrote their samizdat articles, though they did not copy and include statistics or quotations from these materials. The exception was occasions when they translated documents for circulation and discussion, but not for wider dissemination in *Varianty*.³⁹³ But the cumulative effect of this increased access to information was the stimulation of the young researchers' intellectual creativity, and it provided sources for the verification and maturation of their dissenting socialist worldviews.

The opportunities at IMEMO for access to foreign publications that offered alternative reporting, interpretations and analysis, which differed from Soviet narratives of domestic and foreign affairs, introduced other perspectives that added complexity to the young researchers' worldviews. Olga Iur'evna Ivanova (later Fadina) (b. 1953) worked in IMEMO's Department of Information where she assembled the institute's reference collection for the French left-wing parties, including the then-Eurocommunist Parti Communiste Français (PCF).³⁹⁴ She had attended an elite magnet school on Kutuzovskii Prospekt that trained its students intensively in English, where the other pupils included Brezhnev's granddaughters.³⁹⁵ According to Ivanova's recollections, some of its teachers were the wives of former Soviet ambassadors to English speaking countries, who brought toys, books and other materials from the West to their classes.³⁹⁶ Ivanova's father had studied with Inozemtsev at MGIMO and in the final years of his career was the dean of the faculty of English languages at the Maurice Thorez Institute of Foreign Languages (Thorez Institute) before he passed away in Ivanova's childhood.

³⁹² Interview of Aleksandr Lisin, Instructor in the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee by Nikolai Mitrokhin, cited in Nikolai Mitrokhin, "Memoirs of the Employees of the Apparat of the Central Committee of the CPSU about Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: Fragments of an interview," *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* (3) (2012): <http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2012/115/m15.html>.

³⁹³ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

³⁹⁴ Interview with Olga Fadina, Moscow, 4 November 2016.

³⁹⁵ On Soviet magnet schools, see Donald Raleigh, *Russia's Sputnik Generation: Soviet baby boomers talk about their lives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 7.

³⁹⁶ According to Fadina, Vorozheikina also studied at this school. Interview with Fadina.

Afterwards, her father's friends had helped her mother to find work and eventually she was appointed as Inozemtsev's secretary. This had negative repercussions for the director after the Young Socialists' arrests, when it was discovered that *Varianty* had been typed on a machine that was registered to Inozemtsev's own office.³⁹⁷



Olga Ivanova, early-1980s (Facebook).

A graduate of the Thorez Institute, Ivanova had initially intended to pursue postgraduate research in philology and literary studies, but the experience of writing her diploma thesis on Walt Whitman dissuaded her because she felt ideology had thoroughly permeated independent analysis in this field. Ivanova related, "You were not allowed to come up with any of your own ideas...You had to repeat some very accepted...orthodox ideas about the socialist realist approach."³⁹⁸ Instead she was drawn to IMEMO as a result of its intellectually exciting environment, which she had first witnessed firsthand when she performed interpreting duties at an IMEMO conference at the end of her university studies. Her background of language and literary training confined her to the Department of Information, while she

³⁹⁷ Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 515.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

simultaneously read intensively to accumulate the historical and political knowledge necessary for independent research that IMEMO's researchers, who were typically graduates of MGU or MGIMO had already acquired. Her position involved close reading and translation of the French leftist media until she transferred to the Department of Western Europe after three years as a specialist of contemporary France,³⁹⁹ where she wrote a *Kandidat* thesis that addressed the influence of economic conditions in De Gaulle's France, and examined the municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections to detect the influences of inflation, unemployment and other local factors.⁴⁰⁰

Ivanova's disregard for ideologically influenced analysis and her immersive experience with foreign scholarly sources from the very beginning of her career were attributes that were common to scholars who entered the international affairs research institutes during *détente*. The increased possibilities for analysis and understanding of the outside world that were brought by the spike in foreign scholarly sources, which came with *détente* and remained in place after its collapse, coincided with the emergence of this younger generation of scholars, who were typically less preoccupied with incorporating ideological perspectives into their research than their elders. The older generation whose careers began in the late-1950s often displayed a shallower understanding of the outside world as the influence of Marxist structures of thinking and analysis induced them to search for evidence that supported their preconceived notions in their research, which was a feature of their thinking that continued into the late-Brezhnev era, although it occurred with lesser intensity than in previous years.⁴⁰¹ According to the contemporarily observing political scientist, Jerry Hough, these younger scholars, who were born in the post-war years, analysed the world with a more differentiated outlook and often probed for local explanations for developments.⁴⁰² The Young Socialists were at the tail end of this younger generation of researchers, who have been termed "the children of *détente*" by English.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁹ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

⁴⁰⁰ Interview with Fadina.

⁴⁰¹ Sergei Zhuk, *Soviet Americana: The Cultural History of Russian and Ukrainian Americanists* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 130.

⁴⁰² Hough, "The Foreign Policy Establishment," 154-155.

⁴⁰³ English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 125.

While generation influenced the way in which Soviet scholars cast ideological frames on the outside world in their research, it had a more complex and multilayered significance for shaping their perspectives of their own society. Historiographical interpretations and historical actors themselves later assessed the scholarly environment of IMEMO to have been a milieu whose reformist impulses overlapped with dissent in the years that the Young Socialists were at the institute. Its inhabitants have been varyingly termed as “enlightened apparatchiks,”⁴⁰⁴ figures of “in-system dissent,”⁴⁰⁵ “within-system reformers,”⁴⁰⁶ expressions of “altruistic intra-structural dissent,” “liberal conformists,”⁴⁰⁷ “inside dissidents,”⁴⁰⁸ and “intra-systemic dissidents.”⁴⁰⁹ These terms were most often used within narratives that reconstructed the processes within the establishment that contributed to the origins of Perestroika, and referred to a particular grouping of *shestidesiatniki*, the high-ranking liberals who became leading political figures after 1985.

By reading backwards into the Brezhnev years of this milieu from the outcome of Perestroika, Western scholars’ narratives privileged the perspectives of the high-ranking liberals as a result of their prominence as historical actors in the later period. The continued belief in the reformist potential of socialism that was upheld by the high-ranking liberals and their active engagement with these ideals in the late-Brezhnev era in fact placed them in the minority within their own generation and the succeeding one in this milieu in the early-1980s. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia that took place more than a decade earlier had left the mark of disillusionment in the prospects for the reform of Soviet socialism among many other *shestidesiatniki*, who turned away from their earlier ideals,⁴¹⁰ and this echoed into the younger generation, who came of age in the aftermath of this embitterment.

⁴⁰⁴ Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 78, 205, 301.

⁴⁰⁵ See Philip Boobbyer, Chapter 9: In-system dissent, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

⁴⁰⁶ English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, i.

⁴⁰⁷ Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 356.

⁴⁰⁸ Roderic Pitty, “Imagining Liberation: Russian critiques of Stalinism,” *Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 17(1) (2009): 99-116.

⁴⁰⁹ These final three terms were referenced in a survey by Archie Brown. He attributed “within-system reformers” to be part of the vocabulary of a number of Sovietologists in the Brezhnev era. The final two terms were coined by Alexander Shtromas and Yevgeny Primakov successively, cited in Brown, *Seven Years that Changed the World*, 164.

⁴¹⁰ Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 299.

Dmitrii Furman, who had been a researcher at both IMRD and ISKAN in the Brezhnev years, observed that from the early-1970s he rarely came into contact with any Marxists, reflecting that while there had been “plenty of such people in the 1960s. In the 1980s there was none,” and instead his acquaintances lacked any orientation, or had evolved into Westernisers, Orthodox Christians, or in different escapist directions.⁴¹¹ The common absence of belief in Marxism-Leninism, despite its prominent role in everyday public speech, had also reached this milieu. In his post-Soviet memoirs, Georgii Il’ich Mirskii (b. 1926), the Head of the Department of the Economics and Politics of Developing Countries at IMEMO, who was later reprimanded and demoted for his role in the affair of the Young Socialists, described the prevailing outlook of hopelessness and cynicism that he observed among the Soviet intelligentsia in these years:

The overwhelming majority of Soviet intellectuals were limited to what could be called entirely pacified opposition [*komnatnaia fronda*]. They saw everything and understood it all, had no illusions, but realised that “You can’t break through a wall with your forehead”... All that remained was to adjust to this reality and to hope that within the framework of this hateful system it was possible to live more or less decently and with some purpose at least – to pronounce all the necessary words while not believing in them a bit – to vote “like everyone else,” without demonstrating any enthusiasm that would bring feelings of shame upon yourself or to you in your family’s eyes.⁴¹²

In these institutes this development was thrown into sharper relief than in other parts of society because of the daily ideological work demanded by research on global affairs, which took place in close proximity to the highest levels of the party, and more importantly, they were a space where the sense of profound belief had existed among a large proportion of researchers in earlier years. The vantage point of Perestroika, when the values of the high-ranking liberals became inscribed in Gorbachev’s policy agenda, obscures this wider disengagement from socialism that already existed among many Soviet intellectuals at the end of the Brezhnev era. But despite the cynicism that had developed to varying degrees among its researchers, the institute maintained its reformist agenda. Cherkasov, who was a researcher at

⁴¹¹ Dmitry Furman, “Perestroika as seen by a Moscow humanitarian,” in *Breakthrough to Freedom. Perestroika: A critical analysis*, ed. Aleksandr Veber (Moscow: R.Valent Publishers, 2009), 253.

⁴¹² Mirskii, *Zhizn’ v trekh epokhakh*, 221.

IMEMO from the late-1960s, placed great emphasis on the progressive nature of the institute's professional output, and considered the environment to be one of "liberal conformism":

[They] made up the overwhelming majority of the IMEMO research staff. Regardless of their personal convictions, the liberal conformists never spoke against the existing system, limiting themselves to more or less cautious criticism of its "individual defects." They saw their mission as contributing to the improvement of "real socialism," its political democratisation as well as its social and economic efficiency (through the memos, forecasts, and other analytical materials that they sent from the institute to the CPSU Central Committee).⁴¹³

Ivanova, whose hope for gradual reform remained in line with those espoused by the high-ranking liberals in these years, recalled of her then-views, "I fully believed in the evolution of the regime... that people like Nikolai Inozemtsev, Evgenii Ambartsumov, Aleksandr Bovin, they are already members of the Central Committee, they can influence Brezhnev, they can influence the authorities."⁴¹⁴ She was drawn to participate in the Young Socialists' dissident activities out of fascination with the intellectual character of their samizdat, and was a typist of *Varianty* in order to minimise her friends' risk of KGB detection.⁴¹⁵

The Young Socialists' beliefs that led to their drift into illegal activity can be partially interpreted as a reaction against the disengagement from socialism that they encountered even within this environment. However, the greater impetus for their activities that was derived from this setting was the opportunity to observe at close range the lack of influence of reformist impulses at the top of the system, which was especially present in the foreign policy decision making that ended détente. Unlike Ivanova, the editors of *Varianty* expressed skepticism towards the wisdom of the high-ranking liberals' gradualist approach. In an interview with the French publication, *L'Alternative*, in 1981 which will be explored in detail later in the chapter, they concluded that not only did the high-ranking liberals lack the strength to push through their desired agenda, but the system as it existed had in-built blocking mechanisms against reform in the form of its bureaucracy:

⁴¹³ Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," 64, f. 3.

⁴¹⁴ Interview with Fadina.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

The timid reformist impulses “from above,” where they exist, are countered by the inertia and conservatism of the mid-level bureaucracy, actively exercising their right to a “bureaucratic veto,” both when submitting information to the top, and when executing orders that have emanated from there. This mid-level bureaucracy is not interested in any changes towards greater rationality and efficiency.⁴¹⁶

The perception that the high-ranking liberals were insufficient in number and weak in authority, and that their minimal influence was further negated by lower level actors, was also a factor that drove the group towards dissent. Despite broadly sharing the high-ranking liberals’ vision for the reformist evolution of the Soviet system, the Young Socialists’ activities were a reaction against the perceived complacency of this milieu, which did not appear to them to be capable of bringing about reform.

IMEMO was a differentiated milieu, which contained researchers who were to varying degrees privately cynical and held different gradients of reformist views. In this environment, the young dissidents gravitated towards senior researchers who shared elements of their leftist views, or were critical-minded and enjoyed intellectually sparring with the enthusiastic young people. The senior researchers who the Young Socialists associated with, Marat Cheshkov, Viktor Sheinis, Kiva Maidanik, and Donald Maclean, were all figures that occupied the more critical end of reformist views at the time they came into contact with the young researchers. Marat Cheshkov was a former participant in the Krasnopevtsev circle of the 1950s, a neo-Leninist dissident group that had formed in the historical faculty of MGU. Named after its leader, the young history lecturer, Lev Krasnopevtsev, the group initially discussed contemporary political issues and the history of Soviet communism.⁴¹⁷ This was during the momentous year of 1956. The group were supporters of the Twentieth Party Congress and held critical attitudes to the Soviet crushing of the Hungarian uprising. The following year, they distributed 300 leaflets around MGU and on buses that called for the removal of Stalin’s accomplices from

⁴¹⁶ “L’Almanach ‘Variantes,’ Une interview de membres de la redaction,” (The Almanac *Variants*, An interview with the editorial staff.) *L’Alternative* (15) (April-May 1982), 21. The French-language interview was translated into Russian by Radio Free Europe and published as part of AS 4619 in their *arkhiv samizdata* collection (OSA, f. 300, s.f., 85, c. 9, box 111, Published Samizdat AS 4619) which is the text I have translated into English and relied on in this analysis.

⁴¹⁷ Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev’s Soviet Union*, 105.

the leadership, the withdrawal of article 58 on counter-revolutionary crimes from the criminal code, and demanded that workers be given the right to strike. The group was detected by the KGB when its foreign contacts were discovered and after a member of the group dropped a briefcase on the streets of Moscow full of the clandestine leaflets and passers-by helped them to pick it up.⁴¹⁸ Cheshkov was sentenced in 1958 to eight years under article 58-10, for counter-revolutionary agitation and propaganda, and served his sentence in a camp in the Mordovian Republic. At the time of his arrest, he had been working at the Institute of Oriental Studies. While in the Mordovian camps, Cheshkov continued his historical studies. He was able to receive newspapers and journals, and had an academic supervisor. With these resources in the camp, Cheshkov completed his candidate dissertation on the economy of colonial Vietnam, supplemented by scholarly literature sent to him by his friends.⁴¹⁹ After his release on pardon in 1963, he no longer aspired towards any dissenting activities, but was eager to continue his scholarly career. Cheshkov's research interests became oriented towards the Third World and the history of science and global problems, and he found satisfaction in these pursuits at IMEMO. In an example of an application of Inozemtsev's "gentlemen's agreement," Cheshkov was permitted to write a nominally unorthodox article whose reach would not extend beyond the desk drawer, where he demonstrated that the Vietnamese Communist Party had nothing to do with communism as defined by Marxist orthodoxy.⁴²⁰

Cheshkov became acquainted with the Young Socialists through working in the same department as Fadin at IMEMO. Fadin and Kudiukin were inspired by Cheshkov's research on the Third World and he was a reader of their *samizdat*. By the mid-1970s, Cheshkov began to elaborate on a concept that he termed *etakratiia*, which may be approximately understood to mean "rule by the state apparatus." Cheshkov used the concept of *etakratiia* to explain the social nature of the state sector and modes of production in the countries of the Third World.⁴²¹ The Young

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., 106.

⁴¹⁹ Unpublished memoirs of Marat Cheshkov, cited in Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," 33.

⁴²⁰ Cherkasov, "Dissidence at IMEMO," 34.

⁴²¹ These ideas can be found in Cheshkov's work, Marat Cheshkov, "Biurokratiia i 'etakratiia' v razvivaiushchikhksia stranakh," (The Bureaucracy and "Etakratiia" in the Developing Countries.), in *Obshchestvo, elita i biurokratiia v razvivaiushchikhksia stranakh*

Socialists seized on this concept. In a 1980 article in their second samizdat journal, *Sotsializm i budushchee*, Kagarlitskii used the term to describe the Soviet system, “State property is used by the *etokratia* for the exploitation of the working class, the peasants and the intelligentsia... The existing system, in accordance with the terminology, should more accurately be called not socialist, but *etokratia*, or at best transitional.”⁴²² In the post-Soviet years, Kagarlitskii explained in greater detail that for the Young Socialists, Cheshkov’s *etokratia* captured the essence of the Soviet system itself. It described a type of production that emerged on the border of capitalism and non-capitalism, and was characterised by state control over property with the simultaneous absence of public control over the state, which in fact acted as a collective exploiter. Under this system, the bureaucracy evolved to become a “class-type community,” while the working people remained largely a declassed mass of “producers”, deprived of power and property.⁴²³



Marat Cheshkov (Wikipedia).

The appearance of Cheshkov’s *etokratia* in the Young Socialists’ samizdat was an example of an idea that was produced within institutional scholarly

Vostoka (Society, the Elite and the Bureaucracy in the Developing Countries of the East), ed. A.G. Bel’skii (Moscow: Institute of Oriental Studies, 1974), 1-30.

⁴²² Anonymous, “Etokratia i Prisvoenie Pribavochnogo Produkta.” (Etokratia and the Assignment of Surplus Product.) *Sotsializm i budushchee* (1) (8 March 1980), 11.

⁴²³ Boris Kagarlitskii, “Epokha tupikovikh diskussii,” (Epoch of the dead end discussion.) *Zhurnalnyi klub Interlos neprikosnovennyi zapas* (2) (2007): http://www.intelros.ru/readroom/nz/2_52/1284-jepokha_tupikovykh_diskussij.html.

structures that was nominally developed to apply to non-Soviet levels of development, but which the Young Socialists reconfigured to reference Soviet reality, and then circulated within the dissident sphere. The academic environment of IMEMO proved fertile ground for the Young Socialists to imbibe concepts that described external phenomena, and then to apply them to local conditions. It also illustrated the presence of *shestidesiatniki* networks within the institute and their intellectual influence on the Young Socialists. These *shestidesiatniki* transmitted their ideas to the Young Socialists, and informed them of their own generational experience that was shaped in the Thaw. Cheshkov's communication of his lived experience of dissent extended to actions that he recommended to Fadin and Kudiukin for what to do when they faced arrest. After the duo returned from prison and came to the institute to collect their documents, they encountered Cheshkov, who was eager to learn about the conditions of their imprisonment to compare them to his own.⁴²⁴ With some irony, Kudiukin remembered, "For him, it was a kind of possibility to remind him of his own youth."⁴²⁵

Viktor Sheinis was another IMEMO researcher with a dissident past who became a reader of the Young Socialists' samizdat. In 1957, while a postgraduate researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow, he had written a critique of the Soviet invasion of Hungary entitled, "The Truth about Hungary" for which he was expelled from his studies.⁴²⁶ He then became a metal worker for six years at Kirov factory in Leningrad.⁴²⁷ His punishment was much milder than Cheshkov's years in the camps perhaps because Sheinis' samizdat was burned and the ashes flushed down the toilet in the haste of a KGB search rather than distributed on the streets of Moscow.⁴²⁸ From 1964 he resumed his studies and achieved the status of

⁴²⁴ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Boris Vishnevskii, "Pochemu opyat'ne poluchilos'" (Why it didn't happen again.) *Novaya Gazeta* 19 January 2006: http://www.yabloko.ru/Publ/2006/2006_01/060120_novgspb_vishn_scheinys.html.

⁴²⁷ "Spustia poleka Rossiia vozvrashaetsia k Sovietskoi traktovke vengerskikh sobitii. Politicheskii li eto zakaz?" (After Half a Century, Russia is Returning to the Soviet Interpretation of Hungarian Events. Is this a Political Order?) *Radio Svoboda* 11 November 2006: http://www.yabloko.ru/Publ/2006/2006_11/061115_svob_scheinis.html.

⁴²⁸ Revolt Pimenov, "Vospominaniia," (Recollections.) *Pamiat': istoricheskii sbornik* (3) (1980), 97, cited in Pitty, "Imagining Liberation," 103.

Candidate of science at Leningrad State University (LSU) with a dissertation on the theme of “Portuguese colonialism in Africa, economic problems of the last colonial empire.” He taught at LSU until the mid-1970s when he was dismissed for political unreliability. He was then invited to IMEMO. In his view, his appointment to a prestigious research institution after his dismissal from LSU was the result of the peculiarity of the Soviet scientific establishment that arose from the demands of the state. He reasoned:

Our system of scientific and educational institutions fulfilled two functions: the first one — distribution of propaganda in the communist spirit (for example, Leningrad State University) and the second — the investigation of real processes and transferring the gained information to directive bodies. In other words, IMEMO was one of these centres that had to present the real information for the Central Committee etc. That’s why there were lots of people who were politically unreliable.⁴²⁹

He arrived at IMEMO as a senior researcher one year before the Young Socialists. At IMEMO, Sheinis studied the economic growth and social processes that were taking place in the Third World. He was in fact critical of the use of “Third World” as a framework for analysis, and considered it an abstraction and useless concept, as he perceived the differences between the Third World countries to often be more significant than the differences between the Third World and developed countries.⁴³⁰ He was a contrarian and did not hold leftist views in common with the Young Socialists, but was a friend and debater to the group, and influenced their thinking on the Third World. Vorozheikina remembered him as a classical Soviet liberal as he favoured the introduction of market elements into the Soviet economy and gradual democratisation,⁴³¹ who was always arguing with her Guevarist passions.⁴³² Sheinis was heavily critical of the arrests of Fadin and Kudiukin, and later described the situation in a post-Soviet interview: “Two young people were arrested, who were capable, energetic, talented young people, and they were accused, in fact, of sympathy for Eurocommunism.” He continued, “It was no

⁴²⁹ “Interview of Sheinis by Spencer.”

⁴³⁰ Ibid.

⁴³¹ Email communication with Tatiana Vorozheikina, 17 June 2019.

⁴³² Interview with Igor Dolutskii and Tatiana Vorozheikina, 23 November 2016.

coincidence that our authorities were not afraid most of all of sworn enemies of Soviet power, but the Eurocommunists, who were ideologically closest.”⁴³³

Another Eurocommunist sympathiser, Donald Maclean, also came into contact with the Young Socialists. Maclean was part of the Cambridge Five, the group of upper class spies who worked in highly-placed positions in the British diplomatic service, and famously passed information to the Soviet Union from the 1930s to the 1950s. Maclean himself gave intelligence to the Soviets on the Western atomic project while a member of the Anglo-American atomic committee, and defected to the Soviet Union in 1951.⁴³⁴ Upon his arrival, he spent two years interned in the provincial city of Samara (Kuibyshev in Soviet times), purposely hidden by the Soviet authorities from foreign detection, as the climate of high Stalinism still dictated uncertainty for the fate of foreign agents.⁴³⁵ By 1956, Maclean returned to Moscow and announced his presence in the Soviet Union at a press conference to foreign journalists. Unlike the other Cambridge defectors, Guy Burgess and Kim Philby, Maclean acclimated into Soviet life and became a productive member of the society. During the 1960s, he was purportedly a presence in the apartment salons of the *shestidesiatniki*, where literature and anti-Stalinist politics were excitedly discussed. He formed contacts among the Soviet intelligentsia, including the dissident historian, Roy Medvedev, who shared his book manuscripts with him and valued his commentary.⁴³⁶ In 1961, he became a researcher in the section for external policy and a lecturer at IMEMO. His biographer, Robert Cecil, on the basis of testimonies from those who knew Maclean in Moscow, speculated that Maclean considered his work at IMEMO to be of equal importance to his earlier espionage and believed that his capacity to communicate Western understandings of the world to young Soviet students of international relations was an important contribution to the democratic

⁴³³ Vladimir Baburin and Viktor Sheinis, “‘Vremia gostei’: spetsial’nyi vypusk ‘pamiati Aleksandra Yakovleva,’” (Guests’ time: special edition in memory of Aleksandr Yakovlev.) *Radio Svoboda* 19 October 2005: http://www.yabloko.ru/Publ/2005/2005_10/051020_svob_yakpvtlev.html.

⁴³⁴ Roy Medvedev, “Maclean, a dissident abroad.” *Times* [London, England] 31 May 1983: 12.

⁴³⁵ Robert Cecil, *A Divided Life: A biography of Donald Maclean* (London: Bodley Head, 1988), 235.

⁴³⁶ Medvedev, “Maclean, a dissident abroad.”

evolution of Soviet socialism.⁴³⁷ Olga Ivanova worked alongside Maclean in the department of Western Europe. She had friendly relations with him, and remembered him as a very British gentleman who was beloved by the department.⁴³⁸

Though he primarily socialised with Soviet intellectuals, he remained in contact with Moscow based British communists, and communicated to them his disappointment that the Brezhnev era leadership had failed to build on the reforms of the Khrushchev era.⁴³⁹ While remaining a faithful communist, later in his life Maclean believed the Soviet Union needed to evolve in a “Eurocommunist” direction for socialism to be truly realised in the country.⁴⁴⁰ In 1972, he took the step of writing a letter to Andropov in protest against the prison sentence given to dissident Vladimir Bukovskii and the Soviet abuse of psychiatry for political purposes.⁴⁴¹ Maclean was able to carry out this relatively exceptional act as a result of his unusual status as a decorated foreigner within the Soviet intellectual establishment. By the early-1980s, he had become disillusioned by the possibility of a Soviet intervention in Poland and the Soviet polemics against Eurocommunism. In a 1983 interview with the British Moscow based *Observer* correspondent, Mark Frankland, which Maclean only permitted to be published posthumously, he commented on the case of the Young Socialists at the time they were imprisoned in Lefortovo and awaiting trial. Maclean asked the interviewer about “the expected trial of six young Eurocommunists,” who shared his views and added, “They were serious and interested in the right problems.”⁴⁴² He disclosed that he did not know those in Lefortovo personally, but knew their friends, which referred to the members of the wider circle of the Young Socialists, Ivanova and Konstantin Baranovskii.⁴⁴³

Konstantin Iur’evich Baranovskii (b. 1955) wrote articles on Eurocommunism in *Varianty*.⁴⁴⁴ He was the great-grandson of the famous theatre

⁴³⁷ Cecil, *A Divided Life*, 257.

⁴³⁸ Interview with Fadina.

⁴³⁹ Cecil, *A Divided Life*, 261.

⁴⁴⁰ Note of Donald Maclean written at the end of his life, cited in Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 347.

⁴⁴¹ Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 343.

⁴⁴² Mark Frankland, “Last Testament of a Traitor,” *The Observer* (13 March 1983), 9.

⁴⁴³ Interview with Fadina.

⁴⁴⁴ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

director Konstantin Stanislavskii and the grandson of a White Army general.⁴⁴⁵ He was from a long-standing intelligentsia family where French was the second language spoken at home. He had studied with Fadin and Kudiukin in the historical faculty of MGU and then worked in the Western European department at IMEMO, and like Ivanova, was implicated in the case of the Young Socialists in the capacity of a witness.⁴⁴⁶ The Young Socialists' association with Maclean and his reference to their arrests in his final interview with the Western media confirmed the prominence of their case, and the sympathy their ideas attracted within parts of the in-system reformist milieu of IMEMO. Despite venturing into dissent, which was an inimical stance within that setting, their reform socialist direction nevertheless reflected the intellectual trends and convictions among the actively engaged mid-level reformists in this milieu.



Konstantin Baranovskii with his wife and son (Facebook).

Latin America, the Revolutionary El Dorado.

At IMEMO, Tatiana Vorozheikina and Andrei Fadin were junior researchers under the supervision of the famous Latin Americanist, Kiva Maidanik, in the Department of Economics and Politics of the Developing Countries. The Young

⁴⁴⁵ Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 514, f. 1; Kudiukin and Morozov, "Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudiukinym."

⁴⁴⁶ Interview with Fadina.

Socialists' interest in the Third World was largely centred on Latin America as a result of Vorozheikina and Fadin's long-term enchantment with the continent that had begun in their teenage years. But by their late twenties, this romantic attachment was nuanced by academic training, and the two were fluent Spanish speakers and well-informed, sympathetic Latin Americanists. Soviet Latin American studies was an environment where Marxism-Leninism and understandings of development were creatively applied in academic debates, and were treated as a living and evolving body of thought by scholars. The relative unimportance of Latin America to Soviet interests enabled greater academic freedom, and Latin Americanists own frequent personal commitment to these ideas contributed to the field's ideological dynamism. This contrasted with other sections of area studies, where serious engagement with Marxism-Leninism was more often a dead letter. This was frequently the case for the more politically relevant Soviet American studies, where many scholars followed ideological clichés out of regard for political conformity, or employed internalist narratives that relied on analysing documents without using any theoretical conceptualisations as a means of escape from ideology.⁴⁴⁷

While the scholarly environment of Soviet Latin American studies still contained a heavy dose of revolutionary romanticism, the youthful passions of Fadin and Vorozheikina's student years were tempered by their own engagement within the field's concentrated study of Marxism-Leninist theories of socio-economic development. The young scholars' introduction to these ideas and their professional study of the region gave them a broader corpus of thinking that added greater complexity and matured their interpretations of Latin America. This knowledge also broadened their perspectives for understanding Soviet development, and they searched for comparative models in the region that held lessons when contemplating the Soviet path to reform.

Fadin and Vorozheikina's academic supervisor, Maidanik, played a considerable role in the young scholars' intellectual journey. Tobias Rupprecht has

⁴⁴⁷ Sergei I. Zhuk, *Nikolai Bolkhovitinov and American Studies in the USSR* (London: Lexington Books, 2017), 224.

Internalist narratives were also a feature of the field of the History of Science. Slava Gerovitch, "Writing History in the Present Tense: Cold War-Era Discursive Strategies of Soviet Historians of Science and Technology," in *Universities and Empire: Money and politics in the social sciences during the Cold War*, eds. Christopher Simpson (New York: The New Press, 1998), 199

conceptualised Soviet Latin Americanists to be carriers of the idea of Soviet internationalism, noting that a number of these “*mezhdunarodniki*” (international specialists), who were born in the 1920s, continued to idealistically support concrete forms of Soviet solidarity with leftist movements globally even into the 1980s.⁴⁴⁸ Maidanik was a prominent figure among the *mezhdunarodniki*, who was also a patron of Vorozheikina and Fadin and an enthusiastic reader of the Young Socialists’ *samizdat*. Their relationship was an instance where internationalist ideas, knowledge and contacts were passed from the *mezhdunarodniki* to members of a younger generation of Soviet intellectuals.

Kiva L’vovich Maidanik (b. 1929) was part of the first generation of post-Stalin internationalists born in the 1920s, who retained romantic memories of the Spanish Civil War, which had taken place in his early youth. A Soviet Jew, he graduated from Moscow State University in 1951 during the anti-cosmopolitan campaign. It was only after the Twentieth Party Congress that he was permitted to begin his graduate studies at the Academy of Sciences, where he worked under the supervision of the former Soviet ambassador to Britain turned historian of nineteenth century Spain, Ivan Maiskii, who had recently re-entered academia after two years of imprisonment in the gulag.⁴⁴⁹ Maidanik’s dissertation was on the theme of the Spanish Civil War. He criticised anarcho-syndicalism and the anti-Stalinist Workers’ Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) that fought in the Spanish Popular Front, but then perhaps not accidentally had reproduced POUM’s concept of the revolutionary war and the necessity to deepen the revolution for victory in the war in his thesis. He was severely criticised by the Spanish communists who resided in Moscow, and apparently there were even letters to the Central Committee of the CPSU that complained that the dissertation contained too many political mistakes and was not in accordance with the views of the Communist Party of Spain.⁴⁵⁰ From 1963, Maidanik worked in Prague as deputy head of the Latin American department of *Problemy mira i socializma* (Problems of Peace and Socialism). As was addressed earlier in this chapter, many of the famous reformers of the Gorbachev era were

⁴⁴⁸ See “Chapter 5: Desk Revolutionaries,” in Tobias Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interchange and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 230-283.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 258.

⁴⁵⁰ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

alumni of this Prague based journal, which acted as a space of socialisation for the high-ranking liberals of the Brezhnev years, who came to power during Perestroika.⁴⁵¹ During Maidanik's time in Prague, his work continued to provoke. The editors of *Problemy mira i sotsializma* and the Central Committee of the CPSU received letters, particularly from the Argentinian communist party, that "pointed out the mistakes of comrade Maidanik" because he was critical of the dogmatism of some Latin American communist parties and predicted that their position would lead to the loss of their vanguard position in the revolutionary movement.⁴⁵² In Prague, he established friendships with many Latin American leftists including the later leader of the Salvadoran communist party, Schafik Handal, the Salvadoran poet and revolutionary, Roque Dalton and the Dominican communist party leader, Narciso Isa Conde. These friendships continued when the Latin Americans visited Moscow. Many of them stayed in his home, and at one point the Dominican communist party Central Committee was even storing their archive in his Moscow flat.⁴⁵³ After his return to Moscow in 1968, Maidanik entered IMEMO as a political scientist and historian, and became a prolific contributor to the debates of Soviet Latin American studies.

In the late-1970s and early-1980s, Soviet Latin Americanists were primarily engaged in theoretical debates about the mechanisms of Latin American development and their relevance for nations where leftist insurgencies and revolutions were breaking out. These discussions were prominently on the pages of *Latinskaia Amerika*, the official Soviet journal of Latin American studies. Soviet scholars from different institutions, as well as occasional Latin American authors, contributed to the journal, which was a forum for published debates, news, articles and interviews with Latin American political figures that was published in both Russian and Spanish.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ See Archie Brown, "Chapter Six: Institutional Amphibiousness or Civil Society? The Origins and Development of Perestroika," in *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and English, *Gorbachev, Intellectuals and the End of the Cold War*.

⁴⁵² Interview with Kudiukin, 7 November 2016.

⁴⁵³ From the Editor of *Skepsis*, "Kiva Maidanik: Revoliutsioner," (Revolutionary.) *Skepsis Scientific-Educational Journal*, N.D.: http://scepsis.net/library/id_1047.html.

⁴⁵⁴ Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 248.

In the mid-1970s, Soviet Latin Americanists developed different theoretical models to account for the authoritarian regimes on the Latin American continent. For Maidanik, these regimes were fascist examples that resulted from “the structural crises of middle development capitalism” (MDC). MDC was a phenomenon that occurred in countries where capitalism had latently developed, was of a “dependent character,” and its crises directed the country towards either socialism or fascism, as in Spain and Greece and the Eastern Bloc.⁴⁵⁵ This “dependent character” referred to the country being located in a subordinate position within the international capitalist system, which was dominated by the advanced countries. This had a restrictive effect on the less advanced countries’ development; the extent of which was debated among the Soviet Latin Americanists. By contrast, other scholars, such as Aleksandr Galkin of the IMRD took a historical perspective and conceptualised these authoritarian nations as a modernised reappearance of the classical military dictatorship typical in Latin America and therefore a continuation of a certain type of Latin American political culture. These regimes were not considered to be fascist because Galkin considered fascism a phenomenon specific to developed countries.



Maidanik with Che Guevara (Google).

⁴⁵⁵ Discussion “En torno al problema de los regimenes autoritarios de derecha contemporaneos,” *América Latina* (The Spanish language edition of *Latinskaia Amerika*.) (3) (1976): 78-194, cited in Edme Domínguez Reyes, “Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America,” in *Soviet-Latin American Relations in the 1980s*, ed. Augusto Varas (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press Inc., 1987), 56.

Soviet Latin Americanists also contended with the larger question of the precise models of development that should be applied to Latin America. Essentially, it was a question of whether Latin America best conformed to Asian and African levels of development or whether the continent was closer to southern European levels, and from this, which models should be applied to interpret Latin American political developments.⁴⁵⁶ Central to this question was also the degree of dependency of Latin American capitalism and whether this dependency was the definitive factor and restricted Latin America from attaining higher levels of development, which could only be achieved after the overthrow of capitalism, or whether it could attain a higher level of development while under capitalism. Eventually, the majority of scholars accepted that the level of Latin American development was positioned between that of the advanced capitalist countries and Africa and Asia, and two new questions emerged. Firstly, whether MDC countries were especially conducive to revolution, as in the case of mid-nineteenth century France and early-twentieth century Russia, which was the view of Maidanik. Secondly, whether there was a group of countries in Latin America and Southern Europe whose shared commonalities were more important to study than Latin America's Third World-like characteristics for interpreting Latin American political developments, which was the position of Sheinis.⁴⁵⁷

The discussions of laws of development, the effect of local political culture and dependency based global economic relationships within Soviet Latin American studies were symptomatic of the complex reconfigurations that had taken place after post-war decolonisation, where the world expanded and diversified beyond prior Marxist-Leninist calculations. Moreover, the socialist revolutions that had taken place in countries such as China and Cuba often followed divergent logics, and for scholars working within the framework of laws of scientific development, this proved a scramble to decode. Fadin and Vorozheikina became familiar with these modes of thinking about the outside world and were trained in a setting where these

⁴⁵⁶ Jerry F. Hough, "The Evolving Soviet Debate on Latin America," *Latin American Research Review* 16(1) (1981), 134.

⁴⁵⁷ Victor Sheinis, "Strany sredenraz- vitogo kapitalizma," *Mirovaia ekonomia i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia (MEMO)*, (9) (1977), 150-57 and "Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskaiia differentsiatsiia i problemy tipologii razvivaiushchikhsia stran," *MEMO* (8) (1978), 93-107, and *Latinskaia Amerika*, (1) (1979), 63-73, and *Latinskaia Amerika* (2) (1979), 128-30, cited in *Ibid.*, 135.

discourses were developed by respected senior scholars. They themselves participated in their evolution in articles that came out in *Latinskaia Amerika* before and after the arrests of the Young Socialists.

Fadin's first articles considered the significance of the Latin American revolutionary experience for developed societies through his study of the French intellectual, Régis Debray. This exploration of the transfer of elements of revolutionary experience to non-revolutionary conditions may be understood to be connected to his search for sources of change in the Soviet Union. Debray (b. 1940) was from a Parisian intellectual family, and received his education at the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure, which produced many of the famous French public intellectuals and philosophers, particularly on the left, of the twentieth century.⁴⁵⁸ The famed Marxist, Louis Althusser, was Debray's philosophy tutor at ENS. As a young man in his twenties, Debray travelled to Cuba after the revolution in 1959, and returned in 1961, when he met Castro. He later travelled widely across Latin America and alongside Che's guerrillas in Bolivia. He was imprisoned by the then-rightist Bolivian government with a thirty year sentence after Che was captured and killed, but was released after three years due to the amnesty granted by a new government, and found refuge in Allende's Chile.⁴⁵⁹ In Chile, Debray interviewed Allende a number of times and published *The Chilean Revolution*. He returned to France after the Pinochet coup. The bulk of his writing from his Latin American period addressed Cuba and revolutionary conditions in Latin America, and elaborated on the *foco* theory that was developed by Che and Debray, where a small and dedicated band of guerrillas would serve as a motor to set in motion a popular movement in the countryside, which would foment the revolution.⁴⁶⁰

Debray's writing transmitted firsthand the experience of Latin America and perspectives on the revolutionary situation and methods of that continent to the Western Left. In the excitement of 1968, the British leftist historian, Robin Blackburn speculated that the *foco* strategy could be transferred from the Latin American

⁴⁵⁸ Keith Reader, *Régis Debray: A critical introduction* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 1-2.

⁴⁵⁹ Jack Woddis, *New Theories of Revolution: a commentary on the views of Frantz Fanon, Régis Debray and Herbert Marcuse* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1972), 179.

⁴⁶⁰ George N. Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A global analysis of 1968* (Boston, Mass.: South End Press, 1987), 36.

jungles to the urban environments of factory and university occupations in Europe and the United States.⁴⁶¹ However, Debray himself clarified that:

If this body of new ideas were to be transposed from one set of historical conditions to another, for instance, from certain Latin American countries where it has roots to the United States or Western Europe, there would of course be a danger of emptying it of its practical meaning, of reducing what it affirms as a revolutionary policy to something that appears as pantomime or simply romantic radicalism.⁴⁶²

In the Soviet Union of the early-1980s, Fadin reached similar conclusions. Rivkin recalled that Fadin brought Che Guevara's diary of his experience in the Latin American jungle for their circle to read, but the Young Socialists understood the circumstances of Latin America to be quite removed from the industrialised metropolis of Moscow.⁴⁶³ The internationalism that had animated the activism of their student years remained an alluring force for the group that played an important role in sustaining their emotional commitment and romanticised perception of leftist dissent. But the Young Socialists increasingly understood that actions that stemmed from revolutionary romanticism did not have any immediate application for dissident activities under the conditions of late socialism.

In his *Latinskaia Amerika* article, Fadin probed without success for insights from Debray for the path to democratic socialism in post-revolutionary conditions. He interpreted Debray to be a "distinct European 'mirror' of the Latin American revolutionary process in which the position of the left-radical intelligentsia and left wing of the socialist and social democratic parties are reflected,"⁴⁶⁴ from which it was possible to develop understanding of the Western European Left's perspectives on revolutionary developments in Latin America and to gain insight into the effect of Latin American developments on conditions among the Western European Left. While Debray was seen somewhat uneasily as a left radical in the official Soviet

⁴⁶¹ Robin Blackburn, "Introduction," in *Strategy for Revolution* by Regis Debray (London: Cape, 1970), 11, cited in Woddis, *New Theories of Revolution*, 181.

⁴⁶² Regis Debray, "Reply to my Critics," in *Strategy for Revolution*, 232, cited in *Ibid.*, 181.

⁴⁶³ Rivkin, "Interv'iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda."

⁴⁶⁴ A.V. Fadin, "Politicheskie vozzreniia Rezhi Debre, stat'ia pervaiia," (The Political Vision of Regis Debray, First Article.) *Latinskaia Amerika* (9) (September 1981), 82.

view,⁴⁶⁵ Fadin instead praised, “[Debray’s] direction leaves the impression of a sincere, laboured and fruitful scientific search for an explanation of events in contemporary society.”⁴⁶⁶ However, he gave the following caveat:

Debray remains without an answer to one of the fundamental questions of the revolutionary processes in the developing world – about the correlation of objective long-term interests of the middle stratum and the imperatives, laws and logic of the development of socialist revolution.⁴⁶⁷

Fadin’s criticism of Debray’s failure to decipher this relationship marked his disappointment that this Western leftist intellectual lacked insights for a problem that also had application in more developed societies. Understanding the relationship between the concerns of developing societies’ middle strata and the laws of development that governed socialist revolutions was central to discovering the path to democratic socialism. The leftist experiments of the 1970s in Allende’s Chile and what later proved to be the flash in the pan of Eurocommunism both unsuccessfully attempted to attract the vast majority of society to socialism; both rejected the classical overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the Leninist vanguard in the name of the proletariat as inevitably leading to violence and entrenched, anti-democratic governance, as demonstrated in the Soviet model.

Fadin’s question demonstrated his internalisation of the existence of laws of development and his belief that a relationship existed between them and his desired form of democratic socialist development. His choice to investigate Debray was motivated by both personal and scholarly interest, and his examination of Western European leftists’ outlooks on the Third World should be seen as part of the Young Socialists’ search for a scientific program of reform. Despite Fadin’s more detached analysis that concluded there was an essential disconnect between Latin American revolutionary tactics and the conditions of late socialism, his research was likely partially driven by romantic revolutionary trappings as Fadin to an extent resembled Debray. Both were ardent Latin Americanists and young European intellectuals of a privileged background. This would not have been lost on Fadin, who undoubtedly

⁴⁶⁵ Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 267.

⁴⁶⁶ A.V. Fadin, “Politicheskie vozzreniia Rezhi Debre, stat’ia vtoraia,” (The Political Vision of Regis Debray, Second Article.) *Latinskaia Amerika* (11) (November 1981): 107.

⁴⁶⁷ Fadin, “Politicheskie vozzreniia Rezhi Debre, stat’ia pervaiia,” 91.

romantically imagined himself performing Debray's forays into the Latin American jungle with Che's guerrillas.

In addition to developing models for analysing what was happening in Latin America, Soviet Latin Americanists also discussed what was to be done. Maidanik, who believed that revolutionary conditions were present in Latin America, supported a left united front to overcome the military dictatorships, but once this was achieved, did not see the need for an ongoing alliance with the moderate left, which he believed could lead to the abandonment of the revolution.⁴⁶⁸ He supported these views by referring to what he considered to be analogous cases, early-twentieth century revolutionary Russia and the Spanish Civil War. At the other end of the spectrum were Boris Koval', deputy director of the IMRD and Anatolii Shulgovskii of the ILA, who believed that democracy first had to be strengthened before socialism could be achieved, and the current choice was in fact between bourgeois democracy or fascism.⁴⁶⁹ Therefore, the role of the communist movement was to promote the moderates and democratic growth while it coincided with their own interests, and socialism remained a distant prospect. In the conditions of late socialism, where the Soviet leadership promoted peaceful coexistence and were wary of the financial costs of support for a new Third World revolution, Koval' and Shulgovskii's position was much closer to that of the Soviet leadership, while Maidanik was more radical.

Maidanik's theoretical conclusions in *Latinskaia Amerika* that a revolutionary situation existed in Latin America coincided with his personal hopes and convictions. Nicknamed the "Soviet Che Guevara,"⁴⁷⁰ his rooting for the Latin American revolutionaries from a Soviet research institute in the 1970s and 1980s was as out of step with the mood of the Soviet leadership as Che's own revolutionary "adventurism" had been for them in the 1960s. As a result, Maidanik's position began to clash with the authorities. His privately held view that the Stalin period signified a Soviet Thermidor, accompanied by his public use of Trotskyist terminology to

⁴⁶⁸ *Latinskaia Amerika* (6) (1975), 107-8. See also *Latinskaia Amerika*, (4) (1978), 106-14., cited in Hough, "The Evolving Soviet Debate on Latin America," 137.

⁴⁶⁹ *Latinskaia Amerika* (6) (1975), 111; (4) (1978), 103. See also B. I. Koval' and S. I. Semenov, "Latinskaia Amerika i mezhdunarodnaia sotsial- demokratiia," *Rabochii klass i sovremennyi mir*, (4) (1978), 115-30, cited in *Ibid.*, 138.

⁴⁷⁰ Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 270.

criticise the rehabilitation of Stalin were ill-accepted positions.⁴⁷¹ Many of his publications did not survive the censors. A booklet on ultra-left liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America which was circulated within IMEMO by Maidanik prefaced with the warning, “for internal use only,” was regarded to be so ideologically incautious that it was burned by the most senior staff of IMEMO.⁴⁷² Maidanik was protected by the patronage of Sergo Mikoian and prominent foreign communists, who enabled his continued presence in IMEMO despite his highly critical anti-Stalinist and unfashionable internationalist views.⁴⁷³ It took his involvement in the case of the Young Socialists for his expulsion from the party in 1982.

The Young Socialists regarded Maidanik as a revered teacher. He supervised Vorozheikina and Fadin and had close friendships with both. Vorozheikina remembered of him:

He was my teacher in the big sense of the world. He is a person who made a very great impact on my life and personality, although we did not coincide on major Russian and Latin American issues...He had a colossal influence on me. I am not able to say that I am his faithful student, because already during his lifetime we related to many things differently.⁴⁷⁴

Vorozheina’s position was more ambiguous than Maidanik’s. Emotionally, she shared his critical attitude toward Soviet socialism from the left. She recalled that at this time, “I was a left communist. I was ultra-left. I felt very critically towards Soviet history.”⁴⁷⁵ She was a supporter of the armed conquest of power in societies on the brink of regime change.⁴⁷⁶ But the revolutionary passions of her student years had become more moderate when it came to post-revolutionary societies, which included the Soviet Union. For Vorozheikina, in the 1970s and 1980s she felt the governments of Chile and Nicaragua had correctly approached the economic and

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 259.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 259.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 259.

⁴⁷⁴ Their friendship lasted Kiva’s lifetime. He was her authorised spokesperson when she was a candidate in the elections of 1990 to the Moscow Soviet, cited in interview with Igor Dolutskii and Tatiana Vorozheikina, Moscow, 23 November 2016.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ Email Correspondence with Tatiana Vorozheikina, 17 June 2019.

political questions of the relationship between market and society and how to overcome social, economic and political exclusion. In her view from that time, many of the shortcomings of the Soviet system could have been remedied through introducing partial market mechanisms and political pluralism. This essentially reformist position has typically been considered to be to the right of Brezhnev era Soviet socialism. The embrace of this unusual combination of both left and right views appears more consistent when interpreted as a critical response to the bureaucratised socialism of the late-Soviet Union, which she understood no longer contained true commitment to socialist ideals, as well as being burdened by manifest economic inefficiency. It may be understood that in the hierarchy of beliefs that made up her worldview, her devotion to internationalist solidarity was foremost, which led her to identify as a left communist.⁴⁷⁷ Her view also underscored the differentiated perspectives that the Young Socialists held toward different examples of socialism that held attraction for them. While Vorozheikina was a supporter of revolutionary conquest in Latin America, she did not understand it to have application in Soviet conditions. She interpreted the Eurocommunist model, which foregrounded the importance of democratic rights, as containing greater relevance for the Soviet Union.⁴⁷⁸

Kudiukin, whose dissertation at IMEMO was on the subject of the Spanish socialist workers' party in the period of the post-Franco transition, was informally advised by Maidanik. He had borrowed Maidanik's third edition of Lenin's works that were in his bookshelf at the institute and remembered:

Kiva was a devoted communist, but not an official communist. For him, Lenin was a great person and a great theoretician... [When I read his copy of Lenin] I saw many underlined notations. It was very interesting. It was his critique of the Soviet experience and Soviet reality from the left, from the classical communist left.⁴⁷⁹

Maidanik played the role of an academic advisor to the Young Socialists in both in their professional and unofficial and illegal academic pursuits. Kudiukin

⁴⁷⁷ This is also borne out by the fact that her participation in the Young Socialists was confined to being a reader of *Varianty* because Latin America was her major concern in these years. Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁹ Interview with Kudiukin, 7 November 2016.

remembered Maidanik as “very energetic, very open in conversation” with himself, Andrei and his other followers. He read their samizdat and discussed it with them.⁴⁸⁰ On one occasion, he was given to scold an article in the second issue of *Varianty*, whose author was either Fadin or Konstantin Baranovskii, for mistaking the date of the end of the NEP as coinciding with Lenin’s death in 1924, when it was in fact some four or five years later. This episode led Fadin to express some embarrassment about the scientific level of the journal.⁴⁸¹ They also passed on other samizdat to Maidanik. Together, they discussed a Russian language edition published in Florence of Leszek Kolakowski’s *Thesis on Hope and Hopelessness*, which contended that self-formed social groups could expand civil society under totalitarianism. Kudiukin remembered that Maidanik uttered, “The natural enviousness of Russians toward the Poles,” concerning the more advanced civil society structures in Poland, a phrase that Fadin and Kudiukin were to repeat many times in the 1980s.⁴⁸²

In the late-1970s and early-1980s, a revolution took place in Nicaragua and leftist insurgencies were active in Guatemala and El Salvador, events which were enthusiastically received by Maidanik, Fadin and Vorozheikina. In 1979, the Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza was overthrown and the Sandinistas, who were the dominant force in the anti-Somoza coalition, led a revolutionary government. At the same time, encouraged by the Nicaraguan example, the Salvadoran leftist Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN), finally joined by the Salvadoran communist party, fought a campaign of resistance to the government and the country was engulfed in civil war. These events appeared to vindicate Maidanik’s position of the revolutionary conditions on the continent, and generated discussions in *Latinskaia Amerika* on the tactics of armed struggle and the strategies for leftist alliances that should be used in the Central American environment.⁴⁸³ In El Salvador, Maidanik and Vorozheikina argued that the Nicaraguan experience could be repeated and the tactics of wars of national

⁴⁸⁰ Interview with Olga Fadina, Moscow, 4 November 2016.

⁴⁸¹ Rivkin, “Interv’iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda.”

⁴⁸² Interview with Kudiukin, 7 November 2016.

⁴⁸³ Dominguez Reyes, “Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America,” 65-66.

liberation should be encouraged until a revolution broke out.⁴⁸⁴ Maidanik contended that the Chilean experience had proven the hopelessness of the “peaceful path to power” and armed resistance was the only means to overcome entrenched dictatorship in Central America and successfully defend the revolution.⁴⁸⁵ Koval’ and the KGB affiliated Nikolai Leonov had similar insurrectionary advice to pass on. Koval’ believed the Nicaraguan experience affirmed the correctness of *foco* theory, while Leonov recommended the FMLN to secure the support of segments of the army.⁴⁸⁶ By contrast, head of the ILA, Viktor Vol’skii and Shulgovskii were less revolution-ready and considered the Nicaraguan case non-analogous because Somoza had lost all support, while the Salvadoran leader, Jose Duarte, still retained the confidence of the Salvadoran middle class, the army and Washington. They believed the best hope was for the resistance to negotiate with the government to produce the peaceful transformation of El Salvador.⁴⁸⁷ While Volskii and Shulgovskii represented the more cautious voices, the Salvadoran debate also brought out those whom Rupprecht had termed “desk revolutionaries.” Responding to events in El Salvador, these older Soviet academics in the unexciting conditions of developed socialism romantically prescribed guerrilla warfare techniques to faraway movements. Vorozheikina’s own contribution to this dialogue demonstrated an instance of these romantic revolutionary values being passed on to the younger generation of scholars.

When the Salvadoran communist party (PCES) joined the FMLN in the wake of the Nicaraguan revolution, it disavowed its previous position of a peaceful road to socialism and announced its support for an immediate war of national liberation. PCES leader, Schafik Handal, declared that the party had always been ready to carry out revolutionary warfare at the right time, and that “the right moment is now.”⁴⁸⁸ He ruminated on the failure of most of the Latin American communist parties,

⁴⁸⁴ Il’ia Prizel, *Latin America through Soviet Eyes: The evolution of Soviet perceptions during the Brezhnev era, 1964-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 146.

⁴⁸⁵ Dominguez Reyes, “Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America,” 66.

⁴⁸⁶ Discussion: “Nicaragua: Experiencia de una Revolucion Victoriosa,” *America Latina* (2) (1980), 4-40; (3) (1980), 4-115, cited in Dominguez Reyes, “Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America,” 66.

⁴⁸⁷ Prizel, *Latin America through Soviet Eyes*, 146.

⁴⁸⁸ Schafik Handal, “Na puti k svobode,” *Kommunist* 17 (1980): 99, cited in *Ibid.*, 145-146.

including the PCES before 1981, to become a real vanguard force in the struggle against dictatorship, and encouraged the formation of new alliances of Latin American communist parties with other movements on the left.⁴⁸⁹ These reflections received a mixed reception from Moscow. For some Soviet Latin Americanists, Handal had departed too far from the certain general revolutionary principles of the presence of objective conditions necessary for the revolutionary struggle and the vanguard role of the communist party.⁴⁹⁰

In two articles published in July and August 1982 in *Latinskaia Amerika*, Vorozheikina supported Handal's conceptions and advocated the PCES's alliance with the broader Salvadoran left. Vorozheikina argued that Lenin's dismissal of "left-wing communism as an infantile disorder" was not relevant to the Salvadoran "new left," as it should not be applied within countries of dependent capitalism.⁴⁹¹ She rather caustically observed that in the "sad" case of Nicaragua where the "armchair" Nicaraguan communists had upheld this thesis, they had accused true revolutionaries of being Maoists or ultra-leftists so as to avoid their revolutionary duty.⁴⁹² Rather the PCES' alliance with other leftist forces would renew its historic significance as a revolutionary vanguard. Following on from Maidanik's predictions of the late-1960s that the Latin American communist parties would lose relevance unless they abandoned their restrictive dogmatism, Vorozheikina noted that in the case of the PCES, the party's decision to join the armed struggle that was initiated by groups to the left of it was a commendable decision, and saved it from the irrelevance the Nicaraguan socialist party confined itself to by its absence in the struggle against Somoza.⁴⁹³ In her July 1982 article, she explored the role of the left radical forces in the revolutionary processes of the region, and what this might mean for the

⁴⁸⁹ Schafik Handal, "El poder, el character, la via de la revolucion y la unidad de izquierda," *Revista Teorica del PCES* (4) (1982), cited in Dominguez Reyes, "Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America," 71.

⁴⁹⁰ Dominguez Reyes, "Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America," 72.

⁴⁹¹ T.E. Vorozheikina, "Revoliutsionnyie organizatsii Salvadora i narodnoe dvizhenie," (Revolutionary Organisations of El Salvador and the Popular Movement.) *Latinskaia Amerika* (7) (July 1982): 26.

⁴⁹² Vorozheikina, "Revoliutsionnyie organizatsii Salvadora i narodnoe dvizhenie," 23, cited in Prizel, *Latin America through Soviet Eyes*, 145-146.

⁴⁹³ T. Vorozheikina, "Las organizaciones revolucionarias en El Salvador y el Movimiento popular," *America Latina* (8) (1982): 17-27, cited in Reyes, "Soviet Academic Views of the Caribbean and Central America," 72.

communist parties, whose rigid Marxist-Leninist worldview was proving obstructive where they were waiting for objective conditions to arise, which simply were not appearing, and the nature of events of the ground was bolstering the prestige of the left radical forces.⁴⁹⁴ In keeping with the broader trajectory of Soviet Latin American studies, Vorozheikina looked for what a specific case study revealed about the general laws of development of revolutionary situations, and how they might be seized upon by the leftist movements to bring about successful revolutionary circumstances in the region. Vorozheikina's article displayed the transfer of knowledge, internationalist values and concerns, and an unorthodox approach to the study of the region that she received from her training under Maidanik.

Maidanik practically encouraged the Young Socialists' internationalist values and unorthodox scholarly perspectives through his organisation of an unauthorised meeting with Schafik Handal. Handal was in the Soviet Union for two visits in 1980 in order to seek assistance in the ongoing Salvadoran civil war.⁴⁹⁵ He received a muted reception from Soviet officials. The deputy head of the Latin American section of the Central Committee's International Department was the highest ranking official to receive him.⁴⁹⁶ The Soviet Union was reluctant to involve itself in the affairs of a nation that was a proximate security concern to the United States.⁴⁹⁷ According to Maidanik, in an article written after the end of the Cold War, the Soviet leadership had considered the Salvadoran conflict less clear cut than the Nicaraguan case, and as a result resisted direct engagement.⁴⁹⁸ The fact that the PCES only had an

⁴⁹⁴ Vorozheikina, "Revolyutsionnyie organizatsii Salvadora i narodnoe dvizhenie," 24.

⁴⁹⁵ "Communist Interference in El Salvador," *Department of State Bulletin* (81) (March 1981), 3-4.

⁴⁹⁶ Nicola Miller, *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959-1987* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 189.

⁴⁹⁷ Danuta Paszyn, "Soviet Attitudes to Political and Social Change in Central America (1979-1990): Case studies, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala," (SSEES MPhil Thesis, 1996), 144.

⁴⁹⁸ Kiva Maidanik, "On the *Real* Soviet Policy toward Central America, Past and Present," in *The Russians Aren't Coming: New Soviet Policy in Latin America*, ed. Wayne S. Smith (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 93.

estimated membership of 1000 in these years,⁴⁹⁹ while the majority of the factions in the FMLN were in fact anti-Soviet was a likely influence on their thinking.⁵⁰⁰

While Handal's mission to secure substantial Soviet assistance was unsuccessful, he made a significant contribution to the KGB's developing case against the Young Socialists. He participated in a clandestine meeting with them in a subsequent visit to Moscow in September 1981 that unbeknownst to all of the attendees was recorded by the security services. This meeting took place in Vorozheikina's flat where she, Fadin, Kudiukin, Maidanik, Grisha Rzhesheskii, Galina Dubrovskaya and Igor Dubrovskii were in attendance.⁵⁰¹ For all of the Soviet attendees, this meeting constituted an unauthorised contact with a foreigner, which was a violation of Inozemtsev's so-called "gentleman's agreement." The events of the meeting have been communicated in different versions, a testament to the problematic nature of oral history and memoir based historical evidence. On the basis of the Dominican communist party leader, Narciso Isa Conde's tribute, *Kiva Maidanik*, Rupprecht produced the following account of the meeting:

Handal delivered a blazing speech about the prospects for socialism in El Salvador, on which Fadin, even more a leftist than his academic mentor, commented trenchantly, "This is all very well with your heroic struggle, but I may ask Comrade Schafik: all these sacrifices, these values, these political possibilities, all this heroism – only to finally live in the same shit system as we do here in the USSR??"⁵⁰²

Another secondary account of the meeting was provided by Georgii Mirskii in his memoirs, which Cherkasov follows in his history of IMEMO. He recalled Fadin's leading question to be slightly less provocative than in Rupprecht's account, though nevertheless deeply problematic to the Soviet security organs. According to Mirskii, Fadin has asked, "Where is the guarantee that the victory of communism in El

⁴⁹⁹ Peter Clement and W. Raymond Duncan, "The Soviet Union and Central America," in *The USSR and Latin America: A developing relationship*, ed. Eusebio Mujal-Leon (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 289.

⁵⁰⁰ Paszyn, "Soviet Attitudes to Political and Social Change in Central America (1979-1990)," 160.

⁵⁰¹ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

⁵⁰² Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 277. He has relied on Narciso Isa Conde, *Kiva Maidanik* (Santo Domingo, República Dominicana : Editora Tropical, 2007), 50-1.

Salvador will not install a regime of the Stalinist type?"⁵⁰³ Vorozheikina, who was present at the meeting unlike the authors of the other accounts recalled Fadin's question to be much more complex. He had asked, "What would be your position in the case of a Soviet intervention in Poland?"⁵⁰⁴ This was three months before the imposition of martial law. She later remembered, "This question was extremely awkward for one of the Salvadorian guerrilla chiefs who received political and military support from the Soviet Union,"⁵⁰⁵ and at the same time, revealed the chasm of experience between the Eastern Bloc and Latin American communism. Vorozheikina recalled the feelings the question ignited in her friends at the meeting:

He [Handal] wouldn't have liked to discuss it, and I personally think he was not sensitive to these kind of problems, and we were because it was after [the Soviet invasion of] Czechoslovakia...That's why for us the Polish story was important, while for Schafik Handal, it wasn't...I also felt that Andrei's question was out of place, but I understood why he asked.⁵⁰⁶

Fadin's question captured the change over time that had taken place in the imaginary geographies that informed the Young Socialists' world views. The refinement of their knowledge at IMEMO added greater complexity to their perspectives, which took them beyond the uncritical revolutionary romanticism of their student years, to more discriminating approaches. At the same time, as their worldviews matured in a reformist direction, Eastern Europe increased in significance, as will be explored in the following chapter.

The Young Socialists in the Soviet Dissident Community.

By the early-1980s, the Young Socialists had established a network of contacts within their own social milieu and the academic community of IMEMO. They also attempted to form links within the dissident movement, but these connections remained limited in scope. The circle's search for other socialist underground

⁵⁰³ Mirskii, *Zhizn' v trekh epokhakh*, 231.

⁵⁰⁴ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

⁵⁰⁵ Email communication with Tatiana Vorozheikina, 21 November 2016.

⁵⁰⁶ Interview with Dolutskii and Vorozheikina.

currents was inhibited by the minimal presence of this orientation in the movement, and the difficulty for outsiders without the resources of the KGB to identify and contact groups that operated clandestinely. These difficult conditions also occasioned missed opportunities. In these years, at least four other dissident groups, who were influenced by the Western new left and inspired by “revolutionary Marxism in the spirit of Che Guevara,” were active in the Soviet Union.⁵⁰⁷ In 1979, the Young Socialists were contacted by a member of one of these groups, Youth for Communism, but they suspected he was a KGB agent and mutual activities never developed.⁵⁰⁸ The Young Socialists also attempted without success to contact Valerii Ronkin and Sergei Khakhaev, the leaders of the well-known socialist dissident circle of the 1960s, the Union of Communards/Kolokol.⁵⁰⁹

The Young Socialists failed to locate collaborators for their dissident activities, though they did find intellectual interlocutors and mentors in two figures who were well-known within the Soviet dissident community, Roy Medvedev and Mikhail Gefter. These historians both played leading roles in the de-Stalinisation of their profession during the Thaw, and were forced into dissent by the early-Brezhnev years. The Young Socialists’ relationships with these intellectuals were founded on the exchange of their multilingual abilities to translate foreign language works on Soviet history that were of interest to the older historians. During their visits, the Young Socialists conversed with these *shestidesiatniki*, who passed on elements of their accumulated knowledge and lived experience, and exchanged their views with the young dissidents on the nature of Soviet society and its historical experience. Unlike the Young Socialists’ relationships with the senior researchers at IMEMO, these connections were formed outside of official academic structures and occurred privately in the spaces of the intellectuals’ apartments where conversation on controversial political themes was more easily discussed. These connections formed another bridge to the older generation that grounded the Young Socialists’

⁵⁰⁷ These included the Leningrad Union of Revolutionary Communards (1975-1979), the Yellow Submarine Commune in Leningrad (1976-1978), Youth for Communism in Moscow, Tula and Yaroslavl (1979-1981), and the Pedagogical Kommunard Movement in Moscow (early-1980s), cited in Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov*, 79-80.

⁵⁰⁸ Aleksandr Tarasov, “Otkuda sut’ poshli levye radikaly zemli sovetskoi,” (Where did Left Radicals come from in the Land of the Soviets?): <http://www.panorama.ru/gazeta/p40lev.html>.

⁵⁰⁹ Kudiukin and Morozov, “Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudiukinym.”

worldviews and produced their broader awareness of the experience of socialist intellectuals in earlier periods of Soviet history. The original impulses for post-Stalin era socialist dissent stemmed from the hopes generated by the Twentieth Party Congress, which were central developments in these two historians' biographies, and as a result they deserved to be examined in detail.

Roy Aleksandrovich Medvedev (b. 1925) came from a party-intelligentsia family that had been marked by repression. His parents, in the revolutionary spirit of the early Soviet years, had named him after M.N. Roy, a co-founder of the Communist Party of India. His twin, Zhores, was named after Jean Jaures, the French socialist.⁵¹⁰ The twins' father had been a senior lecturer of dialectical and historical materialism at Leningrad State University before falling victim to arrest in 1938, and was condemned to an eight year sentence in the camps, from which he did not return.⁵¹¹ Unlike Zhores who studied biology and later became a famous biologist, Roy followed in his father's footsteps, and studied history and philosophy at LSU from 1946-1951. As a son of an "enemy of the people," he was unable to pursue postgraduate studies, and upon graduation was posted as a history teacher to a school in the Urals. Medvedev had returned to the Leningrad region, when he heard the Secret Speech read out during a party meeting, where he was in attendance as part of the local school's teaching staff. The speech was a major event for Medvedev and started his deep introspection on the origins of Stalinism and the path for the return to the original goals of the revolution.⁵¹²

The beginnings of Medvedev's independent research that explored the causes and consequences of Stalinism coincided with Khrushchev's appeal to historians at the Twenty Second Party Congress that called for their study of Stalin's personality cult.⁵¹³ The resulting manuscript, *Let History Judge*, was written with the aid of Soviet press articles from the late-1950s and early 1960s that documented Stalinist excesses, and oral history testimonies and critical commentary on the manuscript from Old Bolsheviks, historians, well-known writers and members of the

⁵¹⁰ Jonathan Steele, "Zhores Medvedev Obituary," *The Guardian*, 23 November 2018: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/23/zhores-medvedev-obituary>.

⁵¹¹ Barbara Martin, *Dissident Histories in the Soviet Union: From de-Stalinisation to Perestroika* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 22.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, 23.

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

intelligentsia.⁵¹⁴ However, Medvedev's scholarship was already a test of the limits of official de-Stalinisation during the Thaw, and the party's change in ideological course at the end of the 1960s placed his work outside of the limits of official history. At this juncture, Medvedev faced the choice of abandoning his research or continuing without hope for official publication in the Soviet Union, which resulted in his shift to dissemination within samizdat.⁵¹⁵ Following Khrushchev's fall, Medvedev began to produce the liberal Marxist samizdat journals, *Politicheskii dnevnik* (Political Diary) (1964-1970) and *Dvadsatyi vek* (Twentieth Century) (1975-1976), which were intended for small scale circulation among like-minded intellectuals.⁵¹⁶ However, the audience of intellectuals who shared Medvedev's socialist convictions grew smaller over time.⁵¹⁷

Medvedev was expelled from the party in 1969 following the discovery of his *Let History Judge* manuscript, though he remained employed as a pedagogical researcher at the Academy of Sciences. Although *Let History Judge* had always been intended for a Soviet audience out of Medvedev's hope for its political impact in his own country, in the same year as his expulsion from the party, he sent the manuscript to the West. This was partially out of the estimation that the international recognition that would result from the work would afford him protection against repression, which proved correct.⁵¹⁸ Together with Zhores' internment in a *psikhushka* as a measure against his own dissident activities and the wide-scale campaign for his release that accompanied it, these events achieved Western celebrity for the twins.⁵¹⁹ Under the shelter of Western recognition, Medvedev continued his dissident activities, while at the same time maintaining caution for the limits he should not overstep to maintain this uneasy *modus vivendi* with the authorities.⁵²⁰

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 94-104.

⁵¹⁵ Martin, *Dissident Histories in the Soviet Union*, 108.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., 114-115.

⁵¹⁷ Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent*, 420.

⁵¹⁸ Martin, *Dissident Histories in the Soviet Union*, 128.

⁵¹⁹ Steele, "Zhores Medvedev Obituary."

⁵²⁰ Martin, *Dissident Histories in the Soviet Union*, 135, 138.



Roy Medvedev (right) with Zhores Medvedev, 1970 (Moscow Memorial).

Despite the relative isolation of his views among dissidents, Medvedev's fame in the West also amplified his position within the dissident movement for the urban centres of Moscow and Leningrad as his opinions were broadcast into the Soviet Union by the foreign radio stations. In a report in 1976, the Head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB, Filip Bobkov noted that according to sociological research, eighty percent of university students with "more or less regularity" listened to foreign broadcasts.⁵²¹ In 1970, Medvedev had collaborated with Sakharov and Valentin Turchin in an open letter addressed to the Soviet leadership, which called for the democratisation of Soviet society.⁵²² But when it became clear that the regime was not prepared to enter into a dialogue with the dissidents, Medvedev maintained

⁵²¹ While of course many tuned in for the music, political programmes were intentionally interspersed with musical broadcasts to ensure Soviet reception of the radio stations' political messages. F.D. Bobkov, "Analiticheskaia spravka o kharaktere i prichinakh negativnykh proiavlenii sredi uchashesia i studencheskoi molodezhi," (Analytical Background on the nature and causes of negative development among pupils and student youth.) 3 December 1976, in *Vlast' i dissidenty: iz dokumentov KGB i TsK KPSS* (The Authorities and Dissidents: From Documents of the KGB and Central Committee of the CPSU.), ed. Aleksei Makarov (Moskva: Moskovskaia Hel'sinskaia Gruppya, 2006), 144.

⁵²² Harvey Fireside, "Dissident Visions of the USSR: Medvedev, Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn," *Polity* 22(2) (1989), 217.

his loyalist position while the developing human rights movement gradually turned to the West. Medvedev was further distanced from mainstream dissent by his willingness to publicly criticise the tactics of the *pravozashchitniki* when its activists faced repressions.⁵²³

Medvedev's own views developed over the course of the 1970s in response to the fading prospects for reform. In his 1972 work, *On Socialist Democracy*, which was an analysis of Soviet society where he also set out his desired form of democratic socialism, he remained hopeful that the liberals would find wider support within the party to bring about a reformist course.⁵²⁴ He also identified the intelligentsia as a force for leading broader society in a struggle for democratisation. But this was a theoretical assessment that was not grounded in the present reality as he evaluated the current dissident movement as too weak,⁵²⁵ and was manifestly critical of the *pravozashchitniki's* tactics of appealing to the West.⁵²⁶ He estimated the process would occur over ten to fifteen years.⁵²⁷ In 1977, the Moscow correspondent for *Corriere Della Sera*, Piero Ostellino, pressed Medvedev on how the potential forces for change he had identified five years earlier could be mobilised. Medvedev responded:

When I spoke of "democrats" in the party, I had in mind a relatively restricted group of functionaries, present on all levels but without organisational contacts, who took their stand against rehabilitating Stalin and favoured a restructuring of the hyper-bureaucratic system of party state and leadership. But these men are far fewer today than they were a decade ago... and they are in no position to change the party by themselves or to effect a democratic conversation; to achieve that, the support of a solid following at the party base would be indispensable.⁵²⁸

It may be understood that Medvedev's views were founded upon his lived experience of the 1960s, when he observed firsthand the presence of democrats at different

⁵²³ Roy Medvedev and Georgii Vladimov, "Controversy: Dissent among Dissidents," *Index on Censorship* (3) (1979), 33.

⁵²⁴ Roy Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy* (London: MacMillan, 1975), 58.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, 313.

⁵²⁶ F.J.M. Feldbrugge, *Samizdat and Political Dissent in the Soviet Union* (Leyden: A.W. Sijthoff, 1975), 168.

⁵²⁷ Medvedev, *On Socialist Democracy*, 313.

⁵²⁸ Roy Medvedev, *On Soviet Dissent: Interviews with Piero Ostellino* (London: Constable, 1980), 110-111.

levels of the party and society. The gloomier picture of the late-1970s limited him to predicting circumstances that might create the conditions for a renewal of democratic views within the party. He now foresaw an even longer term timeline in the form of generational change in the party leadership:

I hope that the contradiction between the demands for technical and scientific progress and for improvements in the mass information media, on the one hand and the government's immobility on the other, will stimulate such a movement...How and when this might come about is unpredictable because history gives us no precedents to go by... I hope that the next generation of leaders will be more sensitive to the problems posed by changing times and conditions, and thereby encourage the rise of true socialism.⁵²⁹

In December 1981, the editors of *Sotsializm i budushchee* posed their own questions to Medvedev. They did not share Medvedev's continued though muted hopes for the reformist currents in the party to bring about change, nor were they considering a timescale of generations. Unlike Medvedev, as will be explored later in this chapter, they saw an eventual broader socio-economic crisis as the harbinger of change,⁵³⁰ though Medvedev's identification of the problem of scientific and technical slowdown may be understood as one component of that. The Young Socialists had established contact with Medvedev through the provision of their language skills. Sobchenko and Kagarlitskii assisted Medvedev through translating English language works on Soviet history for the older historian,⁵³¹ though in reports after the arrest of the Young Socialists, Kagarlitskii was identified in the inflated role of Medvedev's secretary.⁵³² Their interview questions to the more experienced dissident were a testing ground for their own ideas, as well as an attempt to find guidance for their dissident activities, and were above all a form of agitprop for their readership. The agitprop purpose of the journal shaped the questions to a great extent, which created the impression that the interviewers were much more optimistic about the possibilities for socialist dissent than they were in actuality.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., 111.

⁵³⁰ "L'Almanach 'Variantes,' Une interview de membres de la redaction," 15.

⁵³¹ "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," interview of Kagarlitskii.

⁵³² Oliver MacDonald, "Russian Socialists and Eurocommunists Face Trial," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), 28; Wishnevskaja, "Young Socialists to go on Trial in Moscow."

The interview demonstrated the importance of Medvedev's lived experience of the 1960s and the early dissident movement for informing his views. When the editors opened the interview with the question of whether the crisis of the dissident movement could be exclusively explained by repressions, in the core of his answer, Medvedev shared this lived experience with the younger readership:

Answer: the period 1979-1981 was not as difficult as the period 1969-1971 when various forms of repression became greater, and when all of the oppositional tendencies had more participants, than at the end of the 1970s...In general, the democratic movement has achieved a lot, if you take into account the conditions of our country. It prevented the rehabilitation of Stalin, it created in our country the rudiments of independent societal opinion, it created much of spiritual value/various forms of artistic and scientific works, etc. It created its own parallel culture, it created a kind of unformed political opposition, and despite the weakness of this opposition, the authorities cannot ignore it.⁵³³

He sensibly cautioned the young dissidents against overestimation of the potential strength of a socialist opposition and the risky pursuits that the editors' agitprop was boldly directed toward:

Question: Many of us today talk about the need for socialists to work out their own democratic platform to achieve unity and stand out within the democratic movement as a special force... that such a consolidation of the left will give a new incentive for the development of the democratic movement. What is your attitude to this?

Answer: In the majority of practical questions, for example, the exchange of information, literature, mutual material help, etc., no separation is required for the supporters of socialism, everyone should help each other as much as possible...I don't think that today it would be possible to talk about any kind of "consolidation" of supporters of socialism. This would be a step towards organisation, and the situation today is in no way favourable to the creation of any oppositional organisation. The work of individual groups, circles and individuals connected with each other only by means of direct or even indirect information creates a more flexible and less vulnerable system for the authorities.⁵³⁴

⁵³³ Roy Medvedev, "Otvety na voprosy redaktsii *Sotsializma i budushchego*," (Answers to the Questions of the Editors of *Socialism and the Future*.) (December 1981), 1. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, F. 128 Collection of Roy Medvedev. Note: all of Medvedev's answers that are quoted on these pages have been abridged.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

The editors also posed the difficult questions to Medvedev that their own circle grappled with. But the short-answer format restricted his response to the secondary aspect of the question, which confirmed the difficulty of the challenges the circle faced in its own search:

Question: Is it possible to say that our country should follow the path of socialist reformism? Is it possible that there is a reformist path, which would not be opportunistic?

Answer: I am confident that just what is needed in our country is socialist reformism. Any other path for positive change will not lead to success. If reform achieves its goals and improves the political, social and material conditions of the life of the people, then this is not any kind of opportunism.⁵³⁵

In contrast to Medvedev's loyalist position,⁵³⁶ at the time the Young Socialists encountered Mikhail Gefter, he was increasingly disillusioned about the future of the Soviet Union, and left the party in the same year as the circle was arrested.⁵³⁷ Mikhail Iakovlevich Gefter (b. 1918) began his outstanding professional academic career as a student in the MGU Historical Faculty in the years 1936-1941.⁵³⁸ Anatolii Cherniaev, the high-ranking liberal who entered this chapter earlier, was a fellow Historical Faculty student two years below Gefter. He remembered Gefter as an esteemed student at the university, who in his public speeches as the Secretary of the MGU Komsomol Committee brought to life the ideological orthodoxies set out in Stalin's *Short Course* with inspiring sincerity.⁵³⁹ When the war broke out, Gefter commanded the MGU student battalion that dug anti-tank ditches and built defensive weapons, and then volunteered for the front following his graduation from MGU.⁵⁴⁰ In the post-war years, the young veteran entered the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences as a graduate student and was later a researcher. By 1964,

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁵³⁶ In fact, Gefter was critical of Medvedev, who he felt was responsible for creating false hopes about the prospects for democratic socialism in the Soviet Union, cited in Jeff Gleisner, "Old Bolsheviks Discuss Socialism," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 6(1) (1983), 4.

⁵³⁷ N.V. Kostenko, "Gefter, Mikhail Iakovlevich," (N.D.), 2. Mikhail Gefter spravochno-informatsionnyi fond, Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 1.

⁵³⁹ Anatolii Cherniaev, "Iz dalekoi iunosti," (From a Distant Youth.) *XX Vek i mir* (1-2) (1994): <http://old.russ.ru/antolog/vek/1994/1-2/chern.htm>.

⁵⁴⁰ Cherniaev, "Iz dalekoi iunosti,"; Kostenko, "Gefter, Mikhail Iakovlevich," 1.

Gefter was named the director of the newly established Sector of Methodology at the Institute of History, which became an important centre for de-Stalinisation within Soviet academic structures. The sector's work was dedicated to overcoming the legacy of Stalinism, which had imposed rote learning and vulgarised Marxist-Leninist concepts as absolute, undeviating truths that produced methodological analyses that were divorced from historical reality. Its mission included the development of new methodological approaches, which would assert greater explanatory power for contemporary and historical events than existing Soviet dialectical and historical materialist paradigms. In the eyes of the committed Marxists of Gefter's generation, there was an urgent need for this analysis in the face of global developments unforeseen by Marxism-Leninist theory such as the post-war anti-colonial revolutions failing to coincide with the decline of capitalism in the developed world.⁵⁴¹ The sector's implicit but unstated objective, which was of even greater importance for its historians, was to understand the historical origins of Stalinism.⁵⁴² For Gefter, whose worldview as a young history student at MGU had been shaped under the ideological hegemony of Stalin's *Short Course*, the repudiation of these paradigms held great personal significance. As was characteristic of the experience of the *shestidesiatniki*, his intellectual journey led to his rediscovery of Leninism, which became Gefter's guiding authority for analysing the contemporary world.⁵⁴³

Gefter was the leading figure in the critical work of the sector, which became directed at revising Soviet scholarly approaches to Leninism to treat it as a living and evolving body of thought that could be creatively deployed by scholars to objectively analyse the contemporary world. These aspirations came into conflict with high-ranking party ideologues, who were highly critical of revisionism in the field of Soviet history.⁵⁴⁴ Gefter attracted further negative attention from the authorities when he walked out of the room at the Institute of History when the vote was called to support

⁵⁴¹ Roger D. Markwick, "Catalyst of Historiography, Marxism and Dissidence: The Sector of Methodology of the Institute of History, Soviet Academy of Sciences, 1964-1968," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46(4) (1994), 581.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 585.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 586.

⁵⁴⁴ Markwick, "Catalyst of Historiography, Marxism and Dissidence, 586.

the invasion of Czechoslovakia.⁵⁴⁵ In 1969, a publication of the sector that contained its key intellectual postulates, *Historical Science and Some Problems of the Present*, suffered severe criticism within the press and academic and party structures, who dissolved the sector in the same year.

The sector's ideological revisionism, which emerged from its historians' attempts to follow the decisions of the Twentieth Party Congress to their logical intellectual conclusion, was interpreted by party ideologues as synonymous with sedition during the gradual restoration of conservatism in the Brezhnev years.⁵⁴⁶ Gefter was reposted to the newly established Institute of Global History, where he became engaged in the work of the short-lived Sector of Economic History, but his continued exploration of revisionist methodological approaches reached the end of the line within the institutional setting when party ideologues again put an end to his research, and he retired as a professional historian in 1975.⁵⁴⁷



Mikhail Gefter with Gleb Pavlovskii, March 1982 (Colta).

After Gefter's retirement from the Institute of History, he transferred his intellectual explorations to the dissident sphere, and continued his scholarship as an independent historian. The legacy that was left by the Sector of Methodology made

⁵⁴⁵ English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 112.

⁵⁴⁶ Markwick, "Catalyst of Historiography, Marxism and Dissidence", 589.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 590.

its way into younger hands when Kudiukin read *Historical Science and Some Problems of the Present*, and found inspiration from Iakov Drabkin's discussion of the nature of social revolutions, which the young historian read with interest for its application to Soviet conditions.⁵⁴⁸ But the greater impact on Kudiukin's worldview came from his personal relationship with Gefter. At the end of the 1970s, he worked as his research assistant on a biography of Lenin's thought that had been commissioned by the leftist Italian publishing house, Einaudi.⁵⁴⁹ During this time, Gefter was preoccupied by Lenin's NEP writings that he considered to have revealed pluralistic implications for Lenin's views on the economics of the transition period,⁵⁵⁰ which held relevance for potential Soviet economic reform in the late-1970s. At Gefter's command, Kudiukin collected materials relating to the transition to the NEP, and closely read Lenin's works to find evidence of his thinking that led to this turning point in Soviet history:

I worked very thoroughly, through closely reading the complete works of Lenin – [in] the third edition, there is a wonderful appendix and comments – in order to carefully follow the evolution [of Lenin's thought]... Because back in December 1920 and even in January 1921 he said, "These are all henchmen of the bourgeoisie demanding all kinds of additional taxes, and even more so free trade"...And then a change occurs when he attended a non-party working conference in Moscow, and despite his presence, the conference adopts an SR-Menshevik resolution. And here, apparently, Lenin suddenly understands something important. He lost the ground beneath his feet, and he literally changed his mind in one night, and wrote the theses, "Yes, we must stop *prodrazviorstka*," And I just tracked this change, and Gefter was very grateful that it was possible to track it down to the day.⁵⁵¹

Though the inclusion of scientific communism in the curriculum led to nominal engagement with Lenin in Soviet higher education institutions, serious close reading of his texts was an unusual activity in the 1970s and 1980s. Cherniaev recorded dismissively in his diary that "not only have the main leaders of the CPSU not picked up Lenin's works in decades (I will not even mention Marx), but even their highly

⁵⁴⁸ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

This was based on Drabkin's discussion paper, Ia.S. Drabkin, "Nekotorye aspekty leninskoi kontseptsii mirovoi revoliutsii." Ibid., 582.

⁵⁴⁹ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

⁵⁵⁰ Gleisner, "Old Bolsheviks Discuss Socialism," 3.

⁵⁵¹ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

educated assistants do not know Lenin and could not care less.”⁵⁵² Within the dissident movement, close reading of Lenin was an experience more closely associated with the 1960s, when it became a popular turning point on the road to the rejection of socialism, as developing dissidents concluded from it Lenin’s lack of principles and frequent recourse to violence.⁵⁵³

While Kudiukin’s own reading of Lenin occurred in the form of historical investigation rather than transformative discovery, it exposed him to the place of Lenin for the socialist intellectuals of Gefter’s generation. The opportunity to come into contact with this important aspect of the intellectual heritage and experience of the 1960s for that generation was now a rarity. This helps to explain the influences that set the Young Socialists apart from Yurchak’s conception of their generation. Kudiukin also created summaries of the first two parts of Isaac Deutscher’s classic English-language biographies of Trotsky, *The Prophet Armed* and *The Prophet Unarmed* for Gefter to read. Gefter shared other foreign literature on Soviet history with Fadin and Kudiukin including an unpublished Russian translation of Stephen Cohen’s *Bukharin*. He was an interested reader of *Varianty*, though warned the group in every way against sloppiness.⁵⁵⁴

The conversations between the older historian and the young dissidents in Gefter’s apartment addressed topics that contributed to the formulation of their worldviews, especially concerning the history of philosophy and social theory and contemporary political developments. These conversations had an important effect on Kudiukin’s intellectual development, who recalled, “I consider Gefter to be one of my teachers of free thought.”⁵⁵⁵ Kudiukin recalled that though he believed the flat was likely to be bugged, they spoke quite freely. But when more sensitive topics were broached, they brandished the children’s toy, the *volshebnyi ekran* (Soviet Etch a Sketch) where text could be written and then it quickly vanished. During these consultations they were sometimes joined by other people, though they were not always formally introduced. Gefter had a very wide circle of acquaintances that

⁵⁵² The Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, entry for 6 September 1975: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB516-Anatoly-Chernyaev-Diary-1975-Uncertainty-Detente-Brezhnev/Anatoly%20Chernyaev%20Diary,%201975.pdf>.

⁵⁵³ Benjamin Nathans, “Talking Fish: On Soviet Dissident Memoirs,” *The Journal of Modern History* 87(3) (2015), 595.

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

spanned generations. Among his friends were Anna Larina, Nikolai Bukharin's younger wife, who remained an articulate proponent of his ideas in her late-sixties in the early-1980s and A. Zimin, an Old Bolshevik in his eighties, who had been a member of the Left Opposition of the 1920s.⁵⁵⁶ Gefter was also linked to other young intellectuals as an advisor and contributor to *Pamiat'* (Memory) (1977-1982), a historical themed samizdat journal edited by a cohort of young intellectuals of a similar age to the Young Socialists.⁵⁵⁷

Gefter was also a founder and contributor to the samizdat journal *Poiski* (Searches) (1978-1980). *Poiski* was intended to be a "reset" of dissent that was aimed at reconciling its different currents for collaborative work for a new and more effective program. Coming towards the end of the dissident movement's existence and just a few years before Perestroika, this is a publication that has not yet received sufficient attention in the historiography of dissent. *Poiski* was a cross-generational project that united elderly reform communists with younger non-communist intellectuals.⁵⁵⁸ A number of its editors had already pursued dissident activities over decades and suffered imprisonment and exile. The process that led to *Poiski's* creation was explained by one of its editors, Petr Abovin-Egides (b. 1917) in an interview given shortly after his exile to the West for his role in the publication. His idea for a new samizdat journal had emerged after his parting of ways with Roy Medvedev, who he had collaborated with in the earlier mentioned *Dvadtsatyi vek*. Abovin-Egides had concluded, "I found it too loyalist and evasive in its critique of the system. My fundamental disagreement with Medvedev...lay in the fact that he saw socialism as existing in the USSR, whereas, in my view, it is not at all socialism which exists here."⁵⁵⁹ Both reform communists, Abovin-Egides and Raisa Lert (b. 1906), had intended to publish a more critical socialist samizdat publication together. But *Poiski's* pluralist direction began to take shape when Abovin-Egides was introduced to the younger liberal-humanist Christian, Valerii Abramkin (b. 1946) by his former cellmate in Butyrki Prison when both were imprisoned for dissident activities,

⁵⁵⁶ Gleisner, "Old Bolsheviks Discuss Socialism," 4.

⁵⁵⁷ Barbara Martin and Anton Sveshnikov, "Between Scholarship and Dissidence: The Dissident Historical Collection *Pamiat'* (1975-1982)," *Slavic Review* 76(4) (2017), 1007.

⁵⁵⁸ Robert Horvath, *The Legacy of Soviet Dissent: Dissidents, democratisation and radical nationalism in Russia* (London: Routledge, 2005), 57-58.

⁵⁵⁹ Abovin-Egides, "What is *Poiski*?" *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 3(6) (February-March 1980), 5.

Vladimir Gershuni (b. 1930).⁵⁶⁰ The group decided to publish a journal together. They were joined by the socialist, Gleb Pavlovskii (b. 1951), the *pravozashchitnik*, Iurii Grimm (b. 1935) and Viktor Sokirko (b. 1939), who was a supporter of the market economy, and Gefter.⁵⁶¹ *Poiski* was a thick journal, intentionally modelled on the format of *Novyi mir*, filled with poetry, literature and social and political commentary. Eight issues were published over two years before the repression of its editors ended the journal.⁵⁶² Its literary endeavours included texts from the famed writers Vladimir Voinovich and Fazil Iskander.⁵⁶³ But its political project was its most significant aspect. The first issue opened with an invitation:

We invite everyone who stands for mutual understanding to participate in our journal... Since 1953 we have gone through the entire range of hope and disillusionment and have rid ourselves of illusions both old and new... This period...which was cut in two in 1968 has come to an end...Looking at our own dead ends, and placing a finger in our wounds, who would dare to say with complete conviction, "I know the cure, I see a way out"? Bitterness and enmity between those seeking solutions have made the general impasse even deeper and more aggravating. The editors of *Poiski* appeal for give-and-take and patience in the interests of looking for a way out of our general misfortune.⁵⁶⁴

The editors' recognition that the dissident movement and Soviet society at large had reached an impasse was in many ways in keeping with the Young Socialists' own outlook. But the two groups' search for solutions differed. *Poiski's* call for a renewed collaboration of different political orientations for the development of new methods in a journal that mostly published the names of its editors and authors contrasted with the Young Socialists' underground activities.⁵⁶⁵ The Young Socialists read

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 5.

⁵⁶¹ Viachelsav Igrunov, Mark Barbakadze, Elena Shvarts (eds.), "*Poiski*," in *Antologiiia samizdata: nepodtsenzurnaia literaturna v SSSR 1950-e-1980-e* ("Samizdat Anthology: Uncensored Literature in the USSR, 1950s-1980s."), third vol., (Moskva: IGPI, 2005), 277.

⁵⁶² Petr Abovin-Egides, "What is *Poiski*?" 5.

⁵⁶³ Igrunov, Barbakadze and Shvarts, "*Poiski*, 277.

⁵⁶⁴ *Poiski* (1) (1978), 1, cited in Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent*, 354. According to Igrunov, Barbakadze and Shvarts, Gefter authored the invitation, cited in Igrunov, Barbakadze and Shvarts, "*Poiski*, 277.

⁵⁶⁵ Two notable exceptions were Gleb Pavlovskii and Viktor Sokirko, who adopted the pseudonyms Petr Pryzhov and Konstantin Burzhuademov respectively.

Poiski.⁵⁶⁶ But as may be ascertained from their earlier question to Medvedev in *Sotsializm i budushchee* on the prospects for socialists becoming a special force in the dissident movement and the left's consolidation as a new impetus for dissent,⁵⁶⁷ their socialist orientation entirely determined their activities. Moreover, Kagarlitskii even detected condescension towards socialists in *Poiski's* pluralistic orientation. In *The Thinking Reed*, Kagarlitskii's historical account of the Soviet intelligentsia that was published with acclaim in the West in 1988, which was largely written during the years immediately following his 1980 expulsion from GITIS, he unjustly commented, "The meaning of [*Poiski's*] dialogue was that the liberal part of the editorial office presented the requirements and conditions that the left had to meet in order to be accepted into decent society."⁵⁶⁸

The distance of the Young Socialists' perspectives from the *Poiski* editors may also be understood through the prism of generational experience. *Poiski's* editors typically had long years of participation in the dissident movement already under their belts by the end of the 1970s that included personal experiences of hardship and repression. The comradeship that was fostered through these mutual experiences disposed them to collaboration with different orientations and overcame ideological differences. By contrast, the Young Socialists lacked this lived experience and had not yet encountered repression and defeat.

The Young Socialists were part of the second generation of the dissident movement, who were too young to have directly observed the difficult journey of its earlier years. This generational distance was an important factor that partially accounted for their critical approach to the views and tactics of the *pravozashchitniki*. In the mid-1960s, when the dissident movement first took shape, the *pravozashchitniki* were at first buoyed by the feelings of mutual solidarity and civic strength they derived from their public stand against the state's lawlessness. But as an almost inevitable consequence, they began to perceive themselves as the true

⁵⁶⁶ Articles from *Poiski* were found in Fadin's apartment in the search that took place during his arrest, cited in MacDonald, "Russian Socialists and Eurocommunists Face Trial," 27.

⁵⁶⁷ Medvedev, "Otvety na voprosy redaktsii *Sotsializma i budushchego*," 2.

⁵⁶⁸ Boris Kagarlitskii, *The Thinking Reed: Intellectuals and the Soviet state from 1917 to the present* (London: Verso, 1988), page number, cited in Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov*, 83.

heirs of the best traditions of the nineteenth century Russian intelligentsia,⁵⁶⁹ elevated above the broader conformist Soviet intelligentsia.⁵⁷⁰ This attitude distanced them from their wider networks of friends and potential allies among the educated elite, who were not yet ready to make the personal and professional sacrifices that participation in the movement inevitably entailed. The rejection of the path of dissent by the broader intelligentsia then isolated the movement from a support base within its own society. Under fire from the KGB, the *pravozashchitniki* was forced to turn to the West for assistance as a last resort, not as a first preference, as the Young Socialists' critique of this strand of dissent appears to have assumed.⁵⁷¹

In the setting of the authorities' intensified repression in mid-1981, the Young Socialists pronounced the failure of the *pravozashchitnik* current of dissent:

A serious blow was struck at the base of the human rights wing, which has so far been the most significant and prominent part of the [dissident] movement. It is obvious that there is a crisis of dissent in its traditional forms... The settings of traditional dissent – the priority of the development of legal and half-legal public organisations – turned out to be low in effectiveness – the rights defenders' movement to an excessively great degree was forced to be a self-defense movement. Emphasising the non-political character of the movement by many dissidents was also not justified. They proceeded from the principal of the renunciation of the struggle for power and advocated that the organisation struggle only against the abuse of power, against the authorities' violation of their own laws... Although the rights defenders understand that abuses are an inalienable property of the authorities, they are politically disarming before them, hoping to get in return the legality and sympathy of not only political groups in the west, but of the entire public opinion of the West, educated in liberal traditions. They succeed in the mobilisation of the Western public, a disappointing rebirth of the emancipatory tendency of the first "socialist" state. However, for this success, the dissidents pay with their dependence on the authorities and on the Western press... Legalism forever puts them outside Soviet society and outside conspiracy.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ Benjamin Nathans, "When Did Your Eyes Open?" *London Review of Books* 32(9) (May 2010): <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v32/n09/benjamin-nathans/when-did-your-eyes-open>.

⁵⁷⁰ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 303.

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁵⁷² OSA f. 300, s.f. 85, c. 9 Published Samizdat, box 111, AS 4619, 17-18.

This statement was part of an interview that three of the Young Socialists using the pen name “the editors of *Varianty*” gave to *L’Alternative*, a French publication oriented towards a Third Way between capitalism and socialism, during the summer of 1981.⁵⁷³ This was the first major communication of their views to an audience outside of the Soviet Union, though it was only published after their arrest.⁵⁷⁴ *L’Alternative* was conceived by its editors to be a “platform of dialogue” that would transcend Cold War vocabulary, and introduce thinkers from the “other Europe” into the discursive landscape of Western intellectuals.⁵⁷⁵ It provided a forum for the major currents of dissent across the Eastern Bloc, though its own leftist orientation was what especially attracted the Young Socialists.⁵⁷⁶ The authors, Fadin, Kudiukin and Khavkin, declared their answers to represent a synthesis of *Varianty*’s contributors’ views, which they described to *L’Alternative* as ranging from socialist to Eurocommunist and social democratic.

The different scenarios forecasted by the Young Socialists for the road out of stagnation were influenced by the paradoxical position the circle occupied as dissident intellectuals whose analytical perspectives induced them to see no immediate prospects for their own dissident activities. In response to *L’Alternative*’s

⁵⁷³ The original article was “L’Almanach ‘Variantes,’ Une interview de membres de la redaction,” (The Almanac *Varianty*, An interview with the editorial staff.) *L’Alternative* (15) (April-May 1982), 7-12. The French-language interview was translated into Russian by Radio Free Europe and published as part of AS 4619 in their *arkhiv samizdata* collection (OSA f. 300, s.f. 85, c. 9 Published Samizdat, box 111, AS 4619) which is the text I have translated into English and relied on in this analysis.

⁵⁷⁴ Kudiukin recalled that the answers were composed by himself, Fadin and Khavkin. Khavkin was responsible for the connections to *L’Alternative* that facilitated the interview. Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin.

Fadin recounted in 1994 that *L’Alternative*’s questions and their own interview text were exchanged through several intermediate contacts, and the first time he saw a copy of *L’Alternative* was during his KGB interrogation. “Andrei Fadin (Samizdat).” Interview by Julia Kalinina on behalf of Metta Spencer, 1994: <http://russianpeaceanddemocracy.com/andrei-fadin-1994/>.

⁵⁷⁵ “Déclaration des fondateurs de la revue *L’Alternative*,” November 1979, 1, cited in Friederike Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There: How Underground Literature Crossed the Iron Curtain* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014), 402.

⁵⁷⁶ On the impact of Eastern European dissent on the French Left, see: Robert Brier, “Beyond the ‘Helsinki Effect’: East European dissent and the Western Left in the ‘long 1970s,’” in *The ‘Long 1970s’: Human rights, East-West Détente and transnational relations*, eds. Poul Villaume, Rasmus Mariager and Helle Porsdam (London: Routledge, 2016), 77; see also, Michael Scott Christofferson, *French Intellectuals against the Left: The anti-totalitarian movement of the 1970s* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), 158.

invitation to evaluate whether Soviet dissent had encountered a crisis, they proposed a solution that contained space for their own agency: “The exit from the crisis of dissent may be the creation, in the foreseeable future, of political organisations of various orientations and their appeal to the grassroots with a concrete social program,” though they acknowledged, “a change in the general spiritual climate in the country” was required for such a development.⁵⁷⁷ This was accompanied by an unusually optimistic prediction of the potential upswing of civil society, for which there seemed few grounds to expect in 1981:

Alongside the traditional rights defender dissidence will be the creation of various types of legal non-conformist groups, primarily made up of youth. Clubs, movements, organisations, etc, will expand. The activities of underground political groups will intensify, among them there will be a tendency to create party-type associations; oppositional activity of a trade union nature will become a fairly widespread phenomena. While supporting all of these movements, we consider that the most important task is to unite all the supporters of democratic socialism.⁵⁷⁸

Yet in an alternate, more clinical forecast issued towards the end of the interview, the influence of Kudiukin and Fadin’s experience as specialists of post-Franco Spain and Latin America clearly came through. This analysis closely anticipated the scenario of their own future paths in Perestroika – yet contained no role for them in the present:

The experience of all successful and unsuccessful attempts at democratisation and liberalisation in the 1960s and 1980s: Czechoslovakia, 1968-1969, Spain after 1976, Brazil after 1978, Poland after 1980 and so on, show that that part of the previous regime’s establishment always plays an important role in such processes, as well as the opposition, emerging from the depths of the regime itself. In conditions of a rather acute crisis, the ruling bloc itself is breaking up, and a certain part of it is going to cooperate with the opposition. For us, this, of course, is not a matter of the near future.⁵⁷⁹

Conclusion.

What made these young intellectuals from the Soviet elite dive into the socialist underground during the final years of stagnation, despite the authorities’

⁵⁷⁷ AS 4619, 19, 21.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

intensifying persecution of dissent and the fading appeal of socialism among their generation? In a society where social distinctions were founded on degrees of access to material goods and other types of resources, the Young Socialists' upbringing in privileged intelligentsia families guaranteed them with cultural and economic access, whose consumption stimulated possibilities for steadily greater levels of access. This can be seen from the circle's climb from MGU to IMEMO in this chapter through connections that they made during their university studies.⁵⁸⁰ Their "golden youth" status not only granted access to the intellectual heights of late Soviet society. It also imparted the sense of rebellion required to contemplate active opposition, not to mention the self-assurance that convinced them they were the right people for the job.

The job – writing a scientifically based socialist programme for the reform of the Soviet Union – got a powerful boost from the resources that the Young Socialists encountered at IMEMO. The circle's use of *spetskhran* enhanced their understanding of the Soviet Union and the outside world. Their immersion in the environment of Latin American studies, where Marxism-Leninism was used creatively and often applied with enthusiasm, increased their analytical abilities and solidified their leftist worldview. The Young Socialists' personal relationships with *shestidesiatniki* mentors – Maidanik, Cheshkov and Sheinis – who passed on critical knowledge, including precious lived experience of the Thaw, inspired the young dissidents' creative imaginations. Their contacts with Medvedev and Gefter were equally influential for allowing them to see socialism as a living idea, as it appeared in the eyes of these dissident intellectuals, despite its decline among wider society.

The Young Socialists' dissent was also based on their calculation that both of the groups they identified as potential forces for reform in Soviet society – the high-ranking liberals and the dissident movement – were incapable of succeeding. Yet they too found themselves faltering in the face of the immovability of the working class, just as they were under fire from the authorities' heightening campaign against dissent. By 1981, three years had passed since Kudiukin's programme for the creation of workers' trade unions, but it was not any closer to being realised. The socio-economic crisis that the Young Socialists had predicted would create

⁵⁸⁰ Natalia Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era* (London: Routledge, 2013), 105.

conditions for a broad movement of reform to appear had not occurred, although it still appeared to be potentially on the horizon.

As they matured from student radicals animated by revolutionary romanticism to young scholars with more complex, reformist worldviews, the Young Socialists' hopes for change dimmed over time. Their dissent instead became sustained by developments taking place outside the Soviet Union. The shining example of the worker-intellectual alliance between KOR and the Polish strikers, and the growing mass movement of Solidarność in Poland inspired continued hope for the Young Socialists. The major actions of the circle became directed to contact with Poland and leftist movements outside the Soviet Union, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Dissenting Internationalism. Eurocommunism, early-Solidarność and the International Reformist Left.

Introduction. The Internationalist Outlook of Socialist Dissent.

On Italian television in December 1981, two days after the enforcement of Martial Law in Poland, the leader of the Italian communist party (PCI), Enrico Berlinguer, gave an interview where he reflected on the broader implications of this development and pronounced: “What has happened in Poland leads us to consider that finally the capacity for the development and renewal of the societies set up in Eastern Europe has been exhausted – a renewal that started with the October Revolution. Today we have reached the point where that phase is over.” He later expressed his belief that democratic change in Eastern Europe was dependent on the resumption of détente and would be set in motion if “a new socialism [could] be achieved in the West, based on the principles of liberty and democracy.”⁵⁸¹

These observations present a perspective of Soviet socialism at the beginning of the 1980s from one of the leading lights of the Western European reformist Left. Two associated assumptions stemmed from Berlinguer’s words: the sense of the interconnection of events between East and West, and the importance of what had occurred in Poland for all on the Left. These perceptions were largely shared by a loosely configured transnational alignment of reform socialists that existed in an embryonic state from the late-1970s for about a decade without ever solidifying into a coherent movement with defined power centres. From its first years until the early-1980s – the period under examination in this chapter – the Soviet and Eastern European intellectuals that were part of this diffuse network were mainly dissidents and émigrés, who participated in the occasional conferences and collaborative publications that marked the grouping’s existence until it was thoroughly transformed by reform socialism officially coming to power under Gorbachev. In the late-1970s when Eurocommunism appeared as a potential game changer in the Cold

⁵⁸¹ Kevin Devlin, “The PCI and Poland,” 29 December 1981. Open Society Archives (OSA), f. 300, s.f., 8, c. 3, background report, 17285.

War, the outlines of this network became visible to scholars through the mutually supportive public statements issued by left-leaning dissidents and the Eurocommunist parties, which fleetingly appeared to be a potential instigator of change in the Eastern Bloc.⁵⁸² However, the connections that made up this loose coalition were never systematically evaluated, nor fully discernable contemporarily, and have remained ill-defined in the literature as a result of the Soviet collapse decimating this current.

As Silvio Pons and Michele Di Donato have pointed out, reform socialism as an ideology never had clearly formulated strategies, nor was it a coherent body of thought. Rather, it was a fragmented and disparate set of concepts, practices and people who were committed to the reform of Soviet style socialism from above and the democratic evolution of communism.⁵⁸³ At the most idealistic level, reform socialists were engaged in a search for a reformed model of socialism free of the Stalinist legacy that fully realised the ideology's democratic and humanist potential. But the economic thinking that originated in Eastern Europe, which was directed to the more immediate and pragmatic task of improving the functioning of the poorly performing Soviet-type economic model, was also a central feature. Reform socialism developed into a political project gradually over decades in the wake of the revelations of Stalin's crimes at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, and advanced at an uneven pace between East and West in Europe. Its influential moments were during the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the rise of Eurocommunism among the Western European Communist Parties during 1975-1979, and the years of Perestroika in the Soviet Union. Reform socialism has frequently been understood in connection with the Soviet collapse, and interpreted as a turning point to the end to Marxist revolutionary traditions in Europe,⁵⁸⁴ and a transitional movement that

⁵⁸² For example: Louis Menashe, "Eurocommunism and the USSR: End of the Bolshevik Tradition in the West?" in *The Politics of Eurocommunism: Socialism in Transition*, eds. Carl Boggs and David Plotke (Boston: South End Press, 1980), 325-327; Jiri Valenta, "Eurocommunism and Eastern Europe," *Problems of Communism* 27(2) (1978), 46-49.

⁵⁸³ Silvio Pons and Michele Di Donato, "Reform Communism," in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, Vol. 3: End Games, eds. Juliane Furst, Silvio Pons and Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 179.

⁵⁸⁴ Juliane Furst, Silvio Pons, Mark Selden, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, Vol. 3: End Games, eds. Juliane Furst, Silvio Pons and Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 11.

became a bridging force for European reconciliation in 1989.⁵⁸⁵ This chapter takes a different approach: to reconstruct reform socialist thinking and its European networks in the late-1970s and early-1980s, in order to explore how it provided sources for socialist dissent in the late-Soviet Union before the onset of Perestroika.

This chapter therefore extends its focus beyond the Soviet context to consider the wider international setting that existed during the twilight of détente and the beginning of the Soviet Union's final decade. The Young Socialists were a relatively isolated trend within Soviet society as socialist dissidents who believed in the necessity of reform. But in the first years of their dissent, they derived intellectual inspiration and feelings of support from their knowledge acquired through reading texts that originated within the Western Left and Eastern Bloc socialist dissent, which they perceived to be linked in a loose internationalism. Three years into the circle's existence, the explosion of the Polish strikes in August 1980 altered the landscape of late socialism. The Young Socialists viewed the rise of a powerful workers' movement that was supported by a worker-intelligentsia alliance in a neighbouring Eastern Bloc country as a promising sign for socialist renewal. These developments revitalised the reformist hopes of the Young Socialists, and pushed them forward to new activities and a different audience. The circle continued to await the approaching economic crisis that they predicted would spark greater prospects for dissident activities in the Soviet Union. But after the excitement of the Polish summer, the Young Socialists' renewed drive for dissident activities instead became directed outside of the Soviet Union.

During the years of their dissent, the Young Socialists' most stimulating sources of inspiration were foreign movements that they found ideologically attractive, and which also appeared to them to have the potential to be sufficiently influential to eventually awaken reformist impulses in the Soviet Union itself. In the late-1970s, this was the Italian Communist Party (PCI) that was at the height of its electoral popularity. By the early-1980s, Eurocommunism had already lost its electoral strength. But the PCI's criticisms of the Soviet Union in the PCI-CPSU polemics that erupted in response to the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981 resonated with the Young Socialists, and the conviction that their own critical views of the Soviet leadership were shared by the largest communist

⁵⁸⁵ Pons and Di Donato, "Reform Communism," 180.

party in Western Europe provided sustenance for their dissent. In these same years, the emergence of a workers' movement in Poland also presented a vision of a potential Soviet future. The Young Socialists eagerly digested all of the information about Polish developments that they could. They disseminated propaganda on this topic in *Sotsializm i budushchee*, and initiated plans to distribute the Twenty-One Demands of the Polish Interfactory Strike Committee in the working class suburbs of Moscow, as well as forming the embryonic Organisation of the Committee for the Creation of Free Trade Unions in the USSR. Their enthusiasm for the outlook and direction of Eurocommunism and Solidarność culminated in the Young Socialists sending letters to these movements in 1981 and 1982 to communicate that there was support for them in the Soviet Union.

Why did the circle decide to engage in this particular form of dissent? What were the practicalities that were involved in organising these communications? And what was the impact of their actions? This chapter reconstructs these acts as expressions of dissenting internationalism, and asks the broader question of how their perspectives of the outside world fit into the thinking and practices of socialist dissent. This interpretation follows scholars' recent interest in popular expressions of internationalism from below in the Eastern Bloc,⁵⁸⁶ and what Quinn Slobodian has called "alternative internationalism," which was distinguished by its expressions of support for causes that were unaligned with the state's internationalism.⁵⁸⁷

Socialist internationalism and internationalist solidarity were prominent elements of the revolutionary culture of the early Soviet state, when world revolution appeared to be on the horizon.⁵⁸⁸ In the late Brezhnev years, these ideas

⁵⁸⁶ For example, Péter Apor, James Mark, Piotr Osęka and Radina Vucetic, "We are with you, Vietnam': Transnational Solidarities in Socialist Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50(3) (2015), 439-464.

⁵⁸⁷ Slobodian has highlighted how his East German protagonists "presented a challenge to the regime's monopoly on the language of solidarity and conjured a political geography that overlapped with and opposed that of the state." This mindset was similar to the Young Socialists in this chapter, however, I have chosen to classify their acts as "dissenting internationalism" due to these expressions of internationalism being contained within a wider framework of dissident behaviours. See: Quinn Slobodian, "China Is Not Far! Alternative Internationalism and the Tiananmen Square Massacre in East Germany's 1989," in *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World*, eds., James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Steffi Marung (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 312.

⁵⁸⁸ R. Craig Nation, *War on War: Lenin, the Zimmerwald Left and the Origins of Communist Internationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), 235.

remained officially promoted values that influenced perceptions of global affairs among Soviet citizens, although indifference to them was also often a common response. The post-Stalin era Soviet orientation toward peaceful coexistence, economic integration and active participation in world affairs altered the make up of socialist internationalism from its earlier predominantly politicised revolutionary form so that in these years this concept also signified engagement and exchange with the cultures of other countries.⁵⁸⁹ In the Soviet Union and across the Eastern Bloc, James Mark and Peter Apor observed, “Socialist culture became infused with knowledge of the wider world both to a degree and with a nuance unknown in the Stalinist period.”⁵⁹⁰ This greater awareness coupled with its limits also shaped socialist dissidents’ perceptions of the outside world. But in line with their critical approach to Soviet socialism, they possessed interpretations of socialist internationalism that they understood to be distinctive from official late-Soviet forms by virtue of their restoration of political rigour and sincerity to these values. Their practices of internationalist solidarity were often also distinguished from those of the Soviet state through their support for movements whose ideological positions were considered to be unfavourable or even anti-Soviet in the eyes of the authorities.

The “Helsinki narrative,” which documented the role of the *pravozashchitniki* and their connections to Western journalists, NGOs and politicians within the development of a transnational human rights network in the 1970s that contributed to the fall of communism, is well-known.⁵⁹¹ By contrast, socialist dissidents appeared

⁵⁸⁹ Patryk Babiracki and Austin Jersild, “Editors’ Introduction,” in *Socialist Internationalism in the Cold War: Exploring the Second World* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 5; Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*, 9.

⁵⁹⁰ James Mark and Peter Apor, “Socialism Goes Global: Decolonisation and the Making of a New Culture of Internationalism in Socialist Hungary, 1956-1989,” *The Journal of Modern History* 87(4) (2015), 855.

⁵⁹¹ The key works of the Helsinki narrative are the following: Svetlana Savranskaya, “Unintended Consequences: Soviet Interests, Expectations and Reactions to the Helsinki Final Act,” in *Helsinki 1975 and the Transformation of Europe*, eds. Oliver Bange and Gottfried Niedhart (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 175-188; Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A transnational history of the Helsinki network* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Daniel C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International norms, human rights and the demise of communism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). Recent research has continued within the framework of this narrative, see: Mark Hurst, *British Human Rights Organisations and Soviet Dissent, 1965-1985* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

to be an insular current whose determined reflections on the historic roles of Lenin and Stalin in the outcome of the October Revolution, and their arguments for the democratic potential of the Soviet model of socialism remained largely rooted in their domestic context. This perception was also influenced by the fact that when socialist dissidents did establish foreign contacts, they were not as readily visible to outside observers as the often deliberately public context of the *pravozashchitniki*'s interactions. Moreover, transnational connections among the Left seemed to melt away as a topic of significance for scholarly investigation at the end of the Cold War.

However, renewed attention has been devoted to the international dimension of communism and the role of the Soviet Union's extensive engagement with the outside world in shaping identities and experience when writing the cultural history of the late Soviet Union.⁵⁹² The recent boom in transnational studies has demonstrated the enriching potential of this approach where themes and source material, which during the Cold War were used by political scientists to construct arguments about geopolitical influence, are now being redeployed by historians to address questions of Soviet identity and subjectivity.⁵⁹³ Moreover, moving beyond East West paradigms, scholars have begun to develop an intra-bloc history of dissent, which conceptualises the national dissident movements as part of a loose bloc-wide community, while sketching out shared perspectives and instances of cooperation.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹² Michael David-Fox, "The Impacts of Transnationalism," *Kritika: Explorations In Russian and Eurasian History* 12(4) (2011), 885; Bogdan C. Iacob, "Is it Transnational? A New Perspective in the Study of Communism," *East Central Europe* 40 (2013), 117.

⁵⁹³ This has particularly been the case with Second and Third World relations and intra-bloc relations: David C. Engerman, "The Second World's Third World," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12(1) (2011): 183-211; Rupprecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin*; James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, Steffi Marung (eds.), *Alternative Globalisations: Eastern Europe and the Post Colonial World* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2020); Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer (Eds.), *Cold War Crossings: International travel and exchange across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s* (College Station: University of Texas at Arlington: 2014); Anne E. Gorsuch and Diane Koenker (eds.), *The Socialist Sixties: Crossing borders in the Second World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013); Zbigniew Wojnowski, *The Soviet Near Abroad: Socialist Eastern Europe and Soviet Patriotism in Ukraine 1965-1985* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).

⁵⁹⁴ Robert Brier (ed.), *Entangled Protest: Transnational Approaches to the History of Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Gottingen: Druckerei Hubert & Co, 2013); Friederike Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There: How Underground Literature Crossed the Iron Curtain* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2014); Kacper

Transnational perspectives can also be extended to studies of the socialist dissent of underground circles whose thinking and activities involved engagement with leftist ideas and movements that were active outside the Soviet Union. This approach enables this international element, which was a critical factor in the worldview and activities of some socialist dissidents, to come to the fore, and connects socialist dissent to broader developments that occurred in the history of the international Left.⁵⁹⁵ The exploration of these internationalist currents also facilitates better scholarly understanding of the intellectual make up of socialist dissent. The transnational approach provides a methodological framework to capture the internationalist outlook of these socialist dissidents, while at the same time allowing room to probe the degree to which they were truly connected with the international Left through their thinking and contacts, or whether they remained limited and aspirational in nature.⁵⁹⁶

Many embryonic underground socialist groupuscules were in fact totally restricted to Soviet frames of reference. This resulted from a combination of their specific concerns and limited knowledge of foreign thinkers, as well as their shortlived existence of typically a few months before the KGB detected and arrested them, which limited their evolution.⁵⁹⁷ But the most well-known socialist dissident circles, which existed for at least two years and were composed of intellectuals, were all to varying degrees internationalist in outlook and influenced by foreign leftist thought and movements. Their expressions of dissenting internationalism occurred

Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe: Human rights and the emergence of new transnational actors* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

⁵⁹⁵ Peter Apor and Constantin Iordachi, "Studying Communist Dictatorships: From comparative to transnational history," *East Central Europe* (40) (2013), 4; Robert Brier, "Entangled Protest: Dissent and the transnational history of the 1970s and 1980s," in *Entangled Protest, Transnational Approaches to the History of Dissent in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, ed. Robert Brier (Gottingen: Druckerei Hubert & Co, 2013), 42.

⁵⁹⁶ Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe*, 5.

⁵⁹⁷ This was certainly the case with many of the underground socialist groups of the 1950s and 1960s, though a minority were attracted to Maoism or were defenders of the Hungarian and Polish events of 1956. In the rare cases where they left behind written documents, many of them had programs and leaflets that were usually completely based on Soviet references. It is more difficult to draw conclusions for the 1970s and 1980s as less archival material is available. See E.Iu Zavadskaja and O.V. Edelman, "Underground groups," in *Sedition: Everyday Resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, eds. Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Sergei V. Mironenko (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 285-288, 290.

on a spectrum from being intellectually based, abstracted or aspirational to more concrete. They ranged from being values that formed part of their worldview to real life interactions, and can be differentiated by whether the international character of their activities was driven by the appeal of foreign ideas in domestic circumstances or connected to their desire to establish connections with the outside world. The circles' different degrees of access to the abroad were the greatest determining factor for shaping the form of these interactions. The following vignettes, which address the socialist dissent of the Krasnopevtsev circle (1956-1957), Kolokol/Union of Communards (1963-1965) and the Leningrad Opposition (1975-1978), highlight these elements of their experience.

The Krasnopevtsev circle that formed in the historical faculty of MGU in the mid-1950s, which was discussed in the previous chapter in connection to the participation of Marat Cheshkov who was an informal mentor to the Young Socialists at IMEMO, developed connections to Polish intellectuals. The circle's discussions were centred upon explorations of the Russian and Soviet revolutionary past and present and informed by their interest in Plekhanov, Lenin and Martov, but they were also influenced by foreign thinkers that included the PCI leader, Palmiro Togliatti, the Yugoslav theorist of workers' self-management, Edvard Kardelj, and the reformist leader of the Polish October, Wladyslaw Gomulka.⁵⁹⁸ During trips to Warsaw as part of a Komsomol delegation in 1956 and 1957, the Krasnopevtsev circle's members sought out likeminded Poles to better understand Polish conditions and to share their views of events in the Soviet Union.⁵⁹⁹ They formed connections with the young Polish intellectuals located around the reformist publication *Po Prostu* that continued after the circle's members returned to Moscow through the exchange of each other's publications. The Krasnopevtsev circle's admiration for the Polish variant of reformism led by Gomulka increased their critical attitudes towards what they perceived as the unevenness of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation, which they

⁵⁹⁸ Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (Dissidents among dissidents.) (Moskva: Svobodnoe Marksistskoe Izdatel'stvo, 2017), 35-36; S.D. Rozhdestvenskii (pseudonym of V. Iofe), "Materialy k istorii samodeiatel'nykh politicheskikh ob'edinenii v SSSR posle 1945 goda," (Materials for a History of the Independent Political Organisation in the USSR after 1945.) *Pamiat'* (5) (Moscow 1981/Paris 1982), 239. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f., 102 Leningrad Collection.

⁵⁹⁹ Testimony of Lev Krasnopevtsev and Nikolai Obushenkov in "Vlast' i intelligentsia," 'Delo' molodykh istorikov, 1957-1958 gg." (The Authorities and the Intelligentsia: The "Affair" of the Young Historians, 1957-1958.) *Voprosy istorii* (4) (1994), 112-113.

observed in the violent suppression of the Hungarian revolution.⁶⁰⁰ The following year, the young intellectuals renewed their conversations when the Poles journeyed to Moscow in a delegation for the World Youth Festival of 1957.



Lev Krasnopevtsev in 1958 (Sakharov Centre).

The anti-bureaucratic attitudes that were at the heart of the Union of Communards/Kolokol's dissent were formed by a combination of their observations of everyday life and the influences of Soviet and foreign thinkers. The circle, which was made up of friends who had met through a Komsomol brigade at Leningrad Technical Institute in the mid-1950s, published the samizdat work *From the Dictatorship of the Bureaucracy to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* in 1964. It interpreted the Soviet Union to be a post-capitalist state under the class rule of the bureaucracy, and called for a new socialist revolution in the Soviet Union.⁶⁰¹ Robert Hornsby has noted how dissident texts from the early-1960s displayed similarities to Milovan Djilas' ideas in *The New Class* (1957), and pointed to the Yugoslav dissident's work as an influence on the Kolokol'chiki.⁶⁰² As early as 1957 Radio Liberty broadcast a Russian translation of the work into the Soviet Union, which was read at a deliberately slow pace in order to encourage its transcription and further

⁶⁰⁰ Testimony of Nikolai Pokrovskii in "Vlast' i intelligentsia," 125.

⁶⁰¹ Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov*, 52.

⁶⁰² Robert Hornsby, *Protest, Reform and Repression in Khrushchev's Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 139-142, 150.

distribution by Soviet listeners.⁶⁰³ However, although *The New Class* was circulating in samizdat at the time the circle wrote *From the Dictatorship*,⁶⁰⁴ according to Kolokol'chik, Valerii Smolkin, they were only aware of Djilas' work at that point and had not yet read it.⁶⁰⁵ One of the circle's leaders, Sergei Khakhaev recalled that they spent a year working on the theoretical basis of the text.⁶⁰⁶ They made up for their gap in samizdat connections with public library membership, which contributed to the inclusion of other influences in addition to Djilas. The Italian communist, Antonio Gramsci appears as the most commonly cited foreign thinker.⁶⁰⁷ Il'ia Budraitskis traced the strands of *From the Dictatorship's* argumentation that the Soviet Union's transition to a "bureaucratic formation" was the consequence of a wider global process of bureaucratisation to the American Trotskyist turned conservative James Burnham's work, *The Managerial Revolution* (1941). The circle's leaders, Valerii Ronkin and Khakhaev, reached Burnham by gleaning his arguments through references made to them in the works of Soviet scholars that they borrowed from the library.⁶⁰⁸ The circle's idea of internationalism, which was closely connected to its anti-bureaucratic outlook, was expressed in the first issue of their samizdat journal:

For us proletarian internationalism is a living, close concept...we know that the workers of all countries and nationalities have common goals: the fight against exploiters - the feudal lords in Afghanistan, the bourgeoisie in Germany and Italy, the bureaucracy in the USSR, the People's Republic of China and the United Arab Republic.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰³ Tomaz Ivesic, "Between Critic and Dissent: The Transnational Entanglement of the Fall of Milovan Djilas," CEU History Department MA Thesis, 2017, 56.

⁶⁰⁴ Viachelsav Igrunov, Mark Barbakadze, Elena Shvarts, "Milovan Djilas," in *Antologija samizdata: nepodtsenzurnaia literaturna v SSSR 1950-e-1980-e* ("Samizdat Anthology: Uncensored Literature in the USSR, 1950s-1980s."), vol. 1, book 2, (Moskva: IGPI, 2005), 294.

⁶⁰⁵ Valerii Smolkin in "Kolokol'chiki 1965-2015," film produced by Archive of Memorial St Petersburg: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4aYyfvv0qQ&feature=youtu.be>.

⁶⁰⁶ Sergei Khakhaev in "Kolokol'chiki 1965-2015."

⁶⁰⁷ Valerii Ronkin, "Ot diktatury biurokratii k diktature proletariata," in *Sochineniia: nabliudeniia issledovaniia, razmyshleniia*, vol. 2 (St Petersburg: Norma, 2012), 488, 497, 502, 540.

⁶⁰⁸ Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov*, 52.

⁶⁰⁹ V.S.V. (pseudonym), "O proletarskom internatsionalizme," *Kolokol: Organ Soiuzna kommunarov* (23) (April 1965), 4. Kolokol Fond, Archive of Memorial St Petersburg.



The Kolokol'chiki, reunited 10 years after their arrests, in 1976 (Fond Iofe).

The Leningrad Opposition published a radical new Leftist samizdat journal, *Perspektiva* (Perspective) in the late-1970s whose lifespan overlapped with the first years of the Young Socialists' dissent. The core of the circle were the Leningrad State University students Andrei Reznikov, Aleksandr Skobov and Andrei Tsurkov.⁶¹⁰ Tsurkov was attracted to aspects of Maoism and interpreted the Chinese cultural revolution as a struggle against the nomenklatura for popular democracy.⁶¹¹ He discovered Maoism chiefly from subtracting the condemnatory film coating it in Soviet polemics to deduce its general ideas and also listened to Chinese radio broadcasts.⁶¹² Skobov was drawn to social democracy. He recalled that although all three condemned the Soviet invasions of Central Europe, he argued with Reznikov and Tsurkov, who were opposed to market economic relations, about whether the

⁶¹⁰ Aleksandr Skobov, "*Perspektiva* – zhurnal novykh levyykh," (*Perspective* – Journal of the New Left.) in *Samizdat: Po materialam konferentsii "30 let nezavisimoi pečati, 1950-80-e gody* (Samizdat: Materials of the Conference "Thirty Years of Independent Printing, 1950-1980.) (St Petersburg: NITs "Memorial", 1993), 109.

⁶¹¹ Evgenii Kazakov and Dmitrii Rublev, "Koleso istorii ne vertelos', ono skatyvalos', Levye podpol'e v Leningrade, 1975-1982," ("The Wheel of History was not Turning, it was Tumbling," the Leftist Underground in Leningrad, 1975-1982.) *Neprikosnovennyi zapas*: 91 (2013): https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/neprikosnovennyi_zapas/91_nz_5_2013/article/10655.

⁶¹² Dmitrii Rublev, "Novye levye' v SSSR," (The New Left in the USSR.) *Zhurnalnyi klub Intelros "Alternativy"* (2) (2012): <http://www.intelros.ru/readroom/alternativi/a2-2012/15622-novye-levye-v-sssr.html>.

events in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 were attempted restorations of capitalism or movements for a new socialism.⁶¹³



Aleksandr Skobov (left) with Feliks Vinogradov at the Leningrad State University Faculty of History about 1976-1977 (Fond Iofe).

At the time he was involved in the circle's dissent, Skobov was living in a commune on the edge of Leningrad that celebrated Western counterculture.⁶¹⁴ The Leningrad Opposition were all heavily interested in the Western new Left including its most radical end – Tsurkov went as far as to propose a protest outside the West German consulate against the trial of the Red Army Faction – but they had almost no access to their ideas. Reznikov admitted that their lack of languages stopped them from reading works of the Western new Left in public libraries where the Russian translations were restricted. Their poor connections to samizdat networks and the lack of interest in this topic among foreign radio broadcasters meant they also could not discover their ideas through these clandestine channels.⁶¹⁵ They were restricted to sources that produced fragmented and romanticised impressions: Reznikov recalled his collection of Soviet books entitled *Critique of bourgeois approaches to...* that he read between the lines to learn of foreign leftist ideas and his photograph of

⁶¹³ Aleksandr Skobov, "Nash oppozitsionnyi kommunizma byl dikovinkoi," (Our Oppositional Communism was a Curiosity.), interview with Elena Kovalenko: <https://rusplt.ru/policy/Skobov-interview-8739.html>; Rublev, "Novye levye' v SSSR."

⁶¹⁴ This episode has been explored as a form of living *vnye*. See: Juliane Fürst, "We all Live in a Yellow Submarine': Dropping Out in a Leningrad Commune," in Juliane Fürst and Josie McLellan, eds., *Dropping Out of Socialism: The creation of alternative spheres in the Eastern Bloc* (London: Lexington Books, 2017), 179-206.

⁶¹⁵ Rublev, "Novye levye' v SSSR."

Patricia Hearst, the beautiful hostage of the American left-wing terrorist group, the Symbionese Liberation Army.⁶¹⁶

What does the collective experience of these circles tell us about the international dimension of socialist dissent and where do the Young Socialists fit in? The factors of social milieu, age, and the different domestic and international conditions of the Thaw and the late Brezhnev years that separated *shestidesiatniki* and *semidesiatniki* experiences of socialist dissent, all affected socialist dissidents' interactions with the outside world. The Krasnopevtsev circle shared with the Young Socialists an elite status that made possible their experiences of interactive dissenting internationalism. As postgraduate students in the historical faculty at MGU, they possessed language skills and access to specialist literature, while their highly placed Komsomol involvement was a ticket to the rare experience of travel abroad in the 1950s. These attributes afforded the Krasnopevtsev circle the opportunity to visit Warsaw where they gained a developed picture of Polish reformism and formed internationalist connections, which were later recognised by the Soviet prosecutors in their criminal case as "ties to international revisionism."⁶¹⁷ In addition to the elite milieu they occupied, the Krasnopevtsev circle shared reformist views in common with the Young Socialists and were similar in age.

This was in contrast to the Kolokol'chiki and the Leningrad Opposition, who held revolutionary perspectives that were set against a romanticised picture of the outside world. The Kolokol'chiki were the most inward facing dissident circle due to their critical attitudes largely occurring in a dialogue with Soviet socialism, as was more characteristic of the *shestidesiatniki* generation. As Soviet socialism declined in its appeal as the Brezhnev era wore on, the socialist dissidents of the *semidesiatniki* generation became increasingly inspired by foreign leftist thinking in their criticisms of the Soviet system. The Western radical Left captivated the Leningrad Opposition, despite their limited access to these thinkers. The relative youth of the Leningrad Opposition, who were on the threshold of their twenties during their years of dissent,⁶¹⁸ contributed to their radicalism. By contrast, the period of the Young Socialists' dissenting internationalism as it is conceptualised in this chapter was long

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

⁶¹⁷ Testimony of Pokrovskii in "Vlast' i intelligentsia," 125.

⁶¹⁸ Kazakov and Rublev, "Koleso istorii ne vertelos', ono skatyvalos'," *Levye podpol'e v Leningrade, 1975-1982.*"

after the revolutionary romanticism of their MGU years, and took place when the core of the circle, with the exception of the younger Kagarlitskii, were all in their late twenties or early thirties.

The socialist dissidents of the *semidesiatniki* generation were active at the end of détente, after the Soviet Union had already reached the peak of its opening to the outside world before Perestroika. Despite the worsening climate of international relations, the information networks that Soviet intellectuals used to engage with the abroad largely remained in place. These conditions gave a greater international dimension to socialist dissent than had existed among the earlier generation. The proximity of the Young Socialists to elite intellectual structures that brought information about the outside world into the Soviet Union, which included the research environment of IMEMO and samizdat networks in Moscow, gave them a much greater chance to capitalise on the opportunities for engagement with the international Left brought by détente than the Leningrad Opposition.

By the late Brezhnev years, the decline of the Soviet Union's prestige had occurred among the international Left, which was readily observed by the Young Socialists. The de-stabilisation of Hungary and Poland that occurred as part of the immediate fall out of the Twentieth Party Congress motivated the dissident activities of the Krasnopevtsev circle. Though over the longer term, the events of 1956 stimulated movements for reform among the communist Left that had crystallised by the years of the Young Socialists' dissent.⁶¹⁹ The Krasnopevtsev circle's dissent occurred during the years that the Soviet Union remained the undisputed leader of the still strong international communist movement. By contrast, in the late Brezhnev years a broader reformist Left that was critical of the Soviet experience existed, which appeared to the Young Socialists to share many of their dissenting views.

Reading Reform Socialism. Constructing an Imagined Community of Dissenting Internationalism, 1977-1980.

The Young Socialists' dissenting internationalism was made possible by what Gyorgi Peteri has called the "nylon curtain" that divided Europe during the Cold War. Peteri's updating of the classical metaphor reflected new research on the economic,

⁶¹⁹ Silvio Pons, *The Global Revolution: A History of International Communism, 1917-1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 218.

cultural and political interactions between East and West during the Cold War, which indicated that rather than being forged from iron, a transparent and flexible border divided the Eastern Bloc from Western Europe.⁶²⁰ These conditions had enabled the first generation of Soviet dissidents and their Western facilitators to find points of elasticity in the curtain, where the transfer and exchange of samizdat and tamizdat and other forms of political and literary communication occurred.⁶²¹ By the time the Young Socialists began their dissident activities, these cross-border forms of communication were a regular practice among Moscow dissidents. They were made possible by three interrelated processes that occurred in the late-1960s and early-1970s: the rise of samizdat domestically, the development of personal relations between dissidents and sympathetic Western journalists and scholars in Moscow, and the emigration of the first numbers of dissidents to the West.⁶²² According to Peter Reddaway, who was a prominent Western participant in these networks, the transfer of *Khronika tekushikh sobytii* (Chronicle of Current Events) and other samizdat to the West practically functioned by a *pravozashchitnik* handing a copy to Western scholars or journalists, an act filled with considerable risk. These sympathetic Westerners travelled with the illegal documents themselves or persuaded a diplomat to do so, and across the border these papers were often sent on to émigré publishing houses and media offices.⁶²³ Solzhenitsyn's tamizdat publications and his correspondence with foreign publishers followed a similar

⁶²⁰ Gyorgy Peteri, "Nylon Curtain – Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East Central Europe," *Slavonica* 10(2) (2004), 114. See also: Sergei I. Zhuk, "Closing and Opening Soviet Society," *Ab Imperio* 2 (2011), 125-126.

⁶²¹ Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*, 12.

⁶²² Yasuhiro Matsui, "Forming a Transnational Moral Community between Soviet Dissidents and Ex-Communist Western Supporters: The Case of Pavel Litvinov, Karel van het Reve and Stephen Spender," *Contemporary European History* 29 (2020), 80; Barbara Walker, "Moscow Human Rights Defenders Look West: Attitudes Towards U.S. Journalists in the 1960s and 1970s," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 9(4) (2008), 919-920; Bent Boel, "Western Journalism in the Soviet Bloc during the Cold War: Themes, Approaches, Theses," *Cold War History* 19(4) (2019), 607.

⁶²³ Peter Reddaway, *The Dissidents: A Memoir of Working with the Resistance in Russia, 1960-1990* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1990), 124-126. Reddaway also notes the existence of other channels for the transfer of documents from the Soviet Union to the West that he was aware of that were established by recently emigrated dissidents, *ibid.*, 126.

route with the help of a Swedish foreign correspondent, who used the Norwegian diplomatic pouch to send and receive documents from abroad.⁶²⁴

The impact of the samizdat sent to the West was multiplied in scale by the airwaves of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), which converted clandestinely distributed texts into more widely accessible broadcasts.⁶²⁵ The Eastern Bloc's ability to tune in to what was colloquially known as "the voices" contributed to the broader intelligentsia's familiarity with underground literature and dissident repressions.⁶²⁶ Émigrés were well-represented among the RFE/RL staff, and played other vital communicative roles in the transnational network of dissent. Kacper Szulecki has labelled them "dissident interpreters" out of recognition for their regular practice of transmitting messages from dissidents inside the Eastern Bloc to Western politicians using vocabulary understandable to the power centres of their newly adopted countries.⁶²⁷ They also acted as channels of communication to other dissident contacts and Western media that mitigated the natural difficulties experienced by dissidents inside the Eastern Bloc, and provided access to financial resources and publishing houses.⁶²⁸ The dissident émigré communities particularly in New York and Paris also enlivened the samizdat scene in Moscow and Leningrad through creating new publications in the freer conditions of their exile or giving

⁶²⁴ Stig Frederikson, "How I helped Aleksander Solzhenitsyn smuggle his Nobel Prize Lecture from the USSR": <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1970/solzhenitsyn/article/>; Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*, 73.

⁶²⁵ Friederike Kind-Kovács, "Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty as the 'Echo Chamber' of Tamizdat," in *Samizdat, Tamizdat and Beyond: Transnational Media during and after Socialism*, eds. Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 71.

⁶²⁶ Radio Liberty's broadcasts and programme summaries have been uploaded online by Open Society Archives: <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digital-repository/osa:89898864-78b7-4cf9-b4f7-aaf218f85599>; Kind-Kovács refers to oral evidence concerning people who did not have connections to samizdat reading communities and so listened to the radio in order to discover this information. Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*, 246.

⁶²⁷ Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe*, 89. For example, Liudmilla Alekseeva, Vladimir Bukovskii and Valerii Chalidze and Vladimir Maksimov were all prominent examples of Soviet "dissident interpreters."

⁶²⁸ Karolina Zioło-Pużuk, "Contact Beyond Borders and Historical Problems: Kultura, Russian Emigration, and the Polish Opposition," in *Samizdat, Tamizdat and Beyond*, eds. Friederike Kind-Kovács and Jessie Labov (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 101-102.

renewed life to established ones, which travelled through clandestine routes back to the readership in the Soviet Union.⁶²⁹

In contrast to the first generation of dissidents, who primarily used these transnational networks in the 1970s to attract the attention of Western governments and publics, the Young Socialists drew on these established forms of contact and exchange to pursue connections with the reformist Left in Western Europe and the other countries of the Eastern Bloc. In the circle's early years, this occurred at the level of reading and discussion. Their positions at IMEMO were critical in this endeavour, where Kudiukin's research specialisation on contemporary Spanish leftist politics and Ivanova's role of compiling the reference collection for the French leftist parties made them especially well-informed observers. They also used the networks of samizdat and tamizdat that had been pioneered by the first generation of dissidents to access a large volume of left-wing reformist literature, and familiarised themselves with its debates and concerns. According to a report published in 1984 by the chief investigator of the Young Socialists' case, Fedor Pokhil, in the house searches that targeted the circle the KGB seized over a thousand anti-Soviet publications and more than a hundred photographic films that included copies of works published abroad.⁶³⁰ Among this sizable collection of samizdat and tamizdat, at Khavkin's address the KGB search recorded Russian language copies of Stephen Cohen's *Bukharin*, texts that addressed the East German leftist dissident Rudolf Bahro's *The Alternative in Eastern Europe*, documents of the Socialist International, a summary of the French Leftist Richard Gombin's study, *The Radical Tradition* (1978) on workers' councils as a communist model of governance, several Academy of Sciences publications marked for restricted/internal use that addressed contemporary Western politics and societies, and in a link to the first generation of

⁶²⁹ Roy Medvedev, "The Future of Soviet Dissent," *Index on Censorship* 8(2) (March 1979), 27-28.

⁶³⁰ Fedor Pokhil, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii, provodivsheisia gruppoi lits," (Organisation of the Investigation of Anti-Soviet Agitation Carried out by a Group of Individuals.) *Sbornik statei ob agenturno-operativnoi i sledstvennoi rabote komiteta gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR* (Collection of Articles about Agent-Operative and Investigative Work of the USSR KGB.) (101) (Moskva, 1984), 50, published online by The Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania: https://www.kgbdocuments.eu/assets/books/journals/sbornik/101.pdf?fbclid=IwAR03HVAAfVrFAyVWbpSuw84uMm_ZYUF18aEclwhcrMnRXEQawePy2T9K00Q.

dissidents, a copy of Vladimir Bukovskii's memoir, *And the Wind Returns* published by Valerii Chalidze's *Khronika* Press in New York.⁶³¹

The circle also directed its attention to Eastern European reform socialist economic thinking, which was especially visible in *Sotsializm i budushchee*, where economic ideas were frequently discussed and Kagarlitskii urged readers to absorb themselves in "the lessons of Yugoslavia, the reforms of 1963-1968 in Czechoslovakia, 1968 in Hungary, but we should also attentively study the work of Marxist theoreticians: Rezső Nyers, János Kornai, Włodzimierz Brus, Ota Šik, and others."⁶³² Another indication of the Young Socialists' growing engagement with the reformist Left through reading was a special attachment to the first issue of *Levyi povorot* in 1979, which was not continued in later issues. It contained a list of recommended reading that mainly related to the publications of Soviet reformist economists of the 1960s in *Novy mir* and *Literaturnaia gazeta*, as well as articles from the Polish one time revisionist, Leszek Kolakowski and the British communists who were critical of the Soviet Union, Monty Johnstone and Bert Ramelson.⁶³³ There was also commentary based on the foreign leftist press, which included excerpts from the Italian communist daily *L'Unitá* on price rises that were indicative of a deteriorating economic situation in the USSR, which was not portrayed in the same terms by the Soviet press, and reports of protests by Spanish leftists in solidarity with persecuted East German dissidents.

This reading formed the initial poles of the Young Socialists' dissenting internationalism. It reinforced their attraction to reform socialism, and helped to define the constellation of parties, movements and thinkers that they considered themselves in solidarity with, whom broadly shared their own outlook. As Ann

⁶³¹ "Protocol Obyska," (KGB Search Protocol.), 6 April 1982, 1-6. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 103, Iurii Leonidovich Khavkin.

⁶³² K. Aleksandrovskii (pseudonym for Boris Kagarlitskii), "Net sotsializm bez samoupravleniia," (No Socialism without Self-Government.) *Sotsializm i budushchee* (March 1980), 13-14. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 128, collection of Roy Medvedev; In Kagarlitskii's later recollections, he clarifies that the circle read these works – they were not only intended for consumption by *Sotsializm i budushchee* readers. "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," (Affair of the Moscow Socialists.), Interview of Boris Kagarlitskii by Aleksei Sochnev: <https://rusplt.ru/society/delo-molodyih-sotsialistov-14624.html>.

⁶³³ Kagarlitskii and Kudiukin, "Soobshcheniia: informatsiia, spravki, rekomendatsii," (Communications: information, notes, recommendations.) *Levyi povorot* (1) (Summer 1979), 15. FSO-01-078 Fond of Viktor Sokirko, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa Archiv.

Komaromi has observed, samizdat reading and production also took on social functions, where these practices could support the crystallisation of new group identities.⁶³⁴ This occurred among the Young Socialists as their wide reading persuaded them that they were not as isolated in their thinking internationally as they were in their own society. The circle began to view themselves as part of a broader international community of “dissenting internationalism” that was made up of reform socialists who held positions that opposed the orthodox Soviet viewpoint and sympathised with dissent in the Eastern Bloc.

The Young Socialists’ perception that the reformist Left was held together in a loosely linked internationalism – that, in reality, was indistinct to the point that it was rather a fleeting association – was informed by their awareness of the collaborative publications and occasional conferences that occurred among this community. By the end of the 1970s, Eastern Bloc dissidents were participants in these networks – a development that the Young Socialists became aware of through reading Western leftist publications that contained articles penned by these dissident authors. The Young Socialists recorded their approval of these connections during their own interview with a French leftist publication, “We also positively evaluate publications in Western leftist journals of the work of representatives of the Eastern European opposition, especially in the journals *New Left Review*, *Das Argument* and *Neues Forum*.”⁶³⁵ These journals were part of a broader number of Western publications that had a new Left or reform socialist orientation, which included dissident authors or addressed questions of how the Western Left should support dissent in the Eastern Bloc.⁶³⁶ One of these publications, the British *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, aimed to provide information to Western leftist readers on developments among the opposition in the Eastern Bloc with a focus on its working class or socialist currents.⁶³⁷ In 1982 its editors translated and published

⁶³⁴ Ann Komaromi, *Uncensored: Samizdat Novels and the Quest for Autonomy in Soviet Dissidence* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 133.

⁶³⁵ AS 4619, 17; For example, in these years Roy Medvedev published several articles in *New Left Review*, in addition to Istvan Meszaros, Rudolf Bahro and Wolf Biermann.

⁶³⁶ See, for example, V. Graham, “The Western Left and Eastern Europe,” *Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory* 13(1) (1982), 128-137; other Western Leftist journals that were linked to dissent included *Socialist Register*, *L’Alternative* and the Austrian *Gegenstimmen*, Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*, 380-382, 402-404.

⁶³⁷ “Statement of aims,” *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 4 (1-3) (1980), ii.

Pribylovskii's anonymous review of *Levyi povorot/Sotsializm i budushchee* that was addressed in the previous chapter and issued detailed news of the Young Socialists' arrests.⁶³⁸ In a nod to the manner in which the Young Socialists benefitted from the samizdat/tamizdat networks established by the first generation of dissidents, Leonid Pliushch, a left-leaning *pravozashchitnik*, who emigrated from the Soviet Union to France in 1976 following a worldwide campaign for his release from forced psychiatric treatment, was a sponsor of the bulletin.⁶³⁹

The Young Socialists' view of a loose reform socialist unity that differed in form from Soviet-led proletarian internationalism occurred in tandem with the PCI's announcement of its policy of a "new internationalism" in 1976, which received publicity in *L'Unità*.⁶⁴⁰ This new internationalism was a continuity of the PCI's efforts to distance itself from the Soviet imposed direction of the international communist movement, and intersected with the Young Socialists' conception that internationalist solidarity existed among the reformist Left through its commitment to seeking alliances among European communists, and other socialist and reformist forces.⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁸ "A Review of the Journal *Left Turn*," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), 28-29; Oliver MacDonald, "Russian Socialists and Eurocommunists Face Trial Soon," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), 28.

Pribylovskii later stated that he did not remember who sent the document to the West so it is not possible to reconstruct the path it travelled or the associated contacts. Vladimir Pribylovskii, "Aleksii Sobchenko i evrokommunisty," (Aleksii Sobchenko and Eurocommunists.) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo* (Twice a Dissident: Collection of Memories of Vladimir Pribylovskii.) (St Petersburg: Zvezda, 2017), 95.

⁶³⁹ "Sponsors," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), ii. Pliushch was a notable Soviet figure in this loose international community of reform socialists. He attended both conferences referred to in this chapter that united Western reform Leftists and Eastern Bloc dissidents, and also had contacts with the French communist party. Leonid Pliushch, "Forward Together or Down Together," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto Conference Proceedings*, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 37-45; Valentine Lomellini, *L'appuntamento Mancato: La sinistra italiana e il Dissenso nei regimi comunisti (1968-1989)* (The Missed Appointment: The Italian Left and Dissent under the Communist Regimes.) (Milano: Mondadori Education S.p.A., 2010), 154; Valentine Lomellini, *Les relations dangereuses : French socialists, Communists and the Human Rights Issue in the Soviet Bloc* (New York: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2012), 120.

⁶⁴⁰ Joan Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party: From Togliatti to Berlinguer* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd. Publishers, 1986), 260.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 251.

The Young Socialists' picture of a loosely connected reformist Left was the product of the circle's access to resources that provided information on foreign political developments and non-Soviet leftist thinking. The circle's language skills, together with their access to IMEMO's *spetskhran* and connections to Moscow's samizdat networks, provided them with a detailed working knowledge of political movements outside the Soviet Union. This allowed them to gain a developed sense of the identities, concerns and debates of the reformist Left, which they considered themselves to be a part of. Their identification with the reformist Left abroad was as much the behaviour of solidarity seeking leftists as it was a search for external allies triggered by their isolation within their own society. However, despite the circle's uniquely detailed knowledge, their perspectives were limited by how closed Soviet society remained, which impeded their ability to understand the outside world accurately. This contributed to a rosier perception of the degree of unity and prospects for success that existed among the reformist Left than was the case in reality – an impression that was also influenced by the romantic and idealistic qualities of the circle's outlook that initially led them to dissent. What was particularly missing from the Young Socialists' perceptions of the reformist Left was understanding of some of the factors that contributed to its fragmented state, which included the degree to which its individual groupings were influenced by specific domestic issues and electoral concerns. The circle's lack of familiarity with the dynamics of other societies was an effect of Soviet isolation, which led them to overestimate the importance of developments in the Soviet Union and dissent in the Eastern Bloc to this loose community of solidarity. This was reflected in their assertion to *L'Alternative* that "the leftist forces of the West are foremost vitally interested" in publicising dissent in the Eastern Bloc because they "are suffering from their identification with the so-called 'real socialism.'"⁶⁴² This statement highlighted their hampered understanding of Western society and its different forms of media reporting and reception, which especially for the Eurocommunist parties that remained allies of the Soviet Union, made the issue a double edged sword.

The Young Socialists approached the many currents of reform socialist thinking with what Silvio Pons has termed "hierarchies of sense" that were formed by the distinctive concerns that motivated their dissent. This distinguished the

⁶⁴² AS 4619, 17.

particular composition of the circle's ideological influences from those of the reformist Left located outside the Eastern Bloc.⁶⁴³ In their wide reading, the Young Socialists encountered texts that had a substantial impact on the Western Left, but were not part of the Soviet canon. In the case of Trotsky's, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1940), they read a French edition that they had received through Sobchenko's connections in the late-1970s.⁶⁴⁴ Though in the West Trotsky was regarded as a primary theoretician for Marxist critiques of the Soviet Union,⁶⁴⁵ for the Young Socialists, he was a stopping point on the road to more influential critiques that addressed contemporary Soviet conditions. This trajectory could be observed in an article in *Sotsializm i budushchee* from 1980, when Kagarlitskii referred to Trotsky during a discussion of whether the elimination of private property conferred socialist qualities onto society. He acknowledged the scale of Trotsky's contribution to the analysis of the bureaucracy under socialism, but broadly concluded of his work, "As history shows, many of Trotsky's ideas turned out to be erroneous."⁶⁴⁶ Kagarlitskii followed these comments by returning to his broader question of whether the Soviet Union was a socialist state, and continued with admiring appraisals of the arguments contained in the above mentioned work, Kolokol/Union of Communard's *From the Dictatorship of the Bureaucracy to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (1962) and Mikhail Voslenskii's *Nomenklatura: Anatomy of the Soviet Ruling Class* (1980).⁶⁴⁷ This approach was in keeping with the other dissident Marxists in the Eastern Bloc after 1968, who were more invested in a "historical sociology" of really existing socialism on its own terms, rather than the earlier critiques or analyses that primarily emphasised doctrinal departures from Marxism that were more often favoured by the Western Left.⁶⁴⁸

⁶⁴³ Pons and Di Donato, "Reform Communism," 195.

⁶⁴⁴ "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov.;" In *Sotsializm i budushchee* a 1974 Paris edition of *The Revolution Betrayed* is cited, verifying Kagarlitskii's account.

⁶⁴⁵ Michael Cox, "Trotsky and His Interpreters, or, Will the Real Leon Trotsky Please Stand Up?" *Russian Review* 51(1) (1992), 89; the continued relevance of Trotsky to left-wing Western critiques of the Soviet Union can be found in Marxist journals from these years. See, for example: Ernest Mandel, "Once Again on the Trotskyist Definition of the Social Nature of the Soviet Union," *Critique* 12(1) (1980), 117-118.

⁶⁴⁶ Aleksandrovskaia, "Net sotsializm bez samoupravleniia," 5.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁶⁴⁸ Hugo Radice, "Marxism in Eastern Europe: From Socialist Dissidence to Capitalist Restoration," *Socialist History* (42) (2012), 44.

By contrast, *The Revolution Betrayed* made more of an impression on Kudiukin, who was struck by the similarity of his own views to the conclusions reached by Trotsky nearly forty years earlier, and recalled that this pushed him further, in the direction of analyses that classified the system in the Soviet Union as a form of state capitalism.⁶⁴⁹ He remembered his impressions at the time were that “we had in Russia either some kind of state capitalism or some new formation that was not envisaged by Marx. It was after capitalism, but not socialism.”⁶⁵⁰ The search for an adequate Marxist explanation for Soviet development was one of the most difficult issues that the Young Socialists grappled with during their years of dissent. In an indication of the prominence that it was accorded by the circle, in the summer of 1979, in the first words of the introduction to the first issue of *Levyi povorot* Kagarlitskii confronted this problem using the overly resolute tone that was characteristic of this popular-propaganda samizdat journal:

“Our worst internal enemy, said V.I. Lenin in 1922, is the bureaucrat, this communist, who works in a position with high responsibility, and then in a position with close to no responsibility...” (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, volume 45, p. 15). Since then this enemy has not only strengthened and multiplied, but has become the new master of the country, enslaving it. The recently formed division between the labouring “lower classes” and the bureaucratic “upper circles” exploiting them with the help of the state can in no way be called socialism. Therefore, Comrade Santiago Carrillo, the leader of the Spanish Communist Party, is obviously correct in saying that the Soviet Union is not a working class state, but is located somewhere between capitalism and socialism (*Marxism Today*, October 1978, p. 302).⁶⁵¹ This intermediate position of our country creates quite a difficult and peculiar political situation. In front of us is the question – forward or backwards? Towards genuine socialism or towards shamefaced, disguised, renamed capitalism?⁶⁵²

Despite Kagarlitskii’s confidently framed question of backwards, or forwards to an ideal socialism, even the sense of direction displayed in this question was far from settled among the circle. Kudiukin recalled that at the beginning of the 1980s, in a

⁶⁴⁹ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁵¹ *Marxism Today* was the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which had assumed a Eurocommunist direction in these years.

⁶⁵² Boris Kagarlitskii, “Nekotorye predvaritel’nye zamechaniia,” (Some Preliminary Remarks.) *Levyi povorot* (1) (Summer 1979), 1.

discussion with Kagarlitskii he argued that the dead end reached by Soviet society meant that the Soviet Union would need to return to capitalism for a time before moving forward to socialism once again, while Kagarlitskii suggested that the Soviet dead end could be conceptualised as a fence that encircled them, which the state could jump over somehow.⁶⁵³

These questions of Soviet development were considered by the wider community of the reformist Left at the conference “Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies” in November 1977 in Venice. The conference was dedicated to critically understanding the experience of “really existing socialism” and its implications for the Western Left. It was organised by *Il Manifesto*, an influential Italian new Leftist newspaper that was published by a splinter group from the PCI, which engaged critical voices from the socialist and communist parties, members of the extra-parliamentary left, student activists and feminists.⁶⁵⁴ This was an event that contributed to the Young Socialists’ perception that a loose internationalism that was supportive of Eastern Bloc dissent existed among the reformist Left, which they observed through the participation of Eastern European dissidents in the conference. They later noted to *L’Alternative* that the conference was an important event and a desirable form for the expression of Western leftist solidarity with dissent.⁶⁵⁵ The circle became aware of it through Kudiukin, who encountered a summary article in a Spanish newspaper that he read as part of his research at IMEMO that addressed the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party in the post-Franco years.⁶⁵⁶ The conference attracted high profile leftists, including dissident émigrés from the Eastern Bloc – among them, Leonid Pliushch, Jiri Pelikan and Istvan Meszaros, and a larger number of Westerners, many of whom had left the communist party due to its pro-Soviet positions and those who occupied autonomous leftist positions – including Franz Marek, Charles Bettelheim, Franco Fortini, as well as a considerable number of other public intellectuals and scholars.

Though the PCI was favoured as the leading international force for reform socialism in the late-1970s by the Young Socialists, it was regarded by most

⁶⁵³ Email correspondence with Pavel Kudiukin, 27 February 2020.

⁶⁵⁴ Maud Anne Bracke, *Women and the Reinvention of the Political: Feminism in Italy, 1968-1983* (London: Routledge, 2014), 53.

⁶⁵⁵ AS 4619, 17.

⁶⁵⁶ Email communication with Kudiukin, 27 February 2020; Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 492.

attendees of the conference as much closer to orthodox communism than they were. This was one of the reasons for the conference organiser and *Il Manifesto* director, Rossana Rossanda's characterisation of Eurocommunism in her opening speech as "that poor man's version of the Gramscian approach to revolution in the West."⁶⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the PCI was represented by the MP and historian, Rosario Villari, who sidestepped the leading question of the conference on whether socialism existed in the Soviet Union, and instead asserted, "The real and fundamental problem is the full development of democratic structures and of liberty."⁶⁵⁸

The discussions at the conference on the format of class relations within Soviet socialism, which resembled Kudiukin and Kagarlitskii's conversations above, demonstrate how the Young Socialists' ideological influences overlapped and their thinking fit into a shared intellectual framework with the reformist Left. In his conference address, Boris Vail', the Soviet dissident who had recently emigrated to Denmark stressed, "I and my co-thinkers in the USSR have for a long time been in no doubt about the correctness of the term state capitalism."⁶⁵⁹ Vail' had participated in the illegal Marxist circle around Revol't Pimenov in 1956 and spent long years in the camps due to his continued dissident activities that had become oriented to human rights.⁶⁶⁰ Vail's' analysis of state capitalism centred on the following factors: "(1) In the Soviet Union, the means of production is owned by the state...(2) The workers' labour power has remained a commodity...(3) Added value and the means of production are used by those who control the state without the producers having

⁶⁵⁷ Rossana Rossanda, "Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto Conference Proceedings*, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 6-7.

⁶⁵⁸ Rosario Villari, "Eurocommunism and Marxist, Socialist, and Democratic Currents of Dissent," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto Conference Proceedings*, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 161.

⁶⁵⁹ Boris Vail', "Marx and Lenin Read in the Camps," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto Conference Proceedings*, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 94.

⁶⁶⁰ Kathleen E. Smith, *Moscow 1956: The Silenced Spring* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 303. Providing insight into the rarer perspective of a *pravozashchitnik* who remained a socialist, Vail' proclaimed, "How is it that human rights are defended not by Marxists...Personally, I am convinced that because Marx lived in a society, England, where legality had some real existence, the problem of human rights was not posed for him as sharply as it is for us." Vail', "Marx and Lenin Read in the Camps," 98.

the slightest say or control over their disposal. (4) The state serves the interests of the ruling class.”⁶⁶¹ Another speaker, Fernando Claudin reiterated the difficulties involved in analysing the Soviet Union from a Marxist perspective, where the classification of state capitalism could be countered by the possibility that the Eastern Bloc regimes “are a new type of class society with antagonistic interests – one that is neither socialist nor capitalist.”⁶⁶² Claudin was a Spanish civil war veteran and a former high ranking communist, who in the late Stalin period had spent several years of his exile from the Franco dictatorship in Moscow. He was expelled from the Spanish communist party (PCE) in 1964 for his anti-Soviet positions that prefigured the party’s later Eurocommunist direction, and in the late-1970s was an astute critic of the Soviet Union from the Left, who displayed sympathy for dissent in the Eastern Bloc.⁶⁶³

The Young Socialists regarded Claudin as a Western advocate of their vision of “dissenting internationalism.” They concluded to *L’Alternative*, “We consider that in the Western press, the question of solidarity with our struggle [Soviet dissidents] was correctly delivered, in particular, by Fernando Claudin in the article “Soviet Expansionism” *Zona Abierta* (2-3) 1980.”⁶⁶⁴ In this essay, which was written in the aftermath of the invasion of Afghanistan, Claudin was highly critical of the Soviet Union, though his words also contained an implicit challenge to the PCI:

The Italian communist party, for example, launched at its last congress the idea of a new internationalism that must include all the currents of the Western Left along with the anti-imperialist forces of the Third World, but did not include the movements that fight for democracy and socialism in the countries of the East... If the Kremlin organises a conference of the communist parties that exercise dictatorship in the East together with the satellite communist parties of Western Europe, why can’t the Eurocommunist and socialist parties, along with other progressive forces of Western Europe, organise a large conference in which the democratic forces of the Polish, Czechoslovak, Soviet

⁶⁶¹ Vail, “Marx and Lenin Read in the Camps,” 94.

⁶⁶² Fernando Claudin, “Eurocommunism and ‘the antagonistic societies of a new type,’” in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, II Manifesto* Conference Proceedings, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 222.

⁶⁶³ Jose M. Faraldo, “Entangled Eurocommunism: Santiago Carrillo, the Spanish Communist Party, and the Eastern Bloc during the Spanish Transition to Democracy, 1968-1982,” *Contemporary European History* 26(4) (2017), 661.

⁶⁶⁴ AS 4619, 17.

opposition, etc. are also represented?... It is necessary, yes, a new internationalism, but against the two imperialisms.⁶⁶⁵

This internationalism was on display in *Il Manifesto* director Rossana Rossanda's opening of the "Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies" conference. Rossanda outlined the reformist Left's newly adopted support for dissent, "Solidarity with these comrades [in Eastern Europe] is a moral duty on which the European left has defaulted all too often...those who advance a non-apologetic view of the USSR are no longer disregarded. The isolation of internal dissent [in the Eastern Bloc] has...ended."⁶⁶⁶



Rossana Rossanda (Jacobin).

Rossanda linked the Western reformist Left's newfound solidarity with dissent in the Eastern Bloc to the above question of the existence of socialism in the Soviet Union. She argued that this question was almost as urgent for the Western Left as it was for dissidents in the Eastern Bloc and contended, "This is not an academic question...it affects our political options."⁶⁶⁷ Rossanda asserted that if the Eastern Bloc societies were new social formations that were not defined by capitalist relations, the Western Left needed to appeal to the countries' leaderships to encourage those societies' democratisation. But if the societies embodied capitalism

⁶⁶⁵ Fernando Claudin, "El Expansionismo soviético," (Soviet Expansionism) *Zona Abierta* 24 (1980), 13-14.

⁶⁶⁶ Rossanda, "Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies," 3, 6.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

of a new type, they should instead engage the opposition and promote class struggle in the Eastern Bloc.⁶⁶⁸ This concentrated introspection on the nature of the societies in the Eastern Bloc was a reaction to the failure of socialism to take hold in the West. Rossanda reflected:

The show trials, prisons, and mental asylums constitute only the tip of the iceberg. We view this as our problem, an aspect of our own future revolutions. We believe that the answer to the question, "Why have all the revolutions thus far come to grief on the key problem of the state and freedom?" must be sought in the same theoretical and political obstacles that have impeded the revolution in the West.⁶⁶⁹

As was expressed by Berlinguer at the beginning of this chapter, Rossanda shared the sense that Eastern and Western Europe were interconnected in their prospects for democratic socialism, which was a powerful motivation for the Western reformist Left to engage dissent: "if the societies of Eastern Europe will not change without revolution in the West, there will be no revolution in the West without a thorough critical examination of the experience of the societies of the East."⁶⁷⁰

While the conference was remembered by British and West German Leftists for Louis Althusser's intervention that the Left was gripped by a crisis of Marxism,⁶⁷¹ it also marked a fleeting highpoint for solidarity between the Western reformist Left and dissent in the Eastern Bloc. Their cooperation was formalised in a conference motion, which declared that its attendees would continue their "active solidarity" with dissent and "support the struggle for democracy [in the Eastern Bloc]," which they demonstrated in a concrete form through their appeal to public opinion to call for the GDR to release the East German socialist dissident Rudolf Bahro.⁶⁷² They

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., 7.

⁶⁷⁰ Rossanda, "Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies," 8.

⁶⁷¹ Louis Althusser, "The Crisis of Marxism," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto* Conference Proceedings, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 225-237; Alex Callinicos, *Is there a Future for Marxism?* London: The Macmillian Press, Ltd., 1982, 5; Elmar Altvater and Otto Kallscheuer, "Socialist Politics and the 'Crisis of Marxism,'" *The Socialist Register* (1979), 101.

⁶⁷² Rossana Rossanda, "To Conclude and Continue," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto* Conference Proceedings, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 245-246.

pledged to meet again six months later in Barcelona during the tenth year anniversary of the Prague Spring to discuss the origins and outcomes of the Czechoslovak reformist experiment.⁶⁷³ However, in an indication of the indeterminate nature of this community, this second occasion and other future meetings never materialised. The Prague Spring anniversary was instead recognised by the PCI, who held a conference at the Gramsci Institute's Centre for the Studies of Socialist Countries in Rome. The more ambiguous attitude of the PCI towards dissent, which was tied to its fraternal relations with the Soviet leaders, reshaped the conference's attendance where in contrast to the solidarity displayed at the *Il Manifesto* conference, there were no invitations extended to the former reformers of the Prague Spring or other names of Eastern Bloc dissent.⁶⁷⁴ The dissenting internationalism of the PCI organised reformist Left gathering was limited to the expression of ideas rather than active cooperation or solidarity. In a clear echo of Rossanda's above comments, Lucio Lombardo Radice, the mathematician and PCI Central Committee member who had attended the *Il Manifesto* conference as an observer, remarked how the Prague Spring demonstrated that the paths to democratic socialism in the East and West were "parallel" and "two interconnected processes."⁶⁷⁵

As Rossanda had acknowledged in her opening speech, this cooperation between the Western reformist Left and dissent in the Eastern Bloc was a recent development in the late-1970s. These interactions were the result of two longer term post-war phenomena that had occurred among the reformist Left in Western Europe: the loss of illusions about the authoritarian, anti-democratic qualities of the socialist regimes that had emerged from the Soviet experience,⁶⁷⁶ and linked to this,

⁶⁷³ Ibid., 245.

⁶⁷⁴ Francesco Caccamo, "The Italian Communist Party, the Italian Left, and the Prague Spring," in *Civil Society, the Mass Media, and the Transfer of Political and Cultural Processes in the 'Prague Spring' 1968*, eds. Oldrich Tuma and Marketa Devata (Praha: Ustav pro soudobu dejiny AV CR. 2011), 202.

⁶⁷⁵ Jiri Valenta, "Eurocommunism and Czechoslovakia," in *Eurocommunism Between East and West*, eds. Vernon V. Aspaturian, Jiri Valenta and David P. Burke (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1980), 174.

⁶⁷⁶ Brier, "Entangled Protest: Dissent and the Transnational History of the 1970s and 1980s," 32; Robert Horvath, "'The Solzhenitsyn Effect': East European Dissidents and the Demise of the Revolutionary Privilege," *Human Rights Quarterly* (29) (2007), 907.

the search for a program of democratic socialism.⁶⁷⁷ This connection was made clear by another conference that was held by this fledgling reformist Left community in early-1979. Hosted by the communist and socialist-dominated Florence City Council, it addressed the experience of dissent and democracy in Eastern Europe, and was attended by dissident émigrés and leading names of the Prague Spring.⁶⁷⁸ These conferences also illustrate how the Western Left's identities had come a long way from the early decades of the Cold War. The barriers that had long precluded contact with dissidents, which were not only physical but overwhelmingly mental for the Western reformist Left – many of whom were former communists, had fractured. The earlier ideologically imposed divide had primarily stemmed from the Western European Communist Parties' allegiance to the ruling parties in the Eastern Bloc as the vanguard of their societies. But the upheavals of 1968 in the East and West had challenged the orthodoxy of the socialist and communist parties of the old Left, and given birth to a diverse new Left that contained both radical Third Worldist trends and reformist currents that were critical of the Soviet Union and sympathetic to the dissident experience.⁶⁷⁹

For the Young Socialists, who were observing these developments of the late-1970s from the distance of the Soviet Union, the PCI was the most influential current in the reformist Left and the leading force of dissenting internationalism. While the circle admired figures such as Fernando Claudin, who held heavily critical positions towards the Soviet Union that were closer to Kudiukin and Fadin's own dissenting views, the PCI's fraternal relations with the Soviet Union and its status as a mass party – both factors which increased its ability to influence the Soviet leadership – made it a more visible and consequential force. The scale of its platform in Soviet society was apparent during Berlinguer's speech in Moscow on the sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution in 1977, when he declared to the Soviet audience watching on state television that democracy and socialism were inseparable and universal values.⁶⁸⁰ Anatolii Cherniaev similarly observed the

⁶⁷⁷ Faraldo, "Entangled Eurocommunism," 662.

⁶⁷⁸ "L'Unità Rejects Soviet Criticism of Dissent Seminar," *Radio Free Europe Report* (18 January 1979), OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁶⁷⁹ Victor Strazzeri, "Forging Socialism through Democracy: A critical review survey of literature on Eurocommunism," *Twentieth Century Communism* (17) (2019), 49.

⁶⁸⁰ Stephen Hellman, "The Italian CP: Stumbling on the Threshold," *Problems of Communism* 27(6) (1978), 43-44.

authority of the Eurocommunist parties in a 1976 diary entry, which recorded a scene of Andropov's displeasure at the French communist party's (PCF) defence of Pliushch, and his view of its negative effects on the mood of Soviet society.⁶⁸¹ These practical considerations of the PCI's comparative leverage over the Soviet leadership and its strong domestic support in the West outweighed closer ideological affinities and unabashed support for dissent in the Young Socialists' identification of the PCI as the main power centre in the West for dissenting internationalism.

Moreover, in conditions where the Young Socialists had sufficient knowledge to form an awareness of the differentiated positions of the Western reformist Left, but not enough to follow its regular developments and the more critical thinkers in depth, the PCI was a more immediate influence. It was embedded in everyday political and intellectual life in the Soviet Union and was part of the communist world. These were factors that contributed to its stronger influence on the Young Socialists than currents within the Western reformist Left that were more actively supportive of Eastern Bloc dissent. *L'Unitá* could be found in IMEMO's *spetskhran* and was publicly available as a limited circulation newspaper. Within the critical intellectual milieu that the Young Socialists occupied, there was a culture of reading these more liberal foreign communist newspapers to gain different perspectives to those contained in the Soviet press, which the circle was exposed to within their families or from their MGU years.⁶⁸² This long term association of the PCI with progressive views predisposed the circle to a natural identification of the Italian communists as leading allies of dissenting internationalism.⁶⁸³ The perception that a common agenda existed between the PCI and the Young Socialists was expressed by Kagarlitskii in *Sotsializm i budushchee* in 1981, in one of his propagandistic passages that wildly exaggerated the degree of unified support for Soviet reform socialism, "In 1980, Berlinguer called for the creation of a united front of democratic socialist forces across Europe. In our country this new unity began to take shape long before

⁶⁸¹ Excerpt from the Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev on 3 January 1976: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121194>.

⁶⁸² Vorozheikina recalled her father bringing *L'Unitá* home for the family to read. Email communication with Tatiana Vorozheikina, 17 June 2019; Smith, *Moscow 1956*, 286.

⁶⁸³ Email communication with Pavel Kudiukin, 27 February 2020.

that. We share a common enemy – the bureaucracy, and common goals – to democratise political life.”⁶⁸⁴

While practical considerations took precedence over ideological details, within the circle’s range of left-wing views, Kagarlitskii was especially attracted to Eurocommunism. Rivkin later recalled that for the younger socialist, the Eurocommunists were “cult figures” that they often argued about while walking on the snowy streets of Moscow.⁶⁸⁵ Kagarlitskii remembered that he found the Eurocommunists’ expositions were “radically different to the over chewed gum that had long since lost its taste of Brezhnevite agitprop,” and by contrast appeared both engaging and even radical.⁶⁸⁶ Kagarlitskii’s interest in the Italian Marxist tradition led him to Gramsci, who he quoted from frequently on the pages of *Levyi povorot* and *Sotsializm i budushchee*. He recalled that Gramsci’s work, which had provided the ideological foundations for Eurocommunism,⁶⁸⁷ was translated into Russian and was freely accessible, although only a small print run had been allocated to *The Prison Notebooks*.⁶⁸⁸

This contrasted with the difficulty of accessing information on right-wing social democracy, which was the ideological current favoured by Chernetskii and Khavkin. The effects were apparent from Khavkin’s statement to *L’Alternative* where, similarly to the articles of Eastern Bloc dissidents that were published in journals that were further to the left, which the circle had interpreted as an expression of solidarity with dissent above, he requested, “We would like such materials to be published in journals related to social democracy.”⁶⁸⁹ In fact in the case of the Italian Left, dissent in the Eastern Bloc received stronger support from the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) than the PCI. This was particularly evident during the conference on democracy and dissent in Florence in 1979 described above, which was co-organised

⁶⁸⁴ “Edinstvo Sotsialistcheskoi Mysli.” (The Unity of Socialist Thought.) *Sotsializm i Budushchee* (5) (April 1981), 1.

⁶⁸⁵ Mikhail Rivkin, “Otvety na voprosy P. Butova, chast’ 3,” August 2007 (Answers to the Questions of P. Butov, Part 3.): <http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1199098648.html>.

⁶⁸⁶ Boris Kagarlitskii, “Epokha tupikovikh diskusii,” (Epoch of the Dead End Discussion.) *Zhurnalnyi klub Interros “neprikosnovennyi zapas”* (2) (2007): http://www.intelros.ru/readroom/nz/2_52/1284-jepokha_tupikovykh_diskussijj.html.

⁶⁸⁷ Faraldo, “Entangled Eurocommunism,” 655.

⁶⁸⁸ Kagarlitskii, “Epokha tupikovikh diskusii.”

⁶⁸⁹ AS 4619, 17.

by Italian communists and socialists and attended by dissidents. During the proceedings, the socialists signed a declaration in support of dissent, whereas the communists held back, and instead declared that dialogue with the “opposition” would not be possible, if it developed to the detriment of the “whole of Soviet society.”⁶⁹⁰

The PCI was more restrained in its public pronouncements, and its support for dissent more often took the form of behind closed doors communications with the Soviets.⁶⁹¹ However, this approach stymied the possibilities for cooperation between the PCI and Eastern Bloc dissidents. By contrast, the PSI’s public support for dissent had positive domestic effects for the party as it asserted itself as a more desirable left variant than its communist challenger, who was connected to the Soviet state. But in spite of these considerations, defending the dissidents was not just a domestic weapon for the PSI, but a cause that their leaders demonstrated commitment to.⁶⁹² Chernetskii and Khavkin, who were limited to inconsistently accessible reading material and “the voices” to detect support for dissent, were unable to decode this full gamut of issues that affected developments within the Western Left. This inhibited their ability to accurately perceive the forms of solidarity that emanated from the social democratic movement, just as the PCI’s fraternal relations with the Soviet Union, which afforded it a high degree of visibility in Soviet society as a progressive ally, allowed the circle to over-identify the degree of the PCI’s sympathy for dissent.

During the Young Socialists’ early years of dissent in the late-1970s, the PCI was at the peak of its Eurocommunist energies. Berlinguer had tactically distanced his party from the Soviet communist model not solely from ideological conviction but also as an appeal to the wider Italian electorate, which in the short term appeared to be achieving success as the favourable international environment of détente

⁶⁹⁰ Valentine Lomellini, “The Dialogue that Never Blossomed? The Complex Relations between the Italian Left and Eastern dissent,” in *Europe in the International Arena in the 1970s*, eds. Antonio Varsori and Guia Migani (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2011), 295.

⁶⁹¹ Silvio Pons, “Documents – Meetings between the Italian Communist Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow and Rome, 1978-1980,” *Journal of Cold War History* 3(1) (2002), 159.

⁶⁹² Lomellini, “The Dialogue that Never Blossomed?” 293-295.

seemed to entertain the possibility of the PCI ascending to power.⁶⁹³ The Eurocommunist program included the acceptance of the parliamentary road to socialism and the legitimacy of democratic rights that were formerly considered “bourgeois” including the persistence of a multiparty pluralist system once the construction of socialism had begun. However, the PCI’s electoral defeat in June 1979 signalled the endpoint of its domestic rise. By the end of that year, the added weights of the failure of détente and the collapse of the alliance between the Eurocommunist parties sapped the PCI of its earlier energies.⁶⁹⁴ But the attractiveness of Eurocommunism for the Young Socialists outlasted the timespan of its electoral appeal in Italy, and as late as 1981, the circle described themselves as Eurocommunists to *L’Alternative*.⁶⁹⁵ However, as a new decade began, the Young Socialists’ attention was diverted from the Western Left to developments much closer to home, as a powerful strike movement that was achieving victories against the state sprung up in Poland.

Poland, August 1980. Eastern Europe in the Soviet Dissident Imagination.

In 1980 the joke went around Moscow that the Olympics were being held that year in place of the communism that Khrushchev had promised would be built by then.⁶⁹⁶ The Young Socialists later remarked more seriously to *L’Alternative* that in spite of the many jokes associated with the Olympics, the real litmus test for the mood of society was its strong backing of the Soviet leadership’s condemnation of the US-led boycott of the games, which they linked to a widespread imperial psychology that reinforced support for the regime.⁶⁹⁷ The system’s guaranteed job security and the benefits of the welfare state were also foundations for working class

⁶⁹³ Frederic Heurtebize, “Eurocommunism and the Contradictions of Superpower Détente,” *Diplomatic History* 41(4) (2017), 771.

⁶⁹⁴ Silvio Pons, “The Rise and Fall of Eurocommunism,” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Vol. 3: Endings*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 63.

⁶⁹⁵ AS 4619, 14.

⁶⁹⁶ Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 332.

⁶⁹⁷ AS 4619, 20.

docility, despite overall declining economic performance.⁶⁹⁸ The effects of the collapse of détente were experienced more painfully by the internationally facing parts of the intelligentsia. The prominent Americanist Nikolai Bolkhovitinov described the prevailing atmosphere of xenophobia as “reaction fitting the depictions of the city of Ibansk” the fictitious town of dissident Aleksandr Zinoviev’s brilliant satire of late Soviet reality *The Yawning Heights*.⁶⁹⁹ Creeping economic difficulties were reported by Roy Medvedev in the Western new Left publication *Socialist Register*, where he asserted that in 1979 the country had entered “a third period of ‘the Brezhnev era’” that was characterised by “renewed social and economic crisis.”⁷⁰⁰

In spite of these encircling difficulties and the deep freeze of anti-foreign reaction recorded by critical intellectual observers, at the beginning of the 1980s to many the Soviet system appeared indestructible. In the conditions of the last rounding up of dissent, the sentiment contained in the statement of Aleksandr Skobov, the Leningrad Oppositionist who was interned in a *psikhushka* in that year, reached its height, “All of the fighters against the existing system have always had some subconscious feeling that this system is eternal and that there is no force that can shake it, and this whole fight is useless.”⁷⁰¹ As the previous chapter concluded, the Young Socialists were struck by a similar mood at this juncture. The Eurocommunist leaders, who from the trappings of government could have influenced reform in the East, had stalled in their ambitions to take power in the West. Within the Soviet Union, the circle were of the view that neither liberal forces in the establishment, nor the wider dissident movement were capable of instigating reform, and as they told *L’Alternative*, “a change in the general spiritual climate in

⁶⁹⁸ Viktor Zaslavskii, *The Neo-Stalinist State: Class, ethnicity and consensus in Soviet society*, second ed. (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1994), 63.

⁶⁹⁹ Sergei I. Zhuk, *Nikolai Bolkhovitinov and American Studies in the USSR* (London: Lexington Books, 2017), 215.

⁷⁰⁰ Roy Medvedev, “The Soviet Union at the Beginning of a New Era: Stages in the Development of Society and the Political Leadership in the USSR,” *The Socialist Register* (1983), 196.

⁷⁰¹ Interview with Aleksandr Skobov, St Petersburg, 1991-1992, cited in Tatiana Kosinova, “‘Solidarność’: vzgljad s Vostoka,” (“Solidarity:” Views from the East.): <https://polit.ru/article/2006/09/05/Solidarność/>.

the country is needed” to transform the complacency of the working class into a force that they could harness to build a worker-intellectual movement for reform.⁷⁰²

But the Young Socialists were shaken out of their initial pessimism when they witnessed a strong workers’ opposition taking shape across the border in Poland in August 1980. Elements of the Polish intelligentsia and the working class had united in an atmosphere of popular unrest, which provoked a reformist course from above in the Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR). Nationwide strikes were initiated as workers protested the rise in meat prices and demanded wage increases.⁷⁰³ The Workers’ Defence Committee (KOR), a group composed heavily of intellectuals, assisted by publicising information about the strikes in the face of false reporting from the state media and offered financial and legal support to strikers.⁷⁰⁴ After a month of striking the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) was formed to coordinate the strikes, uniting strikers in Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot. Led by Lech Walesa, its demands included the right to form independent trade unions, which resulted in the founding of Solidarność in September 1980.⁷⁰⁵ The strikes forced the PZPR to the negotiating table. On 31 August 1980 Walesa and Mieczyslaw Jagielski signed the Gdansk agreement, which legalised the right to strike without reprisal and to form independent trade unions, the right to freedom of expression, and provided for pay increases and better working conditions. The following month Stanislaw Kania replaced Edward Gierek as first secretary of the PZPR and began to pursue a conciliatory and reformist course.⁷⁰⁶ The tactics of an intelligentsia-worker alliance appeared to have generated success.

The August strikes in Poland were greeted with enthusiasm among the wider Soviet dissident movement, which was accompanied by their introspection for the reasons for their own failure to create similar momentum. These reflections marked

⁷⁰² AS 4619, 20.

⁷⁰³ Jan Jozef Lipski, *KOR: A history of the Workers’ Defense Committee in Poland, 1976-1981* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 30-41.

⁷⁰⁴ J.B. de Weydenthal, Roman Stefanowski et al., *August 1980: The strikes in Poland*, ed. William F. Robinson (Munich: Radio Free Europe Research, 1980), 8.

⁷⁰⁵ “Chronology of Events,” in *From Solidarity to Martial Law: The Polish crisis of 1980-1981, a documentary history*, eds. Andrzej Paczkowski and Malcolm Byrne (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), xxx.

⁷⁰⁶ Matthew J. Ouimet, *The Rise and Fall of the Brezhnev Doctrine in Soviet Foreign Policy* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 144.

the continuation of a longer term discourse that had developed within Soviet dissent – that extended to parts of the wider critical intelligentsia – which at the level of politics, perceived Eastern Europe as a more advanced laboratory of reform with societal dynamics that gave rise to periodic popular protest against the authorities. Michael David-Fox has described how the Soviet superiority complex, which inculcated into Soviet citizens that their own society was the most advanced, was challenged when they viewed the more developed conditions of Eastern Europe.⁷⁰⁷ By contrast, in the 1950s and 1960s the *shestidesiatniki* remained convinced of Soviet socialism’s great potential, while at the same time collectively recognising the inspiration that could be drawn from the reformist impulses that had arisen in Eastern Europe. These took the form of intellectual trends concentrated around particular thinkers and intellectual circles, popular protests that some *shestidesiatniki* interpreted as being directed against Stalinism, and policy initiatives or broader programs that developed among party reformers.

Unlike dissidents’ links to the West that relied on breaching porous borders, Soviet society was connected to Eastern Europe through extensive bloc relations. The Moscow intelligentsia of the Thaw was acquainted with the cultural and intellectual life in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and the other states of the Eastern Bloc. Among many *shestidesiatniki* there was a feeling that they occupied a shared cultural space and had common agendas.⁷⁰⁸ The intellectuals of the Budapest School and the Warsaw School of intellectual historians shared the same sense of purpose and conviction of the superiority of the original “ideal project” of Marx over Western liberal democracy.⁷⁰⁹ In their quest to inject greater democracy into the Soviet model, these Central European intellectuals’ debates of the 1960s were structured by many currents that overlapped with those that were studied and

⁷⁰⁷ Michael David-Fox, “The Iron Curtain as a Semi-permeable Membrane: Origins and demise of the Stalinist superiority complex,” in *Cold War Crossings: International travel and exchange across the Soviet Bloc, 1940s-1960s*, eds. Patryk Babiracki and Kenyon Zimmer (Texas: University of Texas at Arlington: 2014), 32.

⁷⁰⁸ Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 284.

⁷⁰⁹ Michal Kopecek, “Socialist Democracy or Revolutionary Consciousness? The prospects and limits of ‘revised’ Marxism in Central Europe in the 1950s and 1960s,” (Conference Paper presented at The Countours of Legitimacy in Central Europe, New Approaches in Graduate Studies, European Studies Centre, St. Anthony’s College Oxford, 24-26 May 2002), 7, 9.

discussed by the *shestidesiatniki*.⁷¹⁰ Intra-bloc scientific cooperation stimulated links of travel between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that gave Soviet visiting scholars in depth knowledge of these neighbouring states. This extended to firsthand experiences of reform in action, which notably occurred among the Soviet high-ranking liberals stationed in the Prague office of the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* during 1968.⁷¹¹

By the 1970s and 1980s, Soviet intellectuals' views of Eastern European reformism had shifted. The voices that openly advocated following the experience of Eastern European reforms had become mainly limited to groupings of economists in Soviet research institutes and isolated currents of dissent. These Soviet scholars followed Eastern European economic thinking in institutional settings and some became advocates of Hungarian and Polish policy innovations in Soviet scientific journals.⁷¹² The Young Socialists' dedicated reading of Eastern European thinkers referred to above was an unfashionable current of dissent in these later years. Among the broader Soviet dissident movement, the protests that signalled stronger support for opposition that intermittently arose among intellectuals and workers especially in Poland aroused their envy, and replaced their admiration for Eastern Europe's earlier promise of party-led reform.

Meanwhile, many of the Central European socialist intellectuals of the 1950s and 1960s had also shed their illusions about Marxism, or their ideas had sharpened in oppositional directions. Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, who had published the well-known Djilas influenced *Open Letter to the Party* that inspired the Polish student protests in 1968, had become leading personalities of KOR and the Polish strike movement.⁷¹³ Gyorgy Bence and Janos Kis, who in the 1960s had been young

⁷¹⁰ Janos Kis and Gyorgy Bence, "On Being a Marxist: A Hungarian View," *The Socialist Register* (1980), 278.

⁷¹¹ Archie Brown, *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 162; Josef Pazderka, "'1968 Changed Us,' An Interview with Vladimir Lukin," in *The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968: The Russian Perspective*, ed. Josef Pazderka (London: Lexington Books, 2019), 164-165.

⁷¹² For the 1970s: Robert English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, intellectuals, and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 146; for the 1980s: Pekka Sutela, *Economic Thought and Economic Reform in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 126-128.

⁷¹³ Raymond Taras, "Marxist Critiques of Political Crises in Poland," in *The Road to Disillusion: From critical Marxism to post-communism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Raymond Taras (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), 85-87; Tom Junes, *Student Politics in Communist Poland: Generations of Consent and Dissent* (London: Lexington Books, 2015), 99;

intellectuals associated with the Marxist philosopher Gyorgy Lukacs and the Budapest School, were prominent figures in the Hungarian democratic opposition by the late-1970s.⁷¹⁴ The common elements of the spiritual journey travelled by those *shestidesiatniki* who had turned to dissent, and the concerns that united them with the Central European opposition, resonated among these activists of different national dissident movements. This was demonstrated through announcements of solidarity and proposals of cooperation from the late-1970s between such groupings as the Moscow Helsinki group, Charter 77 and KOR.⁷¹⁵ Though differences in experience were also felt. Hungarian dissidents perceived that the more liberal atmosphere under Kádár meant that they were dealing with other dilemmas connected to securing the broader support of society rather than the harsher level of repression that overwhelmed Soviet dissidents.⁷¹⁶

In conditions where personal communications between Soviet dissidents and the Central European opposition were stunted by the strength of the state security organs, samizdat-tamizdat circulation and foreign radio broadcasting were the main sources through which they gained access to each others' views.⁷¹⁷ The KOR activist Zbigniew Romaszewski, who visited Sakharov in Moscow in 1979 in a rare example of a personal meeting, noted that the esteemed dissident initially learned of KOR and Charter 77's solidarity with Soviet dissent from the radio. This distant form of reception underscored the disruptive influence of repression on these networks. The different social realities – that were not only driven by contrasting levels of

Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe*, 120; David Ost, "I didn't Sit Eight and a Half Years in Jail to Build Capitalism: Karol Modzelewski Obituary," *Jacobin* (2019): https://jacobinmag.com/2019/05/karol-modzelewski-poland-solidarity-democratic-socialism?fbclid=IwAR1amBwO8KyiqMUzCF1vXdAdaPecOpS4zk8xoVsOd_Dz5s1oXLpkp7egs5.

⁷¹⁴ Kis and Bence, "On Being a Marxist," 264, 295.

⁷¹⁵ Gordon H. Skilling, *Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981), 173; in his analysis, Brier provides a detailed list of the different forms of transnational communication and support that occurred among dissidents. Brier, "Entangled Protest," 21.

These links were especially concerning to the Soviet authorities and were reported by Andropov to the Central Committee in the lead up to Sakharov's exile to Gorkii. "Document 136, Andropov and Rudenko to the Central Committee," December 26 1979, in *The KGB File of Andrei Sakharov*, eds. Joshua Rubinstein and Aleksandr Gribanov (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 243-244.

⁷¹⁶ Kind-Kovács, *Written Here, Published There*, 110.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 105-106.

repression – that divided the experience of Soviet dissent from the flourishing Polish opposition were also acknowledged by Romaszewski: “When I told him about the circulation, the literary periodicals, or the activities of the TKN (underground lecture series), I began to feel like an alien from the other side of the Iron Curtain. Another curtain runs along the Bug river.”⁷¹⁸

The sense of a common agenda together with the greater successes of democratising movements in Eastern Europe made the years of upheaval in these societies before Perestroika – 1956, 1968 and 1980 – closely observed events filled with exhilaration and despair for the Soviet intelligentsia. Understandings of Eastern Europe as a laboratory for reform and popular protest first developed around the Polish October and the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. The workers’ riots in Poznan came up in Komsomol meetings, which first alerted the members of the Krasnopevtsev circle that was discussed at the beginning of this chapter, to the growing momentum of developments in Poland.⁷¹⁹ A few months later the events of the Polish October brought the reformist Wladislaw Gomulka to power, which was received enthusiastically by those critical Soviet youth who were supporters of de-Stalinisation.⁷²⁰ Some followed these events by learning to read Polish newspapers and they translated particular articles of interest and circulated them among friends.⁷²¹ Polish students studying in Soviet universities were also sources of information, who communicated their typically more seditious views to their Soviet course mates.⁷²² The Krasnopevtsev circle turned to Polish newspapers not only for news from Poland, but also to gain a different perspective on the Soviet Union in light of the revelations contained in the secret speech.⁷²³ On the suggestion of their lecturer in the historical faculty, K.F. Miziano, the circle also began to read *L’Unitá* for

⁷¹⁸ Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe*, 135.

⁷¹⁹ Budraitskis, *Dissidenty Sredi Dissidentov*, 36.

⁷²⁰ Smith, *Moscow 1956*, 281-282, 287; Zbigniew Wojnowski, “De-Stalinisation and Soviet Patriotism: Ukrainian Reactions to East European Unrest in 1956,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13(4) (2012), 820.

⁷²¹ Benjamin Tromly, “Brother or Other? East European Students in Soviet Higher Education Establishments, 1948-1956,” *European History Quarterly* 44(1) (2014), 95.

⁷²² Patryk Babiracki, “Imperial Heresies: Polish Students in the Soviet Union, 1948-1957,” *Ab Imperio* 4 (2007), 203.

⁷²³ Testimony of Nikolai Obushenkov, “Vlast’ i intelligentsia,” 119.

the same purpose.⁷²⁴ The Polish October was followed by the tumult of the Hungarian Revolution. Scattered protests against the invasion occurred in Soviet universities where critical youth interpreted the Hungarian events as a popular revolution against Stalinism that had been brutally suppressed by their own authorities.⁷²⁵ At Leningrad State University, a young Viktor Sheinis, who appeared in the previous chapter as one of the Young Socialists' informal mentors at IMEMO, penned the samizdat essay *The Truth about Hungary*, which conveyed his view that the invasion was a betrayal of Leninism.⁷²⁶

The chain of hopes and disappointments of the Thaw culminated twelve years later in the Prague Spring, which provoked optimism among the intelligentsia that the reforms that were occurring in Czechoslovakia would spill over into the Soviet Union. The *pravozashchitnik* Petr Grigorenko recalled how conversations about events in Czechoslovakia evoked profound interest within his milieu in this period.⁷²⁷ The *shestidesiatniki* viewed the more developed conditions of Czechoslovakia with its history of democratic traditions as a location from which a more humane socialism could spread across the Eastern Bloc.⁷²⁸ But the turning point of the Soviet invasion was a devastation for many. Following his six year sentence in the camps, the Krasnopevtsev circle member Marat Cheshkov, who entered the previous chapter as an informal advisor to the Young Socialists at IMEMO, remained a Leninist until 1968. He remembered, "These views lasted a long time – both in the camp and afterwards – until the end of the 1960s, when the tragic events occurred in Czechoslovakia."⁷²⁹ The blow that the *shestidesiatniki* experienced when the Czechoslovak reformist experiment ended was intensified by the fact that it was their own country who carried out its suppression. The weight of this responsibility was felt by seven Soviet citizens, who participated in the famous protest against the invasion on Red Square. The demonstrator Natal'ia

⁷²⁴ Ibid, 119-120; It is worth noting that K.F. Miziano, the son of one of the founders of the PCI who found refuge in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, was the uncle of MGU historical faculty student, Viktor Miziano, who introduced Kagarlitskii and Sobchenko 25 years later.

⁷²⁵ Tromly, "Brother or Other?" 96.

⁷²⁶ Smith, *Moscow 1956*, 295.

⁷²⁷ Petr Grigorenko, *Memoirs* (London: Harvill Press, 1983), 358.

⁷²⁸ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 284-285.

⁷²⁹ Testimony of Marat Cheshkov, "Vlast' i intelligentsia," 118-119.

Gorbanevskaia remembered, “We wanted to have a clear conscience.”⁷³⁰ For many of the *shestidesiatniki*, until 1968 Eastern Europe had represented a source of reformist hopes, whose stronger elements of progressive political culture had the potential to lead the Soviet Union further along the path of de-Stalinisation to a democratised socialism. The comparative dynamism of these societies, which the *shestidesiatniki* observed in these episodes of unrest and moves to reform, contrasted with the Soviet Union’s own failure to more systematically de-Stalinise and the seeming inertia of its population. The hardline political culture of their own leaders that culminated in the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia aroused bitter emotions and extinguished hopes for socialism among many in this generation after 1968.

The Polish strikes of 1980 generated excitement among a new generation of socialist dissidents. The former members of the Leningrad Opposition, who were all imprisoned in 1980, interpreted the events as a success for opposition to communism across the bloc, rather than as a turning point towards Soviet reform as had been more typical of the previous generation’s reception of the Prague Spring. Aleksandr Skobov (b. 1957) later reflected on this alignment:

For me personally, and I think, not only for me, the Polish Revolution of 1980 was an important event. Each generation of dissidents had one such event. For the first generation, this was the revolution in Hungary, for dissident human rights activists it was Czechoslovakia in 1968. But my generation did not remember anything, I was born a year after the revolution in Hungary...Such an event in one of the countries of the socialist camp demonstrated that the regime is still vulnerable, and a large opposition movement is possible. If it is possible there, then it is possible with us.⁷³¹

Skobov’s recollection and the following socialist dissidents’ reflections emerged from Tatiana Kosinova’s Memorial affiliated project “Dialogue: Polish-Russian Dissidents’ Connections and Interactions,” which was mainly carried out during the immediate post-Soviet years, and must be regarded carefully because of the difficulty of disentangling dissidents’ consciousness of the recent Soviet collapse from their

⁷³⁰ “‘Para minut svobody,’ Beseda s Natal’ei Gorbanevskoi,” (‘A Few Minutes of Freedom,’ A Conversation with Natalia Gorbanevskaia.) in *Vtorzhenie: Vzgliad iz Rossii. Chexhoslovakiia, Avgust 1968* (Invasion: The view from Russia. Czechoslovakia, August 1968.), ed. Josef Pazderka (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2017), 158.

⁷³¹ Interview with Aleksandr Skobov, St Petersburg, 1991-1992, cited in Tatiana Kosinova, “‘Solidarność’: vzgliad s Vostoka,” (‘Solidarity’: Views from the East.): <https://polit.ru/article/2006/09/05/Solidarność/>.

statements about the meaning that they attributed at the time to the appearance of the Polish strike movement.⁷³² According to Leningrad oppositionist Arkadii Tsurkov (b. 1959), who was serving his sentence in a camp in Perm in 1980, he viewed these events as a possible turning point for Soviet dissent, “The Polish strikes really raised our spirits during that time. I thought that if they managed to get rid of the communists in Poland, then that would become a strong platform for the democratic movement in the Soviet Union both practically and propagandistically.”⁷³³

The Young Socialists’ reception of the Polish events was more complex. In a manner that was reminiscent of the *shestidesiatniki*’s hopes in 1968, they calculated that the strikes could signal that Poland was moving towards democratic reform, which would eventually positively influence the Soviet leaders to pursue their own reformist agenda. But their perceptions were also tinged with an oppositional hue, and they considered that the Polish authorities’ concessions to the workers confirmed the correctness of the tactics of reform from above under pressure from below that they had formulated in their theoretical discussions. Though they continued to assert that the mood first needed to shift in the country, they remarked positively to *L’Alternative* that an underground movement “has great chances to fight for public support.”⁷³⁴ They saw the way forward for their own activities to be using tactics that mirrored the concerns of the strike movement: “Now a focus on society from below in everyday work is needed – exposing specific social evils: thefts by bosses, environmental and economic crimes, flagrant mismanagement and inefficiency, with the promotion of social alternatives.”⁷³⁵

By contrast, former socialist dissidents of the *shestidesiatniki* generation were more likely to view the strikes within the framework of the recurring cycle of Eastern European upheaval and Soviet invasion, and were thoroughly pessimistic

⁷³² Kosinova collected interviews from former Soviet dissidents between 1991-2005, where the majority were conducted in the early 1990s. She partially published the oral history testimony and her analysis in Russian in the polit.ru article used in this chapter, though her research was published fully only in Polish in Tatiana Kosinova et al., *Polski mit: Polska w oczach sowieckich dysydentów: 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980* (Krakow: Instytut Książki – Nowaja Polska, 2012).

⁷³³ Interview with Arkadii Tsurkov, St Petersburg, 1991-1992, cited in Kosinova, “Solidarność.”

⁷³⁴ AS 4619, 20.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

about the state of Soviet dissent after long years of struggle. In 1980, the Kolokol leaders referred to earlier in this chapter, Valerii Ronkin (b. 1936) and Sergei Khakhaev (b. 1938) had completed their camp sentences and exile, and were living the state-enforced 101 km away from Leningrad in the town of Luga, where they maintained connections to dissent and participated in the samizdat journal *Poiski*.⁷³⁶ Memories of the earlier Soviet invasions of 1956 and 1968 shaped Ronkin's response to the August strikes, and he recalled that he feared for the Poles in anticipation of an explosive situation created by Polish armed resistance to a Soviet invasion.⁷³⁷ Struck with exhaustion, Khakhaev's internationalist sentiments had waned, "In 1980 against the backdrop of the total failure of the democratic movement, a feeling of depression prevailed... There were too many disappointments, and there was no longer enough strength to be selflessly happy for the Poles."⁷³⁸



Valerii Ronkin and Sergei Khakhaev in 1976 (Livejournal).

The success of the Polish strikes reinforced perceptions that the *pravozashchitnik* current of Soviet dissent had reached a dead end. From the mid-1970s the Soviet authorities pursued a harder line towards opposition, gradually

⁷³⁶ Valerii Ronkin, *Na smenu dekabriam prikhodiat ianvari: vospominaniia byvshego brigadmil'tsa i podpol'shchika, a pozzhe politzakliuchennogo i dissidenta* (In the place of Decembers, Januarys come: Memoirs of a former brigadist and underground fighter, and later political prisoner and dissident.) (Moskva: Zven'ia, 2003), 373, 407-408.

⁷³⁷ Interview with Valerii Ronkin, St Petersburg, 1992, cited in Kosinova, "Solidarność."

⁷³⁸ Interview with Sergei Khakhaev, St Petersburg, 1992 and 2005, cited in Kosinova, "Solidarność."

decimating the human rights activists with successive arrests, internments in psychiatric institutions, exile and forced emigration that reached a climax at the end of détente.⁷³⁹ This increasing repression occurred alongside the movement's growing sense of its own isolation. Symptomatic of this thinking, as was detailed in the previous chapter, was the appearance of the samizdat journal *Poiski* in 1978, which involved the participation of many well-known names of dissent whose discussion was directed to a "reset" of the movement and a collaborative search for new methods. The Polish strikes brought this trend into even sharper relief, and a conversation occurred within the dissident movement in 1980-1981 about the reasons for the Polish success and their own failure.

The enduring perception that Eastern Europe was a space of comparable dynamics and experience, yet simultaneously a more advanced setting for the trends of reform and opposition, made the wide gulf that separated the turning points reached by the two movements in 1980 to be a watershed moment for Soviet dissent. Soviet dissidents devoted attention to the social conditions that had contributed to the growth of the Polish opposition, which can be viewed in distinct contrast from the atmosphere of the initial post-Stalin decades of the Soviet Union that shaped the emergence of legalist dissent. The uniquely unifying role of the Catholic Church in Poland and the shorter and milder form of communist rule in Poland were common features in their discourse.⁷⁴⁰ Though the more repressive regime in the Soviet Union and its negative impact on infrastructures of opposition came most clearly into focus in dissidents' accounting. The *pravozashchitnik*, Aleksandr Lavut (b. 1929) was in Butyrka prison awaiting transfer to the camps for his role as an editor of *Khronika* in August 1980. A year earlier, he had attended the meeting with the KOR activist Romaszewski in Sakharov's apartment that was mentioned above, when Romaszewski gave them Jacek Kuron's phone number. During those years, Kuron's telephone was permanently staffed by activists and served as KOR's communication point to receive local and international calls and to transmit information to other

⁷³⁹ Viktor Voronkov and Jan Wielgoths. "Country Studies: Soviet Russia," in *Dissent and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe: Origins of Civil Society and Democratic Transition*, eds. Detlef Pollack and Jan Wielgoths (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate, 2004), 105-106.

⁷⁴⁰ Elizabeth Teague, *Solidarity and the Soviet Worker: The impact of Polish events of 1980 on Soviet internal politics* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 173-175.

Polish activists, as well as contacts abroad.⁷⁴¹ Lavut recalled his impression: “This to us was the height of liberalism. [In our country] one chat on a line from abroad, one conversation about things like that – and the phone would be disconnected.”⁷⁴²

Though many dissidents attributed the different scales of repression that the movements encountered as a core explanatory factor for the different outcomes, more critical voices also came to the fore. Echoing the Young Socialists’ criticisms from the previous chapter, a samizdat author claimed that the *pravozashchitniki*’s inability to find wider support was the result of poorly chosen tactics. He derided their open and public stance that in his view only made the KGB’s work easier and the naivety of their appeal to legality: “Wherever laws are not applied – and are not even made with the intention that they should ever be applied – legalistic squabbling is only a substitute for more productive forms of thinking.”⁷⁴³ Vasyl Stus, a prominent figure in the Ukrainian national movement and a member of the Ukrainian Helsinki group also viewed the question of dissidents’ tactics as being at the heart of the issue: “In light of the Polish events, the weaknesses of the Helsinki movement become even clearer, in particular, its cowardly respectability. Had it been a mass movement of popular initiative with a wide programme of social and political demands, had it aimed at eventually taking power, then it would have had some prospect of success.”⁷⁴⁴ The relatively small number of scholars who have addressed the final years of Soviet dissent have emphasised the state’s increased policies of repression at the expense of examining this dialogue that occurred within the movement on its failure to win domestic support or affect change. This remains an underresearched period in the history of the dissident movement, which has attracted little attention as it fits uneasily into arguments about the contribution of human rights activism to the collapse of communism.

In their own comparisons of Soviet and Polish conditions, socialist dissidents were fascinated by the strikes as a display of class consciousness among workers. The *shestidesiatniki* generation of former socialist dissidents never returned to their own youthful programs for workers’ self-government, but some cheered on

⁷⁴¹ Lipski, *KOR*, 425.

⁷⁴² Interview with Aleksandr Lavut, Moscow, 1992, cited in Kosinova, “Solidarność.”

⁷⁴³ Ivan Ivanskii (pseudonym), “The Fourth Civil War in Russia,” 11 December 1981, cited in Teague, *Solidarity and the Soviet Worker*, 171.

⁷⁴⁴ AS 5062, cited Teague, *Solidarity and the Soviet Worker*, 178.

developments in Poland. The former dissident leader, Lev Krasnopevtsev, who was a factory worker in Moscow in 1980,⁷⁴⁵ was especially struck by KOR's discovery of the magic ticket that had eluded socialist dissidents in the Soviet Union – the path to a worker-intellectual alliance.⁷⁴⁶ But those who reached out to Soviet workers following the Polish strikes came to share the perception that Kudiukin had expressed two years earlier in his Program for the Economic Struggle of the Working Class, that in the immediate term the workers lacked the consciousness for political struggle. The former Kolokol leader Sergei Khakhaev later noted that in 1980 the Luga workers had “no chauvinistic moods, but there was no interest either, much less the desire to do something.”⁷⁴⁷ Zbigniew Wojnowski has attributed Soviet workers' immovability in the face of Polish unrest to the unifying qualities of Soviet patriotism and Soviet citizens' continued sense of their stake in the system at the end of the Brezhnev years.⁷⁴⁸

The Young Socialists, who were exponents of the dissident discourse that viewed Eastern Europe as a space of more advanced reformist and oppositional trends, asserted: “Of course, to reach the Polish level, we still have to grow and develop – it should be kept in mind that Poland was the least totalitarian society in Eastern Europe.”⁷⁴⁹ But the August strikes pushed them forward to a clearer program of action to carry out once the economic crisis that they were awaiting broke out:

The main lesson [of the Polish summer of 1980] should be the following: to find the basis for our activities in real, specific issues, and not the abstract, and to examine in detail the needs of society, to conduct specific criticism and put forward feasible programs. The opposition needs...concrete social, concrete political directions. Because so far, unfortunately, the Secretary of the District committee is incomparably closer to real everyday life than Sakharov and the *Helsinki*. And, of course, one of the lessons of Poland is the need to

⁷⁴⁵ “Lev Nikolaevich Krasnopevtsev”: <https://www.sakharov-center.ru/asfcd/auth/?t=author&i=237>.

⁷⁴⁶ Interview with Lev Krasnopevtsev, Moscow, 1992, cited in Kosinova, “Solidarność.”

⁷⁴⁷ Interview with Khakhaev, cited in Kosinova, “Solidarność.”

⁷⁴⁸ Zbigniew Wojnowski, “Staging Patriotism: Popular Responses to Solidarność in Soviet Ukraine, 1980-1981,” *Slavic Review* 71(4) (2012), 835.

⁷⁴⁹ AS 4619, 22.

combine the mass movement with the covertly created structures of social and political organisations.⁷⁵⁰

The Polish strikes elicited wild enthusiasm from the *semidesiatnik* Aleksandr Skobov. Following his release from forced psychiatric treatment for his activities in the Leningrad Opposition in mid-1981, he was electrified by the developments in Poland and again returned to dissent. He recalled his views at that time, which were more radical than the reformist-minded Young Socialists: "I saw this as the long-awaited popular revolution, which would overthrow the ruling class of the party-state bureaucracy and establish true socialism...the 'third way,' a system based on collective ownership of the means of production and self-government."⁷⁵¹ During his *psikhushka* internment, Skobov encountered the veteran social democratic-leaning *pravozashchitnik*, Vladimir Borisov, who had endured many long hunger strikes and episodes of forced psychiatric treatment until he was forcibly exiled from the Soviet Union in 1980.⁷⁵² Borisov was a founder of the Free Inter-Professional Association of Workers (SMOT) that contained views across the political spectrum, and aimed to replicate the activities of KOR.⁷⁵³ Skobov joined the organisation, whose lack of working class connections restricted its activities mainly to an information bulletin that was dedicated to reporting on socio-economic issues.⁷⁵⁴ He also tried to reach the workers on his own while he was employed at a ceramics factory in Leningrad after his release. Skobov unsuccessfully attempted to agitate on the theme of the Polish workers. He later remembered the Soviet workers' responses as being "imperial-chauvinistic" and filled with anger: "The bastard Poles! They do not want to live the way we live!"⁷⁵⁵ In December 1982 he was arrested after he graffitied dissident slogans in central Leningrad in support of arrested SMOT members, and

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁵¹ Interview with Skobov, cited in Kosinova, "Solidarność."

⁷⁵² The connections that developed among dissidents during their incarceration, which affected their inner development and stimulated new collaborations deserves more attention from scholars. In the case of the other Leningrad Oppositionists, Arkadii Tsurkov encountered the leading *pravozashchitniki* Natan Shcharanskii and Iurii Orlov during his sentence and Andrei Reznikov served time with Gleb Pavlovskii. Skobov, "Nash opozitsionnyi kommunizma byl dikovinkoi."

⁷⁵³ Viacheslav Dolinin, "The Free Inter-Professional Association of Workers": <http://solidarizm.ru/txt/smot.shtml>.

⁷⁵⁴ Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent*, 409-410.

⁷⁵⁵ Interview with Skobov, cited in Kosinova, "Solidarność."

was again subjected to forced psychiatric treatment until the general amnesty for political prisoners of Perestroika in 1987.⁷⁵⁶

Taking Action. Letter to the First Congress of Solidarność, 1980-1981.

Following the decline of Eurocommunism, the Polish opposition became the next great hope among reform socialists for socialist renewal coming from abroad to influence the Soviet Union. The August strikes and Solidarność's months of vibrant activism that followed gave new life to the Young Socialists' dissent, and took their activities beyond reading and discussion to action. In an analysis that was inspired by their earlier theoretical discussions, the circle identified the Polish workers' protests to be a response to the class exploitation and other systemic deformations of really existing socialism: "It should be emphasised that it was not economic difficulties that played a large role (they are more likely to be a background cause or a catalyst for events), but a protest against the class character of the social structure, incredible corruption, inefficiency of management, etc."⁷⁵⁷

The Young Socialists' interpretation of Solidarność as a force that could overturn these distortions and spearhead the democratisation of socialism in Poland was broadly shared by the loosely configured international community of reform socialists at the beginning of the 1980s. The PCI also held hopes for socialism with a human face appearing in Poland before the catastrophe of martial law in December 1981.⁷⁵⁸ Characteristic of this eager reception of the emergence of Solidarność in September 1980 was the statement issued by the editors of the British bulletin *Labour Focus in Eastern Europe*:

The great strike movement of August and the subsequent growth of Solidarity, the new national trade union, have unleashed powerful forces of democracy, socialism and working-class control...It is the socialist left that has cause to celebrate the workers' breakthrough in Poland. Here at last is the start of a practical alternative both to

⁷⁵⁶ Skobov, "Nash oppozitsionnyi kommunizma byl dikovinkoi."

⁷⁵⁷ AS 4619, 21.

⁷⁵⁸ Pons, *The Global Revolution*, 296; Pons and Di Donato, "Reform Communism," 193.

Stalinism and to capitalism, a real change to the status quo of East and West.⁷⁵⁹

Among some reform socialists, this optimism extended even further. The Polish émigré and European correspondent for the progressive US weekly *The Nation*, Daniel Singer had attended the *Il Manifesto* conference in 1977 and addressed the theme of Soviet dissent in his presentation, which in similar terms to the Young Socialists had criticised the *pravozashchitniki* for focusing on excessively abstract issues rather than outlining a concrete social program that addressed popular concerns.⁷⁶⁰ In his book of 1981 that focused on the opposition in Poland and the Soviet Union, he predicted that workers' movements would spread beyond Poland throughout the bloc, and a powerful socialist opposition would emerge.⁷⁶¹ The well-connected Singer, who was a guest at the founding congress of Solidarność in late 1981, recorded hearing "nationalist and reactionary notes" in some delegates' discussions. But he dismissed them as discordant voices of "old prejudices" and "new ones bred by thirty-five years of identification with the ruling regime and the Soviet Union" set against a diverse and essentially progressive mainstream.⁷⁶² The Trotskyist Fourth International, who had had contacts with Polish dissidents from the 1960s, maintained connections with leftist currents around Solidarność and therefore heard reports from Poland through this lens.⁷⁶³ Leftist views were present in the Polish strike movement as one of many currents, but they declined in influence by the mid-1980s.⁷⁶⁴ In this initial period when they were still strong, it was far from clear that Solidarność's successes were one of the signs that a broader shift away from the left was underway in Europe. Moreover, reform socialist thinking contained

⁷⁵⁹ "Editorial: Solidarity for Poland," *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 4(1-3) (1980), 1.

⁷⁶⁰ Daniel Singer, "Weaknesses and Potentialities of the Dissident Movement," in *Power and Opposition in Post-Revolutionary Societies, Il Manifesto Conference Proceedings*, Venice, 11-13 November 1977, trans. Patrick Camiller and Jon Rothschild (London: Ink Links Ltd., 1979), 21-23.

⁷⁶¹ Daniel Singer, *The Road to Gdansk: Poland and the USSR* (London: Monthly Review Press, 1982), 153-156, 188, 194.

⁷⁶² *Ibid.*, 261-262.

⁷⁶³ Bent Boel, "Western Trotskyists and Subversive Travelling in Eastern Bloc Countries, 1956-1989," *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 25(2) (2017), 241, 246-247.

⁷⁶⁴ David Ost, *Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics: Opposition and Reform in Poland Since 1968* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 7-8.

assumptions that affected the range of interpretations that its supporters were able to ascribe to political developments in the Eastern Bloc, and induced them to view an oppositional trade union as a breakthrough for the Left.

This view of Polish developments as a left-wing phenomenon was also influenced by the prominence of the left-leaning intellectuals, Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski as spokesmen for the Polish opposition. These Polish intellectuals regularly addressed themselves to left-wing audiences and received platforms in the reformist Left publications, *Il Manifesto*, *Labour Focus in Eastern Europe*, *L'Alternative*, and others.⁷⁶⁵ They also directly engaged the PCI. In 1976 Kuron wrote an open letter to Berlinguer urging him to intervene during the PZPR's crackdown on workers' protests against rising food prices, which the PCI leader the acceded to.⁷⁶⁶ Michnik later remembered his sentiments during this period that marked him out as a particularly astute practitioner of dissenting internationalism and increased his visibility within the loose network of reformist socialists, "I am a man of the left and I am going to speak with people of the left. And I'll demand that they take a stand."⁷⁶⁷

The view that the August strikes marked the beginning of democratic socialism developing in Poland was enthusiastically promoted by Kagarlitskii in *Sotsializm i budushchee*. The Young Socialists' well-connected status permitted close up reporting on Poland in the form of an interview with a Polish socialist. The samizdat publication's propagandistic energy was in high gear as the interviewer's questions were directed to learning about the strikes – their causes and the reasons for their success, the strikers' moods and demands, and the connections between workers and intellectuals – with the clear intention of providing information to help its readership replicate them in the Soviet Union.⁷⁶⁸ But the Pole also expected that

⁷⁶⁵ Robert Brier, "Broadening the Cultural History of the Cold War: The Emergence of the Polish Workers' Defense Committee and the Rise of Human Rights," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 15(4) (2013), 112.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 116-117.

⁷⁶⁷ Adam Michnik, *Letters from Freedom: Post-Cold War Realities and Perspectives*, ed. Irina Grudzinska Gross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 54, cited in *Ibid.*, 112.

⁷⁶⁸ "Protsess demokratizatsii neobratim: Interv'yu s Pol'skim Sotsialistom," (The Process of Democratisation is Irreversible: An interview with a Polish socialist.) *Sotsializm i budushchee* (2) (August-September 1980), 3-6.

a “revival and democratisation of the PZPR” would soon be underway,⁷⁶⁹ which was reflective of the reformist aspirations of party members who had links to Solidarność, and the critical attitudes held by many PZPR rank and file towards the leadership.⁷⁷⁰

The Polish socialist considered, “This is a new Prague Spring – not from above, but from below,” in an acknowledgment of the central role of the August strikes in stimulating the internal party reform that he was predicting.⁷⁷¹ These statements from a Polish source countered official Soviet narratives of an anti-Soviet nationalist uprising, and encouraged the Young Socialists’ wider milieu to interpret what was happening in Poland as a reform socialist event on the scale of the Prague Spring. Though unlike the Czechoslovak reforms whose impetus came from inside the party, events in Poland were following the pattern that the Young Socialists had earlier advocated of reform from above under pressure from below. The Polish strikes indicated that points of vulnerability were present in the really existing socialist regimes, at a time when the Soviet system had begun to appear thoroughly immovable to the maturing Young Socialists, whose activities had continued without conceivable results for three years. They initiated real hope within this milieu that the same impulses could be awakened in Soviet society, even if it took place on a long timescale. Kagarlitskii’s propaganda hit home in this issue with the Polish socialist’s assurance, “Take note: the democratisation of political and economic life in the Soviet Union is equal to the possibility of democratic change in Poland.”⁷⁷²

Solidarność’s strike victories and civil society initiatives in 1980-1981 were eagerly followed by the Young Socialists, whose discussions were enhanced by the inclusion of a new participant in their circle who was a regular visitor to Poland. Nikolai Ivanov (b. 1948) was introduced to the circle’s conspiracy in 1979 by his colleague at the Institute of History of the Belarusian Academy of Sciences, Oleg Bukhovets, who had been a dorm mate in room 242 during the Young Socialists’ MGU

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁷⁷⁰ Jakub Szumski, “The Party, Solidarity, or Both? Transformation of Political Identities in 1980-1981 Poland,” in *Post-1945 Poland: Modernities, Transformations and Evolving Identities* (Warsaw: POMP, 2016), 162-164.

⁷⁷¹ “Protsess demokratizatsii neobratim,” 6.

⁷⁷² Ibid., 6.

years and was posted to Minsk in 1977.⁷⁷³ During the course of the friendship that developed between the two young scholars, Bukhovets sensed that Ivanov shared his friends' critical attitudes, and he told the older Belarusian of the wall newspaper affair at MGU and Fadin and Kudiukin's new dissenting endeavours.⁷⁷⁴

Ivanov's critical views were more novel in the provincial setting of Minsk than in cosmopolitan Moscow. At that time, he held neo-Leninist views,⁷⁷⁵ though in the conditions of the Soviet periphery, he seized on Belarusian national culture and identity as a language of resistance to signal his non-conformism and discontent with Brezhnev era socialism.⁷⁷⁶ The tendency for scholars and Cold War era commentators to treat human rights, nationalist and socialist views as discrete currents in the Soviet dissident movement means that dissidents who fused the celebration of national cultures with socialist perspectives have remained an under-researched phenomenon. Rather than rejecting socialism in favour of nationalist ideologies, these dissidents maintained that the suppression of national cultures was part of the wider deformation of socialism.⁷⁷⁷

Symptomatic of the Sovietisation policies that emanated from the centre, the status of the Belarusian language and culture was declining in the Belarusian public sphere.⁷⁷⁸ It had become a reserve for those with critical views, which Ivanov expressed primarily through his activities as a historian.⁷⁷⁹ His first book, *Critique of*

⁷⁷³ Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin, Moscow, July 2019.

⁷⁷⁴ Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, Wroclaw, 19 September 2016

⁷⁷⁵ Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, Wroclaw, 8 December 2016.

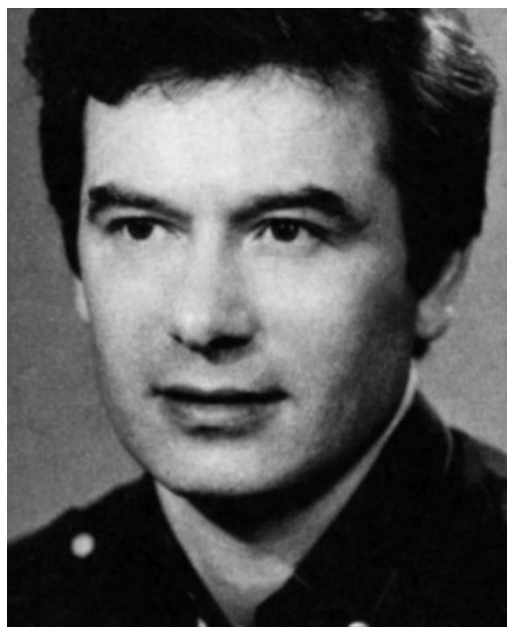
⁷⁷⁶ Although Vladimir A. Kozlov associates this word explicitly with the dissident movement, I understand nonconformism to precede dissent on a spectrum and view it as less critical and less organised in character, which describes Ivanov's views and activities before his participation in the Young Socialists. Following his acquaintance with the Young Socialists, his outlook and actions transitioned to dissent. Vladimir A. Kozlov, "The Meaning of Sedition," in *Sedition: Everyday resistance in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, eds. Vladimir A. Kozlov, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Sergei V. Mironenko (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 25-26.

⁷⁷⁷ Budraitskis provides an initiating survey of these socialist dissidents, who were generally from Ukraine and the Baltic states. Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov*, 71-74.

⁷⁷⁸ David R. Marples, *Belarus: A denationalised nation* (Amsterdam: Overseas Publishers' Association, 1999), 19-23.

⁷⁷⁹ Tatsiana Astrouskaia, *Cultural Dissent in Soviet Belarus: Intelligentsia, Samizdat and Non-Conformist Discourses, 1968-1988* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2019), 166-167.

the Falsification of the History of the Construction of Socialism in the BSSR, 1921-1937 (1980), which emerged from his postgraduate dissertation of 1977, made non-Soviet histories of Soviet Belarus and scholarly arguments of the destruction of non-Russian national cultures under Soviet rule more accessible to Belarusian scholars.⁷⁸⁰ This practice of engaging with foreign scholarship under the pretext of criticising its ideological perspectives was a typical device for evading censorship and bringing new ideas into circulation in late-Soviet academia.⁷⁸¹ Ivanov found another outlet for his “other-thinking” as a young associate professor at the Belarusian State University in the late 1970s, where he delivered his lectures on the history of the Soviet Union in the Belarusian language.⁷⁸²



Nikolai Ivanov (IPN).

Ivanov’s association with the Young Socialists radicalised his views and took him down the path of dissent. He was introduced to Fadin and Kudiukin in 1979 by Bukhovets during one of their periodic trips to Moscow to carry out research in the

⁷⁸⁰ For example, Ivanov introduced Robert Conquest’s work on Soviet nationalities policies to the Belarusian audience and the Western studies of the Belarusian national movement made by Ivan Lubachko (1972) and Nicholas Vakhar (1956), see N.L. Ivanov, *Kritika fal’sifikatsii istorii sotsialisticheskogo stroitel’sтва v BSSR: 1921-1937 gg.* (The Critique of the Falsification of the History of the Construction of Socialism in the BSSR, 1921-1937.) (Minsk: Nauka i tekhnika, 1980), 116, 131.

⁷⁸¹ Jane and William Taubman, *Moscow Spring* (New York: Summit Books, 1989), 58.

⁷⁸² Interview with Ivanov, 8 December 2016.

central archives. The luxurious setting of Fadin's home on Kutuzovskii prospekt and the delicacies and fine alcohol that accompanied the Young Socialists' kitchen talks impressed the young provincial scholar, but what made the greatest impression on him was the erudition of their political discussions that stemmed from their elite access to Moscow's incomparable intellectual resources.⁷⁸³ Samizdat production and its reader networks were largely Moscow-centric, while the lengthy lines outside the reading rooms of Moscow and Leningrad libraries attested to the concentration of scholarly literature in the two capitals.⁷⁸⁴

The provincial scholar's association with the circle opened a channel for his own access to these materials. The samizdat that he received from Fadin and Kudiukin, which detailed a Soviet past that was hitherto unknown to him as a professional historian made an enormous impression. He was deeply affected by the revelations of the Red Terror during the Russian civil war and the establishment of the Solovki camp in the 1920s. Ivanov recalled of the Gulag Archipelago, "Every single word of this book, it was...just a great event."⁷⁸⁵ In Moscow after his days in the archives, Ivanov was introduced to the circle's conspiratorial methods when he met Fadin and learned KGB counter surveillance techniques from the more experienced dissident, which involved Fadin tailing him and challenging him to escape his surveillance.⁷⁸⁶ His experience of dissident life in Moscow emboldened him to create a samizdat journal in Minsk in 1979 with Bukhovets and their older colleague, Zolotnikov,⁷⁸⁷ which Kudiukin also reproduced and distributed in Moscow.⁷⁸⁸ Ivanov recalled his mood: "as a Belarusian...it was very important for me to tell the world that our nation is not silent – that we also have people who do not think like communists."⁷⁸⁹ The trio's samizdat journal, *Novaia nasha niva*, whose title was a reference to turn of the century newspaper *Nasha niva* (Our Cornfield), which had been dedicated to deepening Belarusian cultural identity, had four to five issues

⁷⁸³ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁴ Aleksandr Lukin, *The Political Culture of the Russian "Democrats"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 151; David L. Ruffley, *Children of Victory: Young Specialists and the Evolution of Soviet Society* (London: Praeger, 2003), 154.

⁷⁸⁵ Interview with Ivanov, 8 December 2016.

⁷⁸⁶ Interview with Ivanov, 19 September 2016.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁸ Interview with Kudiukin.

⁷⁸⁹ Interview with Ivanov, 8 December 2016.

that were circulated among trusted friends.⁷⁹⁰ *Novaia nasha niva* was written in Belarusian language and promoted the Belarusian cultural heritage with profiles of notable historical figures and independent accounts of the nation's history.⁷⁹¹

In 1980, Ivanov's dissident activities took on a transnational form as he began to collaborate with the Polish opposition. He had made regular journeys to Poland from 1978 under the aegis of Polish-Soviet scientific cooperation at the University of Wrocław, and married a Pole a year later with whom he had a son in May 1980.⁷⁹² His experience as a recurrent visiting scholar in Poland notably contrasted with the rigidly structured conditions typical of regular Soviet tourism in Eastern Europe that prevented free and open contact with local populations.⁷⁹³ Though the extensive ties that connected the Eastern Bloc included large numbers of Soviet tourists travelling to Eastern Europe,⁷⁹⁴ the "outer empire" remained distant, as was revealed by the label *malen'kaia zagranitsa* (small abroad) that was used in Soviet popular parlance.⁷⁹⁵ This was a contributing factor to the Polish workers' movement attracting little sympathy or understanding among the Soviet population outside sections of the intelligentsia, while Ivanov's unusually close connections sparked his participation in another Eastern Bloc opposition. Following his awakening to dissent in Moscow and the events of the Polish August that brought new possibilities for

⁷⁹⁰ Andrew Wilson, *Belarus: The last European dictatorship* (Cornwall: MPG Books Group, 2011), 83-84.

⁷⁹¹ This is based on a survey of the second issue: *Novaia nasha niva* (2) (October-December 1979), 1-29, personal archive of Nikolai L'vovich Ivanov.

⁷⁹² "Kwestionariusz osobowy dla cudzoziemców: składających podanie o zezwolenie na pobyt stały w Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej," (Foreigners' Personal Questionnaire: Application for permanent residency permit in the Polish People's Republic.), 05.09.1984. Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), Warsaw. Personal file of Nikolai Ivanov, IPN WR 237/2642 4, 15-16.

⁷⁹³ Robert Hornsby, "Strengthening Friendship and Fraternal Solidarity: Soviet Youth Tourism to Eastern Europe under Khrushchev and Brezhnev," *Europe-Asia Studies* 71(7) (2019), 1220.

⁷⁹⁴ Within the rich historiography on Soviet tourism, scholars have instead asserted that the high levels of Soviet tourist travel to Eastern Europe meant that the region was often viewed through Soviet eyes as a point of comparison to their own society. See: John Bushnell, "The New Soviet Man Turns Pessimist," in *The Soviet Union since Stalin*, eds. Stephen F. Cohen, Alexander Rabinowitch and Robert Sharlet (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 191-194; Anne E. Gorsuch, *All of this is your World: Soviet Tourism at Home and Abroad after Stalin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 105.

⁷⁹⁵ Andrei Kozovoi, "Eye to Eye with the "Main Enemy:" Soviet Youth Travel to the United States," *Ab Imperio* 2 (2011), 224.

oppositional activities in Poland, he made contact with Solidarność activists. Though his Soviet citizenship made many Poles understandably cautious, Ivanov formed connections and later a close friendship with Kornel Morawiecki, who was a Solidarność organiser and co-edited *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* (Bulletin of Lower Silesia).⁷⁹⁶ The Polish independent press had exploded in 1980, when its reach expanded to hundreds of thousands of readers – a publishing capability and audience beyond the wildest dreams of Soviet samizdat publishers.⁷⁹⁷ Ivanov began to contribute to *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* as its “Soviet correspondent” under the pseudonyms I. Mickiewicz, Jan Mickiewicz, W.S. Sidorow and Polak zza Buga on a schedule that was in sync with his trips to Poland.⁷⁹⁸

From Moscow, the Young Socialists cheered on the growth of Polish civil society as the milestone of Solidarność’s founding congress was approaching in September 1981. Kudiukin had learned Polish at MGU out of interest in Slavic archaeology, which had a rich literature in that language. He once again broke out his university language textbooks to read Polish language reporting on Solidarność.⁷⁹⁹ The circle also read detailed news on Poland in the white TASS reporting that was accessible at IMEMO, while the Paris-based Soviet émigré journal *Kontinent* that had close links to Polish intellectuals became another important source of information. These materials were a source for their discussions on how to apply the Polish experience to Soviet conditions, which confirmed the direction of a program of social demands to build a broad underground coalition. Yet their prospects seemed no better than in 1978 when Kudiukin admitted that the workers lacked consciousness, and actions to approach them contained even greater certainty of arrest in the climate of heightened repression. This intensified their gaze abroad, to forces of change from outside to whom they could communicate

⁷⁹⁶ Krzysztof Brzechczyn, “Freedom, Solidarity, Independence: Political Thought of the Fighting Solidarity Organisation,” in *The Idea of Solidarity: Philosophical and social contexts*, ed. Dariusz Dobrzanski (Washington DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2011), 160.

⁷⁹⁷ Siobhan Doucette, *Books are Weapons: The Polish Opposition Press and the Overthrow of Communism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017), 13-14.

⁷⁹⁸ He published six articles in *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* between October 1980 and the start of martial law in December 1981: *Biuletyn Dolnośląski*, AO V/469, Archive of the Karta Centre, Warsaw. On Ivanov’s pseudonyms: “Spotkanie z Mikołajem Iwanowem,” (Meeting with Nikolai Ivanov.) *Bibik* 14(21) (November 2010), 1.

⁷⁹⁹ Interview with Kudiukin, 7 November 2016.

encouragement, and they seized upon Ivanov's connections to Poland. They selected the occasion of Solidarność's founding congress in Gdansk, where the trade union's leadership and organisational structures would take formal shape, for their internationalist greetings to have maximum impact.⁸⁰⁰

On one reading, this expression of dissenting internationalism was the product of the bleak forecast for dissident activities in their own society, which restricted them to contacting Solidarność in the hope that democratisation in Poland could influence a turn to reform in the Soviet Union. It was an uncomfortable echo of the *pravozaschitniki's* turn to the West a decade earlier. But these actions also arose from the circle's location at the intersection of the leftist traditions of internationalism and Eastern Bloc dissent, whose national dissident communities had developed a sense of mutually shared experience that included a broadly common agenda, which was acknowledged through expressions of solidarity from the late-1970s. These elements of the circle's identity underpinned their decision to compose a letter: Ivanov later recalled that Fadin had argued for the necessity of communicating to Poland that there were people in the Soviet Union for whom workers' rights remained a vital cause, who shared the aspirations of Solidarność.⁸⁰¹

The process of drafting and delivering the letter to Solidarność brought the circle's conspiratorial measures back in force. Following the decision to carry out this act of dissent, Ivanov's contact with Fadin and Kudiukin transformed from a common friendship to an underground association. They ceased speaking on the phone and only met in pre-appointed locations, while Olga Ivanova acted as the "chief conspiratorial liaison" between them.⁸⁰² On the day the letter was composed, Fadin and Ivanov travelled for hours in the metro, hastily changing their route several times until they were assured that they were not being followed. It was drafted in code by the pair in a Moscow park, and Ivanov memorised it before his trip to Poland. Once in Wrocław, he typed the letter up and transferred it to Morawiecki, who translated it into Polish and delivered it.

⁸⁰⁰ George Sanford, *The Solidarity Congress, 1981: The great debate* (Houndmills: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990), 1.

⁸⁰¹ Nikolai Ivanov, "'Solidarnost' i Sovetskie Dissidenty," (Solidarity and Soviet Dissidents.) *Novaia Pol'sha*: <http://www.novpol.ru/index.php?id=523>.'

⁸⁰² *Ibid.*

The Warsaw branch of *Solidarność* received the Young Socialists' letter via Telex in late August 1981.⁸⁰³ The trade union published it in the week leading up to the congress in their nationwide bulletin, which was distributed to the editorial offices of trade union magazines, regional *Solidarność* structures and its factory committees.⁸⁰⁴ The short letter lauded the more advanced state of the Polish opposition, "We can only dream of what the Polish proletariat has achieved," and carried the steady internationalist refrains, "Your struggle for the interests of the working people of Poland is also our struggle... Long live the international solidarity of free workers!"⁸⁰⁵ To increase the authority of the letter and its impact, Fadin and Ivanov had signed it "Organisation of the Committee for the Creation of Free Trade Unions in the USSR," though such a structure was entirely aspirational in character. In the most explicit statement that illustrated the circle's dissenting internationalism, they declared:

Now this is only a dream, but the day will come (we firmly believe in this!), when Polish and Russian workers will go hand in hand to meet democracy and progress. Today *Solidarność* is a signpost to us. At the cost of persecutions, blood and sufferings the Polish workers have broken the shackles of the regime trade unions.⁸⁰⁶

The Young Socialists' letter was part of a larger volume of correspondence sent by Soviet dissidents to *Solidarność* on the occasion of its founding congress and in the months beforehand. The scale of attention that *Solidarność* attracted was an

⁸⁰³ The British embassy in Warsaw internally circulated and discussed quotations translated into English language of the Young Socialists' letter after it was reported to them that *Solidarność* had received this letter in a telex signed by the Founding Committee of Free Trade Unions in the USSR. See: "Document 77: Mr Joy (Warsaw) to Lord Carrington, 10 September 1981, 2.05 pm," in *Documents on British policy overseas: The Polish Crisis and Relations with Eastern Europe, 1979-1982*, eds. Isabelle Tombs and Richard Smith (London: Routledge, 2017), 190-191.

⁸⁰⁴ "Posłanie do I Krajowego Zjazdu 'Solidarności'" (Letter to the Founding Congress of *Solidarność*.) *Agencja Solidarność* (34) (28-30 August 1981), 22. Open Society Archives, HU OSA LibSpColl_Pokolenie-00116: <https://catalog.osaarchivum.org/catalog/osa:a32eec4d-fc6e-45ac-9f24-e0eced474150>.

⁸⁰⁵ Morawiecki published the Russian original and the Polish translation of the letter in *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* and reported that it had been received "from our regular correspondent in Moscow, W.S. Sidorow." The Russian original is relied on for translation in this chapter. "Posłanie I vsepolskomu s'ezdu 'Solidarnosti'," (*Letter to the First Nationwide Congress of Solidarność*.) *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* 7-8/26-27 (July-August 1981), 3-4, AO V/469, Archive of the Karta Centre, Warsaw.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

expression of the collective euphoria felt by the dissident communities across the Eastern Bloc for the inroads made by the Polish opposition for broader change. The Hungarian democratic opposition focused almost entirely on Poland in their major samizdat/tamizdat publications of 1980-1981. Though leading Hungarian dissidents' passports had been confiscated, younger intellectuals eagerly made contact with the Poles.⁸⁰⁷ In late-August 1980, Sakharov and nine other pravozashchitniki had sent a letter of support to the strikers.⁸⁰⁸ A few months later the Russian Committee to Aid Polish Workers formed and pledged to agitate among Soviet workers on behalf of Poles. A declaration of solidarity with Polish workers from SMOT was published in the Paris émigré publication, *Russkaya mysl'* (Russian Thought).⁸⁰⁹ RL/RFE played an important role in disseminating these messages and other instances of working class discontent and pro-Solidarność leaflets at Soviet higher education institutions in its broadcasts to Poland.⁸¹⁰ The Polish success became a focal point for the mutual solidarity that had crystallised among dissident communities in the Eastern Bloc. On the fourth day of the congress, an overwhelming number of delegates voted to issue their own provocative call of dissenting internationalism:⁸¹¹

To the Working people of Eastern Europe. Delegates of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity assembled at their First Congress in Gdansk send the workers of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Romania, Hungary and all peoples of the Soviet Union their greetings and words of support. At the first independent trade union in our post-war history, we are deeply aware of the community of our fate. We wish to assure you that in spite of the lies spread in your countries, we are the authentic representation of 10 million workers, which has emerged as the result of workers' strikes. Our aim is the improvement of the living

⁸⁰⁷ Ferenc Laczó, "Between Authoritarian Self-Legitimation and Democratic Opposition. The Variety of Hungarian Reactions to the Rise of Solidarność and the Polish Crisis of 1980-1981," *Remembrance and Solidarity: Studies in Twentieth Century European History* (1) (December 2012), 97.

⁸⁰⁸ Roman Solanchyk, "Russian Groups Issues Proclamation of Support for Polish Workers," *Radio Liberty Research* 24 July 1981, OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 57, folder, Samizdat.

⁸⁰⁹ "Boriushchimsya rabochim v Pol'she ot imeni svobodnogo mezhproufessional'nogo ob'edineniia trudiashchikhia 'SMOT,'" (To the fighting workers in Poland from the Free Inter-professional Union of Workers.) *Russkaya Mysl'* (Russian Thought.) No. 3325 (September 1980), 3, OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 57, folder, Samizdat.

⁸¹⁰ Solanchyk, "Russian Groups Issues Proclamation of Support for Polish Workers," 7.

⁸¹¹ Sanford, *The Solidarity Congress, 1981*, 68.

standards of all working people. We support all of you who have decided to take the difficult path and fight for free trade unions. We believe that soon your and our representatives will be able to meet to exchange our union experience.⁸¹²

Radio Liberty repeatedly broadcast the appeal into the Soviet Union, which Ivanov listened to with a giddiness that the trade union had acknowledged the Young Socialists' letter.⁸¹³ Lech Walesa, when questioned about the appeal, simply replied with the rejoinder: "We didn't invent proletarian internationalism."⁸¹⁴ But international observers viewed the appeal with alarm. A cable from the British ambassador reported it as a risk to Poland's territorial integrity.⁸¹⁵

It became a turning point that transformed Soviet leaders' views that Solidarność contained moderate currents to the perception that it was a uniformly hostile organisation.⁸¹⁶ In a telephone conversation with PZPR leader Stanislaw Kania, Brezhnev charged, "Solidarność...is attempting to impose its subversive ideas on neighbouring states and to interfere in their internal affairs."⁸¹⁷ Archival documents on the Politburo's discussions on Poland from this time demonstrate that fear of anti-socialist contagion reaching the Soviet Union and the other states of the Eastern Bloc dominated their attitudes before martial law began.⁸¹⁸ They reacted to the appeal by ordering an orchestrated campaign of letters from Soviet workers' collectives to condemn Solidarność in the Soviet press.⁸¹⁹ A letter addressed to Polish

⁸¹² "Message from the Delegates to the First Congress of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity," 9 September 1981, in *Communist Affairs: Documents and Analysis*, 1(2) (April 1982), 538.

⁸¹³ Ivanov, "'Solidarnost' i Sovetskie Dissidenty."

⁸¹⁴ Singer, *The Road to Gdansk*, 262.

⁸¹⁵ "Document 78: Mr Joy (Warsaw) to Lord Carrington, 11 September 1981, 1.50 pm," in *Documents on British policy overseas: The Polish Crisis and Relations with Eastern Europe*, eds. Isabelle Tombs and Richard Smith, 191.

⁸¹⁶ Mark Kramer, "Introduction," in "Soviet Deliberations during the Polish Crisis, 1980-1981," (Washington D.C.: Cold War International History Project Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1999), 23-24.

⁸¹⁷ "Transcript of Brezhnev's Phone Conversation with Kania," 15 September 1981, in "Soviet Deliberations during the Polish Crisis" ed. Kramer, 141-145.

⁸¹⁸ Kramer, "Introduction," 24-25.

⁸¹⁹ "Document 61: Transcript of the CPSU CC Politburo Meeting," 10 September 1981, in *From Solidarity to Martial Law: The Polish Crisis of 1980-1981*, eds. Andrzej Paczkowski, Malcolm Byrne, Gregory F. Domber and Magdalena Klotzbach (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), 348-349.

workers was published in *Izvestiia* from workers of the V.I. Lenin tractor factory in Ivanov's locale of Minsk. The letter decried the appeal as a "heinous document."⁸²⁰ In Moscow ZiL factory workers similarly condemned, "There is nothing in it but malice against socialism."⁸²¹ The Young Socialists read these letters with outrage and concocted a plan to distribute leaflets with the appeal in suburbs where ZiL workers predominantly resided, though it never concretely materialised.⁸²² The idea resurfaced in the final months of 1981 when the Young Socialists began to anticipate the Soviet invasion of Poland. According to Rivkin, he urged the printing of leaflets to demonstrate to the authorities that popular opinion was against an invasion, though Fadin and Kudiukin argued more cautiously that it should only be done in protest if an invasion took place.⁸²³

Darkening Clouds and the Limits of Dissenting Internationalism. Letter to the PCI, 1982.

Across Poland during the night of 13 December 1981, doors were broken down by SB officers and militiamen during the often violent arrests of thousands of *Solidarność* activists as martial law was enforced and the opposition was driven underground.⁸²⁴ The reformist Left reacted with horror to what it perceived as Jaruzelski's coup d'état and the establishment of a military dictatorship at the centre of Europe. The exception was the French communist party, which had back pedalled from its earlier Eurocommunist agenda to side with the Soviets on both Afghanistan

⁸²⁰ "Pis'mo kollektiv rabochikh Minskogo traktornogo zavoda imeni V.I. Lenina," (Letter of the Collective Workers of the Lenin Tractor Plant in Minsk.) *Izvestiia* (14 September 1981), 4.

⁸²¹ "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh Moskovskogo avtozavoda im. Likhacheva pol'skim rabochim," (Letter of the ZiL Workers' Collective.) *Pravda* (12 September 1981), 4.

⁸²² Interview with Kudiukin and Fadina; however, leaflets of the appeal were discovered by the KGB during the search of Khavkin's flat upon the arrest of the circle. "Protocol Obyska," 5.

⁸²³ Mikhail Rivkin and Andrei Shil'kov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," (The Affair of the Moscow Socialists.) *Glasnost'* (29) (1989), 251-252.

⁸²⁴ Andrzej Paczkowski, *Revolution and Counterrevolution in Poland, 1980-1989: Solidarity, Martial Law and the End of Communism in Europe* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2015), 55-56.

and Poland.⁸²⁵ Martial law in Poland precipitated the final rejection of the Soviet experience by the Spanish Eurocommunist leader Santiago Carrillo, and was equated by many in his party with the failed putsch of the post-Franco military ten months earlier.⁸²⁶ *Labour Force in Eastern Europe* responded with a wide coverage of events that condemned the actions of the PZPR and provided detailed news of solidarity campaigns in the United Kingdom that included sponsoring imprisoned Polish workers.⁸²⁷ The PCI reacted by decisively breaking ranks with the Soviet Union and the international communist movement.

Berlinguer, the loudest voice of dissenting internationalism in the eyes of the Young Socialists, declared that the progressive energies that had emanated from the October Revolution were exhausted, and the societies of the Eastern Bloc that were led by the Soviet Union had lost their ability to move forward.⁸²⁸ The day following the declaration of martial law, in an unsigned front page article in *L'Unità*, the PCI expressed the personal hopes it had invested in the reformist course that had been pursued in Poland prior to its military suppression: “[The Polish experience of renewal] gave space and breath to the development of socialism as a real process of advancement of the workers and for the growth of freedom. Several times we repeated that the attempt at Polish renewal directly involved us and all the Western left wing.”⁸²⁹ That same week in the PCI organ, *Rinascita*, eight articles addressed Poland in a nine page edition. In one, the leader of the PCI affiliated trade union, the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) Luciano Lama dismissed the French communist party’s assertion that Solidarność could be blamed for provoking the military takeover, and levelled a concerted accusation directly at the Soviet leadership:

The decisive responsibility for having brought Poland to this extreme political and economic crisis lies essentially with the political regime, the political system, which rejects the participation of the masses in

⁸²⁵ Silvio Pons, “Western Communists, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the 1989 Revolutions,” *Contemporary European History* 18 (3) (2009), 350.

⁸²⁶ Faraldo, “Entangled Eurocommunism,” 663-665.

⁸²⁷ Joe Singleton, “Labour Movement: Action on Poland,” *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(1-2) (1982), 38-40.

⁸²⁸ Devlin, “The PCI and Poland.”

⁸²⁹ “Italian Communist Party says Polish Party Leaders Failed,” *RFE Report*, 15 December 1981. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

the construction of the state and in which there is neither democracy nor liberty...the citizens tried to use Solidarność to democratise political life in a country where there is no freedom...There is no doubt that this method of acquiring and exercising power developed in the Soviet Union.⁸³⁰

By 29 December, the Central Committee of the PCI had issued a 17 page resolution that criticised the use of military force by a socialist regime to resolve workers' unrest and attributed "negative influence" to the Soviet Union.⁸³¹ The resolution reached the conclusion:

The necessity for a "third way" for Europe is borne of this historical situation and theoretical re-examination. The model adopted in the Soviet Union and transferred to the Eastern Bloc countries is unrepeatable and any separation between socialism and democracy is unacceptable.⁸³²

The CPSU replied with a private letter that the PCI ignored.⁸³³ The Soviets then proceeded to return fire through their press organs *Pravda*, *Kommunist* and *Novoe Vremya* (New Times) in late-January 1982. They were backed up by a broader chorus of pro-Soviet communist parties, who published their own condemnations of the Italians in the Soviet press.⁸³⁴ An unsigned article in *Kommunist* accused the PCI leadership of using the difficulties in Poland as a sneaky and false pretext to propel the party further along an anti-socialist path they had foolishly begun to venture down some time earlier. The author's condescending invective continued:

Using the terminology of the enemies of socialism and the Soviet Union, the PCI leaders permitted themselves to state the degeneration of the countries of the socialist community...Unfortunately, it must be noted that the leadership of the PCI defines its position in such a way

⁸³⁰ Devlin, "The PCI and Poland," 3-4.

⁸³¹ "On Italian communists' resolution on Polish Events," 29 December 1981, 1-2. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁸³² "Polish Deepens Rift between Italian Communists and Moscow," 30 December 1981, 2. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁸³³ A.S. Cherniaev, "Entry for 16 January 1982," in *Sovmestnyi iskhod: Dnevnik dvukh epokh, 1972-1991* (Joint Exodus: A Diary of Two Eras.) (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), (1980), 3.

⁸³⁴ Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, 315.

as to put itself effectively in the same camp as the forces struggling against socialism. This is truly to be regretted.⁸³⁵

For most Soviet readers the polemics were one-sided, due to the CPSU declining to publish the PCI's systematic responses to the Soviet blasts.⁸³⁶ Even the few copies of *L'Unità* normally on sale in Moscow's news stands were unavailable during this period.⁸³⁷ In another unsigned *Kommunist* article in March 1982, the CPSU continued to lambast the PCI leadership's perspectives. Addressing the PCI's criticism that there was an absence of democracy in the Soviet Union, the article speculated, "What do they want? 'Dissident'-type criticism and freedom for unbridled defamation of the socialist system on the part of individual renegades?"⁸³⁸

Martial law had been a devastating blow to the Young Socialists' own hopes for the Polish workers' movement and its seeming promise for change in the Eastern Bloc. The PCI's forceful condemnation and its accompanying criticism of the Soviet leadership fully reflected the Young Socialists' own feelings. This anger was transformed into action when early in the morning of April 1, Kudiukin woke up to read the March *Kommunist* issue. He reacted with fury to its criticism of the PCI and penned an emotional letter of support to the party, that for the time being remained in his flat. The following month, a simplified and paraphrased Italian translation of this letter would appear in the loosely PCI-affiliated publication *Paese Sera* in May 1982,⁸³⁹ and again in the left-leaning Italian magazine, *L'espresso*, in March 1983 at which time the Young Socialists were still in prison awaiting trial.

By early-1982, a new issue of *Varianty* had not appeared for over a year. Fadin later admitted to an interviewer that at this point, their dissident activities were winding down.⁸⁴⁰ Kudiukin had successfully concluded his graduate studies at IMEMO and had attained the rank of junior researcher the year before. Fadin,

⁸³⁵ "Kommunist Text on PCI," Moscow TASS International Service in Russian, 27 January 1982, 5. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁸³⁶ "Rinascita Editorial on Soviet-Italian Communist Rift," 28 January 1982, 1. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁸³⁷ Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, 318.

⁸³⁸ "Kommunist Refutes PCI Distortions, Statements," Moscow TASS International Service in Russian, 10 March 1982, 5. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 327, Italian Communist Party.

⁸³⁹ Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party*, 328. Unfortunately I have not found access to *Paese Sera* from May 1982.

⁸⁴⁰ "Andrei Fadin (Samizdat)," Interview by Julia Kalinina on behalf of Metta Spencer, 1994: <http://russianpeaceanddemocracy.com/andrei-fadin-1994/>.

Chernetskii and Khavkin were all fathers to young children. What had begun in their early twenties as a romantic revolutionary fuelled adventure seemed increasingly irrational to these more mature intellectuals with professional standing and personal responsibilities, especially in the face of the total failure of external forces of reform and the unrelenting intransigence of the regime. Rivkin later speculated that their conspiracy continued up to the point of arrest mainly because nobody wanted to be the first to call it off and admit that all of their efforts had been pointless.⁸⁴¹ Yet the Young Socialists' political views remained unchanged. Although they did not know at the time that it would be their last rodeo, the circle went out in a final blaze of dissenting internationalism in this letter of support to the PCI.

At this time, other processes were moving forward. In March 1982 the KGB directorate approved the initiation of article 70 criminal proceedings against Fadin, Kudiukin, Chernetskii, Khavkin and Kagarlitskii.⁸⁴² Probably not coincidentally, this was the same month that the Young Socialists' *L'Alternative* interview, which they had prepared answers for in the summer of 1981, came out in Paris. This fact was prominently noted by the chief investigator of the Young Socialists' case, Fedor Pokhil, in an article that showcased the investigative and interrogative tactics used against the Young Socialists as a model for future KGB operations against dissident circles. The KGB interpreted the Young Socialists' open discussion of oppositional tactics in a foreign publication and their call for internationalist solidarity with Soviet dissent in an especially negative light, and decried their responses to *L'Alternative* as "strategies for the undermining and weakening of Soviet power, as well as calls for intervention by foreign reactionary forces into the internal affairs of our country."⁸⁴³

The Young Socialists had been on the KGB's radar at least since Kagarlitskii's first interrogation and expulsion from GITIS for publishing *Levyi povorot* in January 1980. That action had prompted the circle to lie low, but when nothing occurred after

⁸⁴¹ Rivkin, "Interv'iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda (s kommentariiami M. Rivkina ot dekabria 2007 g.):" <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1200923212.html>.

A notable exception to this is the younger Kagarlitskii, whose *Sotsializm i budushchee* was issued every few months up until his arrest.

⁸⁴² Pokhil, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii, provodivsheisia gruppou lits," 50.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, 49.

two months, they resumed their activities. As Rivkin recognised in retrospect, “We had no real idea of the time scales that were at work in the KGB.”⁸⁴⁴ In the short term lead up to the Young Socialists’ arrests, from March 1982 the KGB dedicated considerable personnel and resources to the pursuit of the circle. A special taskforce was selected from officers of the Fifth Directorate that focused on combating dissent, as well as the Second Directorate, the Investigative Department of the KGB of the USSR, and the Directorate of the KGB of Moscow and Moscow region.⁸⁴⁵ This concentration of resources enabled the mass sweep of arrests and house searches of both the inner and outer circle of the Young Socialists that occurred on 6 April 1982, which will be addressed in more detail in the postscript to dissent section.

These searches and arrests that occurred less than a week after Kudiukin had drafted the letter to the PCI took the Young Socialists totally by surprise. In circumstances where the circle’s leaders were all jailed in Lefortovo, the outer circle stepped in to publicise the group’s repression. In a strange episode, Kudiukin later related that during the search of his apartment, a KGB officer disdainfully showed his sister the PCI letter as evidence of his supposed criminality. Maria Kudiukina memorised this letter as best as she could and Aleksei Sobchenko set up a meeting between her and the *Paese Sera* correspondent, Franco Pantarelli.⁸⁴⁶ Sobchenko (b. 1954) had studied in the Faculty of History of MGU from 1976-1981 and was a fluent Spanish and Italian speaker. He had a social personality and had befriended Italians, Latin Americans and Spaniards in the MGU environment, who had introduced him to connections further afield in their national communities, including left-wing journalists.⁸⁴⁷ Sobchenko left his own witness interrogation on 6 April and immediately went to sound the alarm. Drawing on the conspiratorial training that he had learned from Kagarlitskii, he travelled in the metro for hours to lose a possible tail before finally commuting to his intended destination of the MGU dormitories to warn the Faculty of History postgraduate student Vladimir Pribylovskii about the

⁸⁴⁴ Mikhail Rivkin, “Nuzhny li ‘Varianty?’” (Do we Need *Varianty*?): <http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1178396822.html>

⁸⁴⁵ Pokhil, “Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii, provodivsheisia gruppoi lits,” 50.

⁸⁴⁶ “Beseda s Pavlom Mikhailovichem Kudyukinym o s.d. organizatsii rubezha 70-x-80-x godov, besedoval K.N. Morozov”: http://socialist.memo.ru/1991/kudukin_interview.html.

⁸⁴⁷ Interview with Aleksei Sobchenko, via Skype, 27 February 2021.

circle's arrests.⁸⁴⁸ Together Pribylovskii and Sobchenko drafted a press announcement of the Young Socialists' arrests and Pribylovskii's Mexican girlfriend, Laura, went outside to relay its contents to Pantarelli via public phone.⁸⁴⁹ That night, in a pre-arranged agreement, Pribylovskii's friend Anatolii Kopeikin came and took the samizdat archive that Pribylovskii had amassed in his dorm room.⁸⁵⁰ In the coming days, Pribylovskii would withdraw his diploma thesis from the MGU Faculty of History storage. This was out of concern that the KGB would connect it to the typewriter that he had used to produce the samizdat materials that he expected had been confiscated in the Young Socialists' house searches.⁸⁵¹

Conclusion.

After the unusual conditions of the Young Socialists' release from Lefortovo, rumours spread that the Eurocommunist party leaders had intervened in their case, which in the coming years were accepted into the dissident circle's official history.⁸⁵² In the early-1990s, two of the Young Socialists' leaders repeated on separate occasions to interviewers that this had occurred.⁸⁵³ Though according to Rivkin's estimation, this version of events was the product of the KGB's meddling, that was designed to elicit testimony from the Young Socialists while they were imprisoned

⁸⁴⁸ Pribylovskii, "Aleksei Sobchenko i evrokommunisty," 93.

⁸⁴⁹ Interview with Sobchenko.

⁸⁵⁰ Vladimir Pribylovskii, "30 let 'delu molodykh sotsialistov,'" (Thirty years after the affair of the Young Socialists.), 6 April 2012: <http://lj.rossia.org/users/anticompromat/1730719.html?nc=1>.

⁸⁵¹ "Inakomyshliashchaia zhizn' v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Moskva, 1970-1980e" (Dissident Life in the Era of the Decline of Developed Socialism, Moscow 1970-1980s), Interview of Vladimir Pribylovskii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, 25 July 2005: <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/smysl/1058065392/1123140153.html>.

⁸⁵² A statement about the "intercession of the Western communist and socialist parties" into the Young Socialists' case is included in the Russian language version of Alekseeva's classical history of Soviet dissent, though this detail is omitted in the English language version. See Liudmila Alekseeva, *Istoriia inakomyshliia v SSSR: Noveishii period* (History of Dissent in the USSR: The recent period.), third ed. (M. : Helsink. gruppaa, 2012), 336.

⁸⁵³ "Andrei Fadin (Samizdat)," interview by Kalinina on behalf of Spencer, 1994; Interview with Boris Kagarlitskii by A. Raskin, 28 April-5 May 1992. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 155, folder, Boris Iul'evich Kagarlitskii (62), d. A11, 12.

in Lefortovo.⁸⁵⁴ As Jonathan Bolton has recognised, conditions of surveillance and censorship placed the late socialist opposition in an environment driven by uncertainty, speculation and rumour. As dissident groups crafted a shared identity on this murky terrain, over time and especially retrospectively, individuals' experiences were reimagined into larger mythologies that emphasised the participants' sense of purpose and camaraderie over other memories. Bolton concluded that it was the historian's task to analyse these stories and legends, to delve into deeper questions about what these constructed narratives revealed about dissenting identities.⁸⁵⁵

The legend of Eurocommunist intervention – how the Young Socialists could have believed it happened and why it attained a place in the circle's mythology – had its roots in the circle's dissenting internationalism.⁸⁵⁶ As this chapter has argued, the

⁸⁵⁴ Rivkin recalled that during his pre-trial imprisonment in Lefortovo, a fellow inmate who he believed to be a stool pigeon told him, "For some reason Volodka [Chernetskii] is sure that there will be an appeal from the Western communist parties." Rivkin deduced that Chernetskii, who was imprisoned and unable to receive outside information from the Western communist parties, could not have known about their intercession with any accuracy, and instead had expressed a false hope, which was circulated by the KGB to the other arrested Young Socialists. Rivkin, "Interv'iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda."

⁸⁵⁵ Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe and Czech culture under communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 16.

⁸⁵⁶ My unsuccessful investigations into the Italian and French Communist Party archives and conversations with relevant Italian actors has led me to conclude that this intervention was most likely only a rumour.

In my oral history interviews with the Young Socialists, I probed them on why they believed an intervention had occurred and they did not have any particular evidence.

I interviewed Gioletto Chiesa via Skype in 2015. He was the Moscow correspondent for *L'Unitá* in 1982 and in his duties he also reported directly to the PCI directorate. Chiesa reported the arrest of the Young Socialists to Berlinguer, but he was not aware of any follow up by the PCI, nor did he believe it would have happened.

The surviving relevant members of the PCI that I contacted via email were Claudio Ligas, who was secretary to Giancarlo Pajetta, the PCI's head of foreign relations with other communist parties in 1982, email correspondence with Claudio Ligas, 21 February 2016. I contacted Giorgio Napolitano, who was chairman of the PCI in the Chamber of Deputies in 1982. He did not know of any intervention. He also asked Antonio Rubbi, who was head of PCI foreign relations, who provided the same answer, email correspondence with the Office of Giorgio Napolitano, 21 March 2016. It was not possible to contact Enrico Berlinguer, who died in 1984.

The archives of the Gramsci Institute contained detailed records of meetings between PCI and Soviet representatives in 1982, which included the participation of Rubbi and Ligas, though the Young Socialists' case was not mentioned. Within the PCF archives, there were appeals written by Soviet citizens, especially refuseniks, for the PCF to

Young Socialists' views of the international landscape at the turn of the 1980s were informed by their reading and discussion of left-wing samizdat, Soviet scientific publications and white TASS media reporting. This reading led them to believe that a loose internationalism linked the reformist Left in the West and dissidents in the Eastern Bloc, though in reality, these connections were flimsy and aspirational, rather than concrete. The Young Socialists' impressions were guided by the strength of their own internationalism, that they imagined was equally as potent across the reformist Left, and their desire to make a mark on the international environment.⁸⁵⁷ Despite their enhanced knowledge relative to earlier generations, the effects of Soviet isolation still limited their understandings of other domestic and international considerations that affected the Western reformist Left, which outweighed dissident affairs in importance, or made them unable to effectively engage. Although the Young Socialists' arrest did arouse lower level reactions among the international reformist Left. *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* held a solidarity campaign for the Young Socialists at the end of 1982 that involved distributing leaflets and writing letters to the Soviet embassy in London to demand their release, which belatedly linked the circle to the reform socialist community of solidarity that it had observed and constructed through reading.⁸⁵⁸

This chapter has used the concept "dissenting internationalism" not only to emphasise the existence of international reformist tendencies that opposed orthodox Soviet viewpoints, but also as a shorthand for the mutual solidarity that occurred across the national dissident movements in the Eastern Bloc. During 1982-1983, detailed accounts of the Young Socialists' case were reported by the *pravozashchitniki* publications, *Khronika tekushikh sobytii* and *Vesti iz SSSR*, while news of their arrests was broadcast on the pillar of the transnational network of

intervene in dissident cases as well as petitions from dozens of French intellectuals. There were letters written by Gaston Plissonnier, a PCF Politburo member to the Soviet Central Committee advocating for the freedom of the Soviet dissidents Natan Sharanskii and Yuri Orlov. Therefore records of intervention into dissident cases did exist, but not in the case of the Young Socialists, cited in APCF (Archive of the French Communist Party, Seine-Saint Denis) 261 J 7, 84 h-i

⁸⁵⁷ Additionally, Aleksei Sobchenko noted that there had also been ideas for other letters addressed to different Western left-wing actors, though these projects did not reach completion. Interview with Sobchenko.

⁸⁵⁸ "Free the Russian Socialists!" *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), 1.

dissent, Radio Free Europe.⁸⁵⁹ The wave of euphoria that had gripped dissidents across the Eastern Bloc during the founding congress of Solidarność proved to be a precursor for what was to come under Perestroika. As the next chapter will show, the hazy character of the reformist Left that was explored in the preceding pages was a reflection of its growing weakness. With the rise of neo-liberalism and laissez faire economics, the tide was turning against the Left in Europe. However, although in the late-1980s, the Young Socialists would turn their backs on reform socialism due to its ties to the communist experience, Perestroika would deepen their connections to Poland and the transnational solidarities of dissent in the Eastern Bloc.

⁸⁵⁹ In oral history testimonies and memoir texts, Mikhail Rivkin, Vladimir Pribylovskii and Sergei Karpiuk all reported hearing the Young Socialists' case broadcast on the voices in the months after April 1982. One of the Radio Free Europe reports on the case has been uploaded online, see "Dokumenty i liudi," (Documents and People.), Munich, 27 July 1982: <https://catalog.osaarchivum.org/catalog/osa:93e45eaf-f9f8-4657-b703-ef65437d81d1>.

Postscript to Dissent. Arrest, Investigation and Trial.

On 6 April 1982, the mass sweep of arrests and house searches took the inner and outer circle of the Young Socialists totally by surprise. Fadin, Kudiukin, Chernetskii, Khavkin and Kagarlitskii were arrested and imprisoned. The outer circle were searched and taken to Lefortovo prison for interrogation as witnesses, where they were pressured to give evidence against the accused. The chief investigator of the Young Socialists' case, Fedor Pokhil later noted the positive results achieved through the simultaneous seizure of witnesses and accused for obtaining maximally reliable evidence.⁸⁶⁰ Though the KGB's wide net also caught witnesses who were associated with the circle through friendship rather than conspiracy, including Sergei Karpiuk whose close personal relations with Fadin and Kudiukin continued after their years at MGU in room 242. As he later recalled, "I did not really know anything about the underground organisation, although I could guess at its existence."⁸⁶¹ Brought into the KGB's orbit through his association with Fadin and Kudiukin, he had been overheard by an informer declaring that the party was not capable of governing Soviet society – a scene that was described in Andropov's report to a Politburo meeting two days after the circle's arrest.⁸⁶² Following a search at *Nauka's* editorial office for Eastern literature where he worked, Karpiuk resigned from his job in order to prevent the publishing house's liberal management suffering any further repercussions.⁸⁶³ He faced employment difficulties for three years, but

⁸⁶⁰ Fedor Pokhil, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii, provodivsheisia gruppoy lits," (Organisation of the Investigation of Anti-Soviet Agitation Carried out by a Group of Individuals.) *Sbornik statei ob agenturno-operativnoi i sledstvennoi rabote komiteta gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR* (Collection of Articles about Agent-Operative and Investigative Work of the USSR KGB.) (101) (Moskva, 1984), 50, published online by The Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania: https://www.kgbdocuments.eu/assets/books/journals/sbornik/101.pdf?fbclid=IwAR03HVAAfVrFAyVWbpSuw84uMm_ZYUF18aEclwhcrMnRXEQawePy2T9K00Q.

⁸⁶¹ Sergei Karpiuk, "O drevnei istorii s ljubov'iu," (About Ancient History with Love.) *Mir istorika: Istorigraficheskii sbornik* 10 (2015) 338: http://ivka.rsuh.ru/binary/84762_48.1432718399.26352.pdf.

⁸⁶² "Session of the Politburo TsK CPSU, 8 April 1982," cited in Petr Cherkasov, *IMEMO: Portret na fone epokhi* (IMEMO: Portrait against the background of an era.) (Moscow: Ves' Mir, 2004), 492.

⁸⁶³ Karpiuk, "O drevnei istorii s ljubov'iu," 341.

by late-Perestroika his fortunes changed and he was appointed to the Institute of General History of the Academy of Sciences.

Caught by surprise, Grigorii Zaichenko answered the door to the KGB totally naked.⁸⁶⁴ By 1982, this second room 242 alumni was a graduate student in the MGU historical faculty. He had also continued the nonconformist intellectual odyssey that had characterised his earlier MGU years, and was associated with a circle of religious dissidents whose most active members were arrested and imprisoned on the same day as the Young Socialists. Zaichenko was arrested as a witness who linked both cases.⁸⁶⁵ This intensified the KGB's interest in him, and for good reason: he had acted as a messenger between the two groups in negotiations for the transfer of a copier to the Young Socialists when the religious dissidents wanted to get rid of it after they felt the eyes of the KGB on them.⁸⁶⁶ He was subjected to three weeks of interrogations followed by a month long break before they resumed. The heavy KGB surveillance that accompanied him as he carried out his daily affairs,⁸⁶⁷ along with the news that another religious dissident had been moved from witness to accused in the case forced him to consider his options.⁸⁶⁸ Rather than betraying his own moral code by testifying, or facing the risk of similarly going from witness to accused and getting a possible camp sentence, Zaichenko opted to run. He escaped to a remote town in the Moscow region and worked as a lift operator until early-1984, when he judged it safe to return.⁸⁶⁹

The KGB's real work began during their interrogation of the core circle. The investigators initially relied upon psychological portraits, before the seized materials from the searches allowed for more detailed, individualised interrogation

⁸⁶⁴ Interview with Grigorii Zaichenko, Moscow, 22 November 2016.

⁸⁶⁵ In fact, issue 64 of *Khronika tekushikh sobytii* that reported the arrests of both the Young Socialists and the religious *samizdatchiki* named Zaichenko in connection with the latter case.

⁸⁶⁶ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016; interview with Zaichenko, 22 November 2016.

⁸⁶⁷ The approval that occurred at the level of the leadership of the KGB USSR for the surveillance of witnesses following the arrest of the accused in the Young Socialists' case was acknowledged by Pokhil in his report, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii," 52.

⁸⁶⁸ This was Vladimir Budarov, see issues 64 and 65 of *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*.

⁸⁶⁹ Interview with Grigorii Zaichenko, Moscow, 30 November 2016.

tactics.⁸⁷⁰ In the case of Kudiukin, the investigators drew heavily from a drafted letter to his wife that was discovered during the search.⁸⁷¹ According to Pokhil:

It openly slandered the constitutional democratic principles of the Soviet state, justified the position of the need to fight the “existing regime” in the USSR, emphasised personal participation in organisational activities and expressed the determination “to join the ranks of organised fighters anew when the political and social situation changes (for example, as occurred in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or in Poland in 1980).”⁸⁷²

In keeping with the KGB’s overall perception that dissent arose from the influence of the hostile West,⁸⁷³ Pokhil recorded that the investigators were determined to detect whether the circle was acting “on the instructions of foreign intelligence agencies or ideological centres of the enemy.”⁸⁷⁴ As they were seeking to understand the reasons for the Young Socialists’ “hostile mood,” the KGB prioritised the identification of the circle’s foreign contacts, and in particular the sources of their communication channel to *L’Alternative* abroad. While tracing the circle’s participants and the extent of its reach, including its samizdat production, Pokhil noted that the “main focus” was to work toward the “ideological disarmament and reeducation” of the accused by using theoretical literature and concrete examples to “expose the anti-Soviet essence of the activities of revisionists.”⁸⁷⁵ The Young Socialists’ investigators attentively read their samizdat publications and the anti-Soviet literature seized in the searches and used them to construct their interrogation questions.⁸⁷⁶ This approach, which involved debating reform socialist ideas with the arrested, occurred as a result of Andropov’s initiative of training the KGB to combat dissent intellectually from the late-1960s.⁸⁷⁷ This careful treatment

⁸⁷⁰ Pokhil, “Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii,” 51-52.

⁸⁷¹ According to Western reporting on the case, Kudiukin’s wife divorced him in the wake of his arrest. See Oliver MacDonald, “Russian Socialists and Eurocommunists Face Trial Soon,” *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe* 5(5-6) (1982-1983), 28.

⁸⁷² Pokhil, “Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii,” 52

⁸⁷³ Victor J. Yasmann and Vladislav Zubok, “The KGB in the 1980s,” in *The KGB Documents and the Collapse, Part II* (Washington DC.: American Foreign Policy Council, 1998), 9.

⁸⁷⁴ Pokhil, “Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii,” 51.

⁸⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁸⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 54-55.

⁸⁷⁷ Yasmann and Zubok, “The KGB in the 1980s,” 9.

was also a reflection of the Young Socialists' status as children of the elite. Kudiukin recalled that the polite approach of the interrogators was combined with psychological manipulation.⁸⁷⁸ He began to give candid testimony to the investigators at the end of April, and Fadin and Kagarlitskii followed from the end of May. This evidence led to Mikhail Rivkin moving from witness to accused and his imprisonment in Lefortovo on 8 June.

In early-1983, the Kremlin politics of succession once again intervened to affect the case. When the outcome of the post-Brezhnev power struggle was decided, the Young Socialists were no longer useful as pawns to compromise the liberals. They were permitted to petition for clemency in order to be released without trial.⁸⁷⁹ With the newly installed general secretary Iurii Andropov at its head, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR took the decision to grant a pardon to the young intellectuals upon their written repentance – which was then unprecedented in the state's treatment of dissidents.⁸⁸⁰ Kagarlitskii recalled that when he first heard news of this decision, he assumed the investigators were asking for televised repentance as occurred in the infamous case of Piotr Yakir and Viktor Krasin, which had thoroughly demoralised the dissident movement a decade earlier.⁸⁸¹ But along with Fadin, Kudiukin, Chernetskii and Khavkin, he accepted the more muted form of signing a paper that included a pledge not to continue anti-Soviet activities.

In an acknowledgement that his behaviour departed from traditional dissident ethics, Kagarlitskii later reasoned, "I was not a dissident, I was a political activist."⁸⁸² On one level, this can be read as an exculpatory statement designed to gloss over the shame of testifying and the fear the inexperienced young dissident likely felt when confronted by KGB interrogators and the prospect of a bright future

⁸⁷⁸ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 1 December 2016; these tactics were given less attention in Pokhil's report, though he noted that the leadership of the KGB of the USSR approved funding for "maintaining a well-organized in-cell development of the accused." Pokhil, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii," 52.

⁸⁷⁹ Liudmilla Alekseeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious and Human Rights* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), 426.

⁸⁸⁰ A.V. Shubin, *Predannaia demokratiia: SSSR i neformaly, 1986-1989* (Betrayed Democracy: The USSR and the Informals.) (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo 'Evropa,' 2006), 18.

⁸⁸¹ Interview with Boris Kagarlitskii by A. Raskin, 28 April-5 May 1992. Archive of Dissent in the USSR, Moscow Memorial, f. 155, folder, Boris Iul'evich Kagarlitskii (62), d. A11, 11.

⁸⁸² *Ibid.*, 13.

lost to a camp sentence. But it also aligned with the reformist and constructive bent of socialist dissent, where its practitioners generally understood themselves to be a loyal opposition. This picture is complemented by the experience of earlier socialist dissident circles, who cooperated with their KGB investigators and the camp authorities following their arrests,⁸⁸³ and Roy Medvedev's loyalist position toward the regime that was coupled with his willingness to publicly criticise other dissidents.⁸⁸⁴

But the leaders of the Young Socialists had attracted into their orbit others who had a different conception of dissent. Mikhail Rivkin and Andrei Shilkov held views that were closer to the *pravozashchitniki* and upheld the concept of inner freedom.⁸⁸⁵ In the absence of connections to human rights oriented groups, the two dissidents had separately found their way to the Young Socialists through different mutual friends.⁸⁸⁶ Due to his disinterest in socialist ideology, Rivkin was not invested in the circle's intellectual project. But his determination to act against the regime drove him to train new recruits in conspiratorial methods and he attempted to procure means for mass printing – practical actions that truly alarmed the KGB.⁸⁸⁷ Rivkin and Shilkov's fates intersected when on Fadin's instruction, the young mining engineer travelled to Petrozavodsk to receive a font for mass printing from Shilkov, a history graduate of Petrozavodsk state university who worked as an operator of an Era copier at an industrial institute.⁸⁸⁸ This episode became one of the cruxes of the

⁸⁸³ For the experience of the Krasnopevtsev circle in the camps, see Il'ia Budraitskis, *Dissidenty sredi dissidentov* (Dissidents among dissidents.) (Moskva: Svobodnoe Marksistskoe Izdatel'stvo, 2017), 38. Valerii Smolkin of Kolokol/Union of Communards noted that all of the circle gave testimony and they all knew it, which saved them from the bitter recriminations and accusations of informing that frequently plagued other dissident groupings and prevented future friendly association. Testimony of Valerii Smolkin in "Kolokol'chiki 1965-2015," film produced by Archive of Memorial St Petersburg: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4aYyfvv0qQ&feature=youtu.be>.

⁸⁸⁴ Roy Medvedev and Georgii Vladimov, "Controversy: Dissent among Dissidents," *Index on Censorship* (3) (1979), 33.

⁸⁸⁵ Philip Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (London: Routledge, 2005), (Google Books – no page number given – need to check when I have library access.)

⁸⁸⁶ Mikhail Rivkin and Andrei Shilkov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," (The Affair of the Moscow Socialists.) *Glasnost'* (29) (1989), 239, 248.

⁸⁸⁷ Pokhil, "Organizatsiia rassledovaniia antisovetskoi agitatsii," 55.

⁸⁸⁸ Rivkin and Shilkov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," 247-250.

investigation, though it received little attention in Pokhil's report due to its unsuccessful outcome for the KGB. During Rivkin's interrogations, he refused to give up the location of the font and he declined to request a pardon, which brought the full force of the state's repressive apparatus of the Brezhnev era down on him.

Rivkin's trial in July 1983 was a tragic ending to the Young Socialists' years of dissent. By then Shilkov was already serving a three year camp sentence for illegally copying samizdat at his workplace,⁸⁸⁹ which was unrelated to the Young Socialists' dissident activities, though likely uncovered by their testimony.⁸⁹⁰ In a grievous turn of fate, Fadin, Kudiukin, and Kagarlitskii acted as witnesses to the court. Reports indicate that the trio attempted to defend Rivkin and refused to answer questions.⁸⁹¹ In response the prosecutor read aloud the testimony that they gave during their interrogations, which contributed to the court ordering the maximum sentence of seven years in the camps and five years in exile. After Rivkin returned to Moscow in 1987 following Gorbachev's amnesty for political prisoners, he and Shilkov published in the informal press a widely circulated account of Fadin, Kudiukin and Kagarlitskii's role in his fate, whose repercussions will be explored in the following chapter.

⁸⁸⁹ "Shilkov, Andrei Iur'evich," in "Zhertvy politicheskogo terrora v SSSR," (Victims of Political Terror in the USSR.): <http://lists.memo.ru/index25.htm>.

⁸⁹⁰ "Khotite – Stroite... ia zhe ponial, chto eto bespolezno," (You want it, build it... I realised it was useless.) *Nabat Severo-Zapada* Petrozavodsk 76(164), 12 December 1992: <http://www.kolumbus.fi/edvard.hamalainen/docs/chilkov.htm>.

⁸⁹¹ "Sud nad Mikhailom Rivkinym," (The Trial of Mikhail Rivkin.) *Vesti iz SSSR* (21) (15 November 1983): <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/2016/11/15/sud-nad-mikhailom-rivkinym-1983-21-1/#more-720>; "Sud nad Mikhailom Rivkinym," (The Trial of Mikhail Rivkin.): http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/smysl/lett_diss/1147340908.html.

The Afterlives of Socialist Dissent during Perestroika.

Introduction.

In January 1990 in Tallinn, the founding congress of the unionwide Social Democratic Association (SDA) was attended by representatives of seventy groups across the Soviet Union who were in the process of forming republic-based political parties and members of European social democratic parties, who came as guests.⁸⁹² In this moment of flux during late-Perestroika, numerous communist party members were present as observers, including the popular politician Iurii Afanas'iev, who continued to push for the establishment of a social democratic faction inside the CPSU. In a CPSU sponsored scholarly roundtable later that year, a senior adviser to the international department approvingly commented that those who had been in Tallinn “knew the experience of Western social democracy” and had presented a vision whose “goals and values differed from communist ideals...of the pre-Perestroika times.”⁸⁹³

The transformative though ultimately shortlived influence of social democratic ideas in the Kremlin and the emerging civil society of the late-1980s had seemed an unlikely prospect only a few years earlier. Some of the former Young Socialists were at the head of this process as organisers of social democratic structures from below including the SDA that developed into the Russian Social Democratic Party (SDPR) in 1991, while other former members of the circle became participants in the new academic and journalistic opportunities of Perestroika, and a few seized on the greater freedom to emigrate. Before addressing these experiences, this chapter briefly sets out how Gorbachev and other high-ranking liberals of the *shestidesiatniki*

⁸⁹² Konstantin Selizerstov, “Sleva ot Gorbacheva,” (To the left of Gorbachev.) (2 February 1990) *Leningrad Literator*. Open Society Archives (OSA) f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 632, Informal Movements.

⁸⁹³ “Stenogramma vstrechi uchenikh-istorikov za kruglym stolom ‘Sotsial demokratie: proshloe, nastoiashchee’ podgotovlena lektorskoi gruppoi ideologicheskogo otdela MGK KPSS,” (Stenogram of the Meeting of Scholars in the Roundtable “Social Democracy: Past and Present,” prepared by the lecture group of the Ideological Department of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU.), 27 September 1990. Otdel khraneniia dokumentov obshchestvenno-politicheskoi istorii Moskvyy (TsGA OKhDOPIM) f. P-8723, op. 1, d. 24, l. 27.

generation applied reform socialist thinking during their years in power and its transformative effects on the domestic and international contexts. I then turn to Soviet society and the different responses of the *semidesiatniki* to Perestroika's democratisation before returning to the Young Socialists' story at the point they were released from prison in 1983.

This chapter examines the afterlives of the Young Socialists' dissent during Perestroika as a way to explore how some of the processes that were underway in the political and intellectual spheres in the late-Brezhnev era became recast in the final years of the Soviet Union. While the worldviews of the *shestidesiatniki* generation had acted as a formative influence for many politicised *semidesiatniki* in the Brezhnev years, during the late-1980s the relationship between these generations of intellectuals shifted and developed in more complex directions, as the *semidesiatniki* began to carve out their own political and intellectual spaces from below. This study is less concerned with tracking the twists and turns of political activism during Perestroika, its primary focus is rather on how changing ideas about the nature of Soviet society and socialism transformed the identity of the left-wing of *semidesiatniki*-led political movements during Perestroika. Its secondary focuses are the shifting dynamics of intellectual spaces and the final wave of Soviet emigration.

A trio of young Soviet historians observed at the time: "In 1988 the accepted overview had collapsed: the past was just a set of pieces, and nobody could quite understand the whole."⁸⁹⁴ Under glasnost, those in the former Young Socialists' wider milieu, due to their familiarity with samizdat and other forms of uncensored knowledge, had less difficulty repositioning the pieces into a recognisable picture than many other Soviet citizens. Yet their views, too, were significantly reshaped as they accepted the newly ascendant interpretation of the "totalitarian" essence of Soviet reality that proliferated among the intelligentsia. The limitations of reform socialism that were revealed during Gorbachev's disastrous attempt to implement socialism with a human face caused them to revise the views that they had held in the Brezhnev years, as they moved to social democratic and new leftist positions. Integral to the development of these new identities was the lifting of censorship and

⁸⁹⁴ Daria Khubova, Andrei Ivankiev and Tonia Sharova, "After Glasnost: Oral history in the Soviet Union," in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, ed. Luisa Passerini (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 96.

the greater ability to establish connections with foreigners, including via overseas travel: the door to the outside world was finally flung open. This placed other left-wing identities beyond reform socialism within easier reach, as well as transforming the careers of Soviet academic researchers, and encouraging some of the former Young Socialists to choose emigration. This chapter, then, primarily asks: how was the experience of socialist dissent connected to the former Young Socialists' evolution to social democratic and new leftist identities during Perestroika?

Reform Socialism Comes to Power.

In contrast to the Young Socialists' earlier predictions that a broad economic crisis would trigger a mass movement of pressure for socialist reform, change instead came from inside the party in the form of a *shestidesiatnik* general secretary. Gorbachev's revolution from above began at a point when the Soviet economy was under strain yet still stable.⁸⁹⁵ Soviet society was without significant strikes or riots, or other displays of social dissatisfaction.⁸⁹⁶ Dissident opposition had been contained to the point where Western scholars wondered during early-Perestroika, "Whatever has happened to the Soviet 'dissident movement'?"⁸⁹⁷ The end of the Brezhnev era did not come from the breaking points outlined in Marxist theory, but instead biology intervened to force the old guard's departure. Sovietologists had registered from afar the advanced aging of Brezhnev and his entourage ("does the Soviet Union simply have a leader who is incapable of firing anyone or who has he decided to keep himself surrounded with people whom he feels comfortable as he ages?").⁸⁹⁸ But while Western scholars anticipated the possibility of generational

⁸⁹⁵ Michael McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution: Political Change from Gorbachev to Putin* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 37.

⁸⁹⁶ Archie Brown, "The Gorbachev Revolution and the End of the Cold War," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 3 endings, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 252.

⁸⁹⁷ Stephen Cohen, "The Decline of Liberal Dissent in the USSR," *New American* (January-February 1986). OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 295, inakomyshliashchie 1985-1991.

⁸⁹⁸ Jerry F. Hough, "The Generation Gap and the Brezhnev Succession," *Problems of Communism* 28(4) (1979), 1.

succession coming together with a dramatic shift to policies reminiscent of the Prague Spring, few openly expected it.⁸⁹⁹

The Soviet turn to reform socialism in the mid-1980s was guided by the *shestidesiatniki*'s hopes of returning to the promise of socialism at the time of their youth during the Thaw. For scholars of the late-1980s neo-Leninism was the most outwardly discernible ideological foundation for Perestroika, as a result of Gorbachev's many public statements that framed his reforms as a "return to Lenin," which were wholly within the confines of Soviet authoritative discourse.⁹⁰⁰ But the influences that Gorbachev took from the reform socialist canon and declared "new thinking" were a much broader set of ideas that his generation of reformists had absorbed over the three decades, which spanned the years of their university studies and careers in the fields of high politics and international relations.⁹⁰¹ This thinking went beyond neo-Leninism and the anti-Stalinist spirit of the Twentieth Party Congress to include the Prague Spring's "socialism with a human face," Eurocommunist thinking and approaches to international relations borrowed from the West.⁹⁰² In addition to occasional trips abroad, from the distance of the provinces as first secretary of Stavropol, Gorbachev had accessed Western shades of "new thinking" through conscientious reading of restricted "white books" issued by Progress publishers that contained Russian translations of works by Western European communists and social democrats.⁹⁰³ Yet while his vantage point as a high-ranking liberal at the time of the late Brezhnev era gave him a more informed picture, Gorbachev began his years in power without a clearly formulated understanding of how to apply these reform socialist ideas to solve the challenges the system was

⁸⁹⁹ Robert V. Daniels, "Political Change in the USSR: Moving the Immovable," *Problems of Communism* 30(6) (1981), 50.

⁹⁰⁰ See, for example, Terry L. Thompson, *Ideology and Policy: The Political Uses of Doctrine in the Soviet Union* (London: Westview Press, 1989), (Google books, 4 pages from beginning of chapter two).

⁹⁰¹ Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, intellectuals, and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 198-199.

⁹⁰² Silvio Pons and Michele Di Donato, "Reform Communism," in *The Cambridge History of Communism*, Vol. 3: End Games, eds. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons and Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 195.

⁹⁰³ Mikhail Gorbachev and Zdeněk Mlynář, *Conversations with Gorbachev: On Perestroika, the Prague Spring, and the Crossroads of Socialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 50.

facing. In his early steps he moved slowly to maneuver around party conservatives, but he was also inhibited by the limitations in his own thinking and practice that came from decades spent immersed in the political culture of conservatism and careerism at the top of Brezhnev's establishment.

The reform socialist experiment that had never been fully put to the test during the decade of the Prague Spring had disastrous consequences in the Soviet Union of the late-1980s. The delay of twenty years created a much less favourable economic context and the optimism that lit up the socialist idea in the 1960s had given way to cynicism among large parts of the Soviet population in light of the failed promises of communism. The introduction of economic measures that were inspired by Kosygin's reforms of the 1960s became a vehicle for cynical self-enrichment that drained much-needed state resources, while other ill-advised policy choices that were intended to bring "socialism with a human face" instead produced endless lines and the disappearance of goods from stores by 1990.⁹⁰⁴ As Gorbachev's thinking radicalised, he began what he and his supporters later called the "real Perestroika" in 1988 with the transformation of the rubber-stamping Supreme Soviet into an energetic parliamentary institution that was inspired by the Council of People's Commissars of Lenin's time.⁹⁰⁵ Perestroika's highpoint arrived with the atmosphere of euphoria surrounding the first free elections in nearly seventy years, but it quickly pirouetted into decline in the same year as central institutions became chronically destabilised without being replaced by credible new forms of governance and the specters of political polarisation, ethnic separatism and economic disintegration grew ever stronger.⁹⁰⁶ Glasnost let loose increasingly horrifying revelations about the Soviet past and present, which were incessantly discussed in the media as Gorbachev's reformers faced the same dilemma that the leaders of the Prague Spring encountered twenty years earlier – the impossibility of stopping liberalisation part

⁹⁰⁴ Vladislav Zubok, "The Soviet Union and China in the 1980s: Reconciliation and Divorce," *Cold War History* 17(2) (2017), 132-133.

⁹⁰⁵ Vladislav Zubok, "The Collapse of the Soviet Union," in *The Cambridge History of Communism. Volume III, Endgames? Late communism in global perspective, 1968 to the present*, eds. Juliane Fürst, Silvio Pons, Mark Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 255-256.

⁹⁰⁶ William Taubman, *Gorbachev: His Life and Times* (London: Simon and Schuster Ltd., 2017), 427-428.

way.⁹⁰⁷ In contrast to the reformers' conviction that greater freedom of speech would have a rejuvenating effect on Soviet society, the cumulative weight of glasnost's revelations destroyed the state's legitimacy to the extent that even many among the intelligentsia who had been supporters of reform socialism at the beginning of Perestroika came to disparage the entire Soviet experience as irredeemably totalitarian. The capitalist alternative that had been unthinkable two decades earlier entered popular consciousness as the vast gulf in prosperity between the systems became clear.⁹⁰⁸

By 1991, there were not enough people who remained committed to the Soviet project to sustain its socialist essence, or even the Soviet state's territorial integrity.⁹⁰⁹ The Baltic states were the first to express separatist attitudes at the Congress of People's Deputies in 1989, when their representatives adopted an openly oppositional stance to the Moscow-centred party structures and aligned themselves with Russia's democratic movement.⁹¹⁰ This portended the rise of ethnic national separatist movements across the country, which had been totally unforeseen by Gorbachev and those who had been convinced of the strength of reform socialism's appeal.⁹¹¹ The breakdown of the union gained steam with the prospect of a massive run on the bank, as the new republican elites that emerged from the elections in 1990 intuited that if republican territorial lines became national borders, they would gain full control of the state property on their territory.⁹¹² As economic catastrophe mounted and the coming Soviet collapse came clearly into view in late-1991, the dissolution of the union acquired the air of inevitability to much of the Russian public.⁹¹³ Movements for independence gained

⁹⁰⁷ Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 343.

⁹⁰⁸ Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 25.

⁹⁰⁹ Mark Kramer, "Soviet Society, Perestroika, and the End of the USSR," in *Perestroika and the Party: National and Transnational Perspectives on European Communist Parties in the Era of Soviet Reform*, ed. Francesco Di Palma (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019), 61.

⁹¹⁰ Kaarel Piirimäe and Olaf Mertelsmann, "Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania at the End of the USSR and the Cold War," in *The Baltic States and the End of the Cold War*, eds. Kaarel Piirimäe and Olaf Mertelsmann (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2018), 11.

⁹¹¹ Taubman, *Gorbachev*, 366.

⁹¹² Zubok, "The Collapse of the Soviet Union," 262, 269

⁹¹³ Kramer, "Soviet Society, Perestroika, and the End of the USSR," 61.

ground in the Soviet heartland as Yeltsin's star rose in the wake of the communist hardliners' bungled August coup, and as RSFSR president he signed the Belovezha Accords to dissolve the union in December 1991 together with the leaders of the Ukrainian and Belarusian SFSRs.⁹¹⁴ Instead of breathing new life into socialism, Gorbachev's attempt to realise reform socialism brought the end of Soviet power.

Perestroika equally transformed the international landscape. The communist world was recast as the *shestidesiatniki* reformers attempted to refashion its dynamics. In 1985, Anatolii Cherniaev, a deputy head in the international department who was soon to take a leading role in foreign policy under Gorbachev, recorded in his diary impressions that were broadly shared by all of the reformers: "The international communist movement has no future: it is vanishing, the parties are falling apart one after another."⁹¹⁵ The new Soviet leadership's attempt to reverse this process and modernise the communist identity was in the main met with resistance from orthodox communist parties.⁹¹⁶ But close relations with the Italian communists were restored as newly aligned perspectives allowed the two parties' leaders to reflect on issues of shared concern.⁹¹⁷ Aldo Agosti has used the term "border identity" to capture the uneasy duality of the PCI's continued presence in the communist movement when the party's reformist values and agenda brought it closer to social democracy.⁹¹⁸ This problem of striking a balance between visions of change and the preservation of communist identity acquired similar urgency for Gorbachev, who found himself unable to secure Perestroika's humanist turn without delegitimising the Leninist revolutionary experience that defined Soviet communism

⁹¹⁴ Serhii Plokhyy, *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), xxi.

⁹¹⁵ Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, entry of 26 January 1985: <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB192/>.

⁹¹⁶ Silvio Pons, "Gorbachev and the End of International Communism," in *Perestroika and the Party: National and Transnational Perspectives on European Communist Parties in the Era of Soviet Reform*, ed. Francesco Di Palma (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019), 328.

⁹¹⁷ Silvio Pons, "Western Communists, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the 1989 Revolutions," *Contemporary European History* 18 (3) (2009), 353; Pons and Di Donato, "Reform Communism," 196.

⁹¹⁸ Aldo Agosti, "Parallel Destinies: The Italian Communist Party and Perestroika," in *Perestroika and the Party: National and Transnational Perspectives on European Communist Parties in the Era of Soviet Reform*, ed. Francesco Di Palma (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2019), 180.

– an issue that will be returned to later in this chapter.⁹¹⁹ In the field of international relations, Gorbachev’s reformist influences worked to overcome the “two camps” theory that had dominated Soviet perspectives for decades, as he moved to ideas of interdependence and the “common European home.”⁹²⁰ In contrast to the Brezhnev era leadership’s sense of pride in the achievement of nuclear parity, Gorbachev evoked apocalyptic images of “nuclear suicide” to convey the peril that the superpower arms race had wreaked on the world.⁹²¹ The turning point away from Cold War rivalry to peaceful cooperation came at the Reykjavik summit in 1986 as Reagan and Gorbachev embarked on wide-ranging arms control negotiations. This outcome was the first in a chain of radical foreign policy shifts that ended the Cold War, which included the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the relinquishment of the Brezhnev doctrine even as the communist establishment in East Central Europe imploded.⁹²²

Soviet society responded with amazement to these rapidly paced political developments. In the developing social and cultural history of Perestroika, the *semidesiatniki* have appeared alternately as adjusting citizens, budding political activists, and wily entrepreneurs, or at times as subjects overwhelmed by the scale of breakdown in a society in the midst of transformation. This highly educated and urbanised Soviet generation that had grown up in the relative prosperity and security of the Brezhnev years possessed diverse interests and increased awareness of the outside world.⁹²³ On the eve of Perestroika, these attributes had encouraged greater expectations than those of previous generations, who had grown up in closer proximity to the war years, and a readiness for innovation after an entire adulthood lived without political change at the top.⁹²⁴ Most *semidesiatniki* had a stake in a

⁹¹⁹ Pons and Di Donato, “Reform Communism,” 199.

⁹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁹²¹ Brown, “The Gorbachev Revolution and the End of the Cold War,” 257-258.

⁹²² English, *Russia and the Idea of the West*, 222.

⁹²³ Judith Devlin, *The Rise of the Russian Democrats: The causes and consequences of the elite revolution* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1995), 10-11.

⁹²⁴ Newly emerging scholarship has been engaged in tracing sources of societal support for reform on the eve of Perestroika, see, for example, Zbigniew Wojnowski, “The Pop Industry from Stagnation to Perestroika: How Music Professionals Embraced the Economic Reform that Broke East European Cultural Networks,” *The Journal of Modern History* (92) (2020), 346.

reformist agenda that opened new possibilities for career mobility and entrepreneurial pursuits. The oldest members of this generation were nearly forty years of age at the beginning of Perestroika. Meanwhile the younger end of the cohort, who were born in the mid-1960s were approaching the end of their university years or occupying junior positions in their fields. Unlike the *shestidesiatniki*, who were in their fifties and sixties and gambled their all on Perestroika,⁹²⁵ this generation's lower level status in public life coupled with its greater flexibility and relative youth allowed its leading personalities to see futures for themselves beyond Perestroika and the Soviet system.

A shared element of *semidesiatniki* subjectivity which ran through this generation's distinctive though sometimes overlapping responses to Perestroika was outlined by Yurchak, who posited that many educated urbanites of this generation believed that the Soviet state was eternal right up until the final years of the Soviet Union, when their perceptions quickly flipped to view the collapse as inevitable when it occurred.⁹²⁶ The sheer deluge of new information during Perestroika that undermined existing worldviews was a powerful force for determining this shift. In the first years of glasnost the changes in the media landscape were subtle – events such as natural disasters in the USSR began to receive coverage and Soviet hippies were shown on television.⁹²⁷ But from 1987 many *semidesiatniki* became transfixed by the disclosures of uncensored journalism that gradually piled up and cumulatively pummelled the state's perceived legitimacy. One of Donald Raleigh's baby boomers from Saratov recalled "Did you read it?" became a sacred question, at a time when he judged that about sixty percent of what was discussed in the media shocked his circle of acquaintances.⁹²⁸ Those among Yurchak's subjects who had been communist believers used the term "break of consciousness" to describe the rupturing of their long-held beliefs in the face of this

⁹²⁵ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 344.

⁹²⁶ Aleksei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever, Until it was no more: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1.

⁹²⁷ Christine E. Evans, *Between Truth and Time: A History of Soviet Central Television* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 235; "Moscow Television Shows Hippie Demonstration," 24 July 1987. OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 70, Unofficial Groups.

⁹²⁸ Donald Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012), 286.

unrelenting bombardment of reporting that had often painfully forced them to adjust their worldviews.⁹²⁹

The transformations of Perestroika created excitement at MGU, where information boards appeared in the lobby of the main building in 1989, which were made by a student club who encouraged the university community to put up texts that freely commented on any issue that came to their mind.⁹³⁰ Though, as was observed by an American who came to the university as a visiting lecturer of Marxist theory in 1990, the spirit of democratisation eventually brought to light the rejection of Marxism-Leninism in this milieu.⁹³¹ This stood in marked contrast to the Thaw, when the university had been filled with fervent supporters of socialism to embolden the reformist Khrushchev. The open crisis of Marxism-Leninism at MGU was part of a union-wide trend among youth as 2.5 million left the Komsomol between 1987-1988.⁹³² The organisation's in-house destruction then proceeded apace as its central committee cynically used the Komsomol's property and financial assets, which as the sum of decades of grassroots membership dues came into billions of roubles, to finance their private business ventures in line with Gorbachev's entrepreneurial reforms.⁹³³ This behaviour embodied the *semidesiatniki* stereotype of being "totally cynical and preoccupied with 'making it' in both the old and the new way" that was described to the Taubmans, the American Russianist couple who visited Moscow when Perestroika was in full swing.⁹³⁴ But a frequent response of the *semidesiatniki* to the final years of Perestroika was disorientation and despair in the face of the economic and social collapse occurring all around. In her anthropological study of Perestroika era conversation, Nancy Ries detailed what she called Soviet speakers'

⁹²⁹ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 294.

⁹³⁰ Aleksandr Abramov, "Vol'naia mysl' na leninskikh gorakh," (Free Thought in the Lenin Hills.) *Moskovskie Novosti* (48) (1989) (newspaper clipping with no month or page number recorded). Independent Political Movements in the USSR Collection of UCL-SSEES Archives, IND 4/12.

⁹³¹ Howard L. Parsons, "Moral and Spiritual Changes," in *Witnessing the Soviet Twilight: Accounts of Americans in the USSR on the Eve of its Collapse*, ed. Dorothy S. McClellan (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company Inc. Publishers, 2014), 34.

⁹³² "Communist Youth League Membership Plummets by 2.5 million," 25 April 1988. OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 71, Unofficial Groups.

⁹³³ Steven L. Solnick, *Stealing the State: Control and Collapse in Soviet Institutions* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 112, 116-117.

⁹³⁴ Jane and William Taubman, *Moscow Spring* (New York: Summit Books, 1989), 235.

“litanies of hopelessness” that invoked the image of a road to nowhere amid impending Soviet collapse.⁹³⁵

The *semidesiatniki* activists who entered street-level politics at the beginning of Perestroika had spent the Brezhnev years orbiting critical intellectual milieus.⁹³⁶ In addition to the former Young Socialists, one such example was Iurii Skubko (b. 1953), a junior researcher at the Africa Institute turned liberal democrat, who told a British journalist in 1988, “In the 1970s, I read the usual samizdat [Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn and Medvedev]... and agreed in a vague way without ever doing anything about it, without ever thinking about how any of what I read actually related to me.”⁹³⁷ Another was the translator turned social democrat Vladimir Kardail’skii (b. 1948), who joined the party at the height of stagnation in 1978 in order to promote change from within, yet had despaired during those years in private letters to a friend that it was impossible to carry out real action to reverse the country’s decline without being put in prison.⁹³⁸ This mood of the first wave of *neformaly* activists had remained an undercurrent among the *semidesiatniki* intelligentsia in the Brezhnev years, when most had been unwilling to engage in illegal activity that would have derailed often promising careers in academic fields.⁹³⁹ Gorbachev’s legalisation of independent associations that came in the same year as Sakharov’s return to Moscow in 1986 brought this submerged tendency into the open, as these economists, historians, philosophers, mathematicians, sociologists, and jurists came forward to participate in Perestroika from below.⁹⁴⁰

⁹³⁵ Nancy Ries, *Russian Talk: Culture and conversation during Perestroika* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 170.

⁹³⁶ Aleksandr Shubin, *Paradoksy Perestroiki: Upushchennyi shans SSSR* (The Paradoxes of Perestroika: The Missed Chance of the USSR.) (M. : Veche, 2005), 122; Interview with Aleksandr Shubin, Moscow, 28 November 2016.

⁹³⁷ Martin Walker, “Russian Diary,” *The Guardian* (27 June 1988), OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 71, Unofficial Groups.

⁹³⁸ “Klub Perestroika 1987,” interview of Vladimir Kardail’skii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, Part One, December 2008-July 2010: http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remen/1269186609.html.

⁹³⁹ Carole Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva: Politicheskie kluby i Perestroika v Rossii* (Opposition without Dissidence: Political clubs and Perestroika in Russia.) (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2014), 57, 59-60.

⁹⁴⁰ These professions were recorded by those who joined Club Perestroika in 1987, the organisation which was the starting point from which many clubs of diverse political orientations, larger coalitions and political parties emerged during the years 1988-1991.

With the support of prominent *shestidesiatniki* patrons, early *neformaly* (informal clubs) passionately debated questions of contemporary politics and published legal samizdat in the spaces authorised by the party authorities, while attempting to expand their influence and social impact in conditions of fledgling democracy.⁹⁴¹ The clubs' ideological perspectives initially ranged from neo-Leninist to social democratic to post-*pravozashchitnik*.⁹⁴² Though glasnost's revelations ripped through this milieu and became a powerful radicalising force that caused many of its socialists to take the ideological journey that the *pravozashchitniki* had made two decades before at a much accelerated pace as they condemned Leninism and rapidly moved to support classical liberalism or even anticommunism.⁹⁴³ This pushed the clubs from discussion halls to the streets as rallies against Soviet repressions developed into the broader initiative of the founding of Memorial.⁹⁴⁴ As the political authority of the democratic movement gained ground, the clubs grew into popular fronts and unionwide alliances in advance of the Nineteenth Party Conference in mid-1988.⁹⁴⁵

The momentum of the election campaigns that surrounded the Congress of People's Deputies brought a second wave of *neformaly* activists into the movement. These newcomers were mostly *semidesiatniki* that had eschewed critical intellectual environments during the Brezhnev years, while typically pursuing scientific careers

Two-thirds of its members were *semidesiatniki*, including almost all of its leadership. "Spisok chlenov Kluba 'Demokraticheskaiia Perestroika'" (List of Members of the Club Democratic Perestroika.), 1989. Democratic Perestroika Fond, Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial.

⁹⁴¹ Their patrons among the *shestidesiatniki*, who envisaged the *neformaly* as a popular front in support of the reformers, included the eminent sociologist Tatiana Zaslavskaiia and jurist, Boris Kurashvili, see: Devlin, *The Rise of the Russian Democrats*, 106-107.

⁹⁴² I use the term "post-*pravozashchitnik*" to capture the position of those activists, who either were former *pravozashchitniki* or held human rights oriented views and saw their activity as a continuation of that movement's legacy. For an account of the activities of these activists, who were primarily located around Democratic Union, see, "Interview with Victor Kuzin," May 1991, in *The Troubled Birth of Russian Democracy: Parties, Personalities and Programs*, eds. Michael McFaul and Sergei Markov (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1993), 27-29.

⁹⁴³ Aleksandr Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian "Democrats"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 161.

⁹⁴⁴ Julia Wishnevskii, "Conflict Between the State and Memorial," 29 December 1988, OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 632, Informal Movements.

⁹⁴⁵ Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian "Democrats"*, 73.

and conventional paths of social promotion through the party.⁹⁴⁶ This cohort entered informal politics only when they felt assured Perestroika's reforms were genuine and unlikely to be reversed, yet they quickly became vocal advocates of a market transition and the engineers of more radical forms of oppositional activism.⁹⁴⁷ The election atmosphere sparked popular mass rallies at Luzhniki and voters associations mobilised at both the union and republic level over 1989-1990 as alliances formed among candidates, who were backed with the grassroots support of the democratic movement. This broader coalition of rising politicians and democratic activists that opposed the communist party and tied their star to Yeltsin grouped into the broader Democratic Russia movement in January 1990.⁹⁴⁸ A month later amid mass demonstrations Gorbachev revoked article six of the Soviet constitution and announced the coming of a multi-party system.⁹⁴⁹

Though Western political scientists primarily interpreted these events through a framework of democratisation, in fact only a small percentage of the population became caught up in the democratic politics of Perestroika: in August 1991, less than sixty thousand demonstrators came to defend the White House in a city of ten million.⁹⁵⁰ Yet, this was an altogether different image from the demonstration of seven people on Red Square almost twenty five years earlier, illustrating the thoroughly changed environment that the former Young Socialists found themselves in following the transition from milieus of dissent to the mass politics of Perestroika.

Intellectual Spaces of Perestroika.

When Kudiukin and Fadin left prison in early-1983, they faced the dispiriting atmosphere of Moscow's last years of stagnation with no obvious end in sight. Their wider circle was in a state of dejection. Many of their friends and families' careers had been derailed by their dissident activities, while some were left traumatised by

⁹⁴⁶ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 103.

⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 121-122.

⁹⁴⁸ McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, 69-79.

⁹⁴⁹ Kagarlitskii, *Farewell Perestroika: A Soviet Chronicle* (London: Verso, 1990), 206.

⁹⁵⁰ Kramer, "Soviet Society, Perestroika, and the End of the USSR," 59.

the affair.⁹⁵¹ The two discovered that all of the doors of academic institutes were closed to them, and eventually found jobs as industrial sociologists in a factory and in the oil processing ministry.⁹⁵² The first bright spark that reoriented their career trajectories came in 1984, when Olga Ivanova, while serving as an interpreter, came into contact with the American nuclear scientist, Michael May, who hearing of some of her troubles, offered to grant her an interview – a valuable commodity in the late-Soviet Union.⁹⁵³ The resourceful Ivanova brought the interview, which addressed themes of American and Soviet scientific cooperation, to *Vek XX i mir* (The Twentieth Century and Peace), then the little-read bulletin of the Soviet Peace Committee, and traded it in return for a job at the publication.⁹⁵⁴



Andrei Fadin (left) and Olga Fadina (centre) in 1990 (Facebook).

⁹⁵¹ See, for example, Richard Owen, “Dissident son costs expert his job,” *The Independent* (2 November 1983). OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

⁹⁵² Interview with Olga Fadina and Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 9 July 2019.

⁹⁵³ Interview with Olga Fadina, Moscow, 4 November 2016; Interview with Fadina and Kudiukin, 9 July 2019.

⁹⁵⁴ I was not able to find access to *Vek XX i mir* as far back as 1984, but the interview was of sufficient interest to be reprinted in *Argumenty i fakty*: “Vek XX i mir,” *Argumenty i fakty* (46) (13 November 1984): <https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/9250964>.

But it was Perestroika's atmosphere of liberalisation that decisively changed the wider circle's fortunes and returned them to prominent places in the Soviet intellectual establishment. In early-1987, Ivanova was able to also find work at the journal for Fadin and their new friend, Gleb Pavlovskii.⁹⁵⁵ Pavlovskii (b. 1951) was a graduate of the faculty of history at Odessa State University and ran in unofficial leftist circles in the early-1970s. By the end of that decade, he had formed contacts in the Moscow dissident community, where he became known as one of the editors of the samizdat journal *Poiski* and was a close confidant and intellectual collaborator of the famed historian, Mikhail Gefter.⁹⁵⁶ Following the authorities' suppression of *Poiski*, he was sentenced to three years exile in a case that ran in parallel with the affair of the Young Socialists.⁹⁵⁷ By mid-Perestroika, the talented former dissidents, Fadin and Pavlovskii, had joined *Vek XX i mir*'s editorial board and recruited other likeminded intellectuals as its core contributors,⁹⁵⁸ including Gefter, Viacheslav Igrunov, who was Pavlovskii's fellow dissident from Odessa, the sociologist Simon Kordonskii and legal scholar Nina Beliaeva.⁹⁵⁹ This collective influenced the publication's turn from Soviet anti-war propaganda to a forum for intelligentsia-led debate on the domestic and international dimensions of Perestroika.

Vek XX i mir's metamorphosis occurred amid wider transformations in the field of Soviet journalism. The initial impulse for the liberalisation of the media landscape came from the new Soviet leadership, yet this mission was in the main enthusiastically accepted by editors. From mid-1987, conversations commenting on revelatory articles in the Soviet press could be heard not only in Moscow kitchens,

⁹⁵⁵ According to Kudiukin, Fadin had met Pavlovskii – later a notorious political technologist, through their mutual attendance of informal meetings in 1986. “From the History of the KSI and the Club Perestroika,” Interview of Pavel Kudiukin by Aleksei Piatkovskii, March 2006: http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remen/1152374732.html.

⁹⁵⁶ D.I. Zubarev and G.V. Kuzovkin, “Pavlovskii, Gleb Olegovich.” Moscow Memorial, F. 155 Collection of Personal Files, Gleb Pavlovskii.

⁹⁵⁷ “Delo Gleba Pavlovskogo,” (The Affair of Gleb Pavlovskii.) *Vesti iz SSSR* (10) (May 1982): <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/2016/12/13/delo-gleba-pavlovskogo-1982-10-3/>.

⁹⁵⁸ In fact, Pavlovskii became the journal's editor-in-chief in 1992. Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 403.

⁹⁵⁹ Gleb Pavlovskii, “Vek dvadtsaty i konets veka,” (The Twentieth Century and the End of the Century.) Moscow Memorial, F. 155 Collection of Personal Files, Gleb Pavlovskii.

but also outside on the streets and in the metro.⁹⁶⁰ Soviet television began to show material never seen before on air including performances of songs by the bard Aleksandr Galich and interviews of former dissidents. Victims of Stalin era repression came on screen to discuss their experiences.⁹⁶¹ In 1987-1988, two *shestidesiatniki* publications that became glasnost's trail blazers, *Ogonek* and *Moskovskie novosti*, publicised the conditions in the massive camp system of the Stalin era and revisited the Moscow trials of the 1930s to call for Bukharin's rehabilitation.⁹⁶² According to the fascinated Taubmans, as glasnost progressed Marxism-Leninist philosophy was disparaged in the press as "neither Marxist nor Leninist nor philosophy."⁹⁶³ The Soviet present also came under scrutiny as unflattering comparisons with the United States became public knowledge and cracks in the everyday conditions of Soviet life were publicised.

These developments undid the previous veil of secrecy that had shrouded official data and prevented society's access to a comprehensive picture of Soviet decline.⁹⁶⁴ Though after years of positively spun propaganda, this rush of negative information made a balanced assessment equally difficult and instead fostered crippling mass disillusionment with the Soviet system. These circumstances drove Anatolii Cherniaev to despair in his diary at the end of 1988: "In the newspapers, journals, and on television, there is the total discord...of our entire seventy year-long system. None of the terminology is shunned anymore—down even to totalitarianism."⁹⁶⁵

Stephen Lovell has remarked how Perestroika era journalism represented the circulation in wider society of the political discourses and literary texts that

⁹⁶⁰ Mary Dejevsky, "Glasnost' and the Soviet Press," in *Culture and Media in the USSR Today*, eds. Julian Graffy and Geoffrey A. Hosking (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 26.

⁹⁶¹ James Dingley, "Soviet Television and Glasnost'," in *Culture and Media in the USSR Today*, eds. Julian Graffy and Geoffrey A. Hosking (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 13.

⁹⁶² Dejevsky, "Glasnost' and the Soviet Press," 27-28.

⁹⁶³ Taubmans, *Moscow Spring*, 338-339.

⁹⁶⁴ Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies in the Period of Glasnost: Responses to Brezhnev's Stagnation* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 67-68.

⁹⁶⁵ Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, Entry for 31 December 1988: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB250/Chernyaev_Diary_1988.pdf.

already were familiar to the critical intelligentsia from the time of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years.⁹⁶⁶ Highlighting the case of *Ogonek*, he argued that this publication made “the liberal ideology of the *shestidesiatniki* accessible to the mass intelligentsia.”⁹⁶⁷ Though high-ranking liberals like Cherniaev above, who were invested in gradual democratisation, were quickly unsettled by the cumulatively radicalising effect that anti-Stalinist editors’ critiques of the Soviet past had on society at a time when broader economic and political destabilisation was underway.

Fadin and Pavlovskii and other *semidesiatniki*, who had occupied a space at the oppositional end of this same cultural field during the Brezhnev years, welcomed this radicalisation. Remote from the political levers of power, these *semidesiatniki* with a continuing critical attitude to the party leadership saw a chance to participate in the transformation of society through the cultural sphere of journalism. Pavlovskii remarked to a Western source in 1991:

[*Vek XX i mir*’s editors and core contributors] were united by the project of a cultural and at the same time individualistic alternative to the policy of liberalisation from above – ‘Perestroika.’ [They] rejected the belief, which was widespread in the Moscow liberal environment, that the totalitarian system was superficial and would be responsive to reforms.⁹⁶⁸

The liberalised conditions that, in Pavlovskii’s words had permitted “the editor-in-chief of *Vek XX i mir* Anatolii Beliaev” to bring a “convicted *samizdatchik* into the editorial office” provided these former dissidents with a sizeable audience. *Vek XX i mir* began the Perestroika years with a circulation of 25,000,⁹⁶⁹ which grew to 100,000 from 1987-1991 – a scale incomparable to their former experience with samizdat production.⁹⁷⁰

⁹⁶⁶ Stephen Lovell, *The Russian Reading Revolution: Print Culture in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Eras* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 112.

⁹⁶⁷ Stephen Lovell, “Ogonek: The Crisis of a Genre,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 48(6) (1996), 990.

⁹⁶⁸ Pavlovskii, “Vek dvadtsatyi i konets veka.”

⁹⁶⁹ Viacheslav Igrunov, “Eto byl shok,” 2000: <http://www.igrunov.ru/cv/vchk-cv-chosenpubl/vchk-cv-chosenpubl-shok.html>.

⁹⁷⁰ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 403; Though to provide a relative comparison, *Ogonek* had a circulation of over three million in 1989. Julian Graffy, “The Literary Press,” in *Culture and Media in the USSR Today*, eds. Julian Graffy and Geoffrey A. Hosking (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 155.



***Vek XX i mir's* journalists with the economist Iavlinskii. Left to right: Mikhail Gefter, Viacheslav Igrunov, Grigorii Iavlinskii and Gleb Pavlovskii, 1993 (Meduza).**

From the standpoint of the late 1990s, Pavlovskii considered that *Vek XX i mir* was defined by its status as a “bearer of the [unofficial] culture of the 1970s that broke into the mainstream press.”⁹⁷¹ The fluidity of this former dissident identity in a rapidly evolving climate was reinforced by Fadin’s participation in both the state and independent press during Perestroika. He was joined by other former Young Socialists, such as Vladimir Pribylovskii, who first began his later successful career in journalism in the independent publications, *Khronograf* and *Panorama*.⁹⁷² As editor of Club Perestroika’s monthly, *Otkrytaia zona* (Open Zone), Fadin attended a meeting of editors of independent publications in Leningrad in October 1987, which had the air of a post-dissident milieu as most of the participants had begun their activities during the Brezhnev years. Joined by representatives from official publications such as *Literaturnaia gazeta* and *Izvestiia* as well as the Komsomol, the meeting’s speakers considered the place of the independent press in the new media landscape.⁹⁷³ Fadin addressed the hall to recommend its organisation of a wider

⁹⁷¹ Pavlovskii, “Vek dvadtsatyi i konets veka.”

⁹⁷² “Avtobiografia,” (Autobiography.) in *Dvazhdy Dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo*, eds. Anatolii Kopeikin and Leonid Romankov (SPb. : Zvezda, 2017), 4-5.

⁹⁷³ Bill Keller, “Soviet Underground Press Movement Continues to Spread,” *New York Times* (12 January 1988). OSA, f. 300, s.f., 80, c. 1, box 880, Samizdat 1987-1992.

campaign to pressure for the guarantee of freedom of the press during the approaching society-wide debate on the incoming “law on the press.”⁹⁷⁴

As an official press organ, *Vek XX i mir* was unique in giving a consistent voice to rising *semidesiatniki* figures engaged in informal politics, while also featuring *shestidesiatniki* status intellectuals, who as prominent supporters of Perestroika led public discussions in *Vek XX i mir* and elsewhere around the early direction of the reforms. This composition not only reflected the intellectual networks that these former dissidents had cultivated, but also demonstrated the authority that the *shestidesiatniki* continued to command in this post-dissident *semidesiatniki* milieu. In 1988, the journal held two roundtables on the path of Perestroika that featured the writers, Boris Mozhaev, Ales Adamovich, historians Leonid Batkin and Iurii Afanas’ev, and sociologists Len Karpinskii and Dmitrii Furman, as well as the *neformaly* leaders, Viacheslav Igrunov and Grigorii Pel’man.⁹⁷⁵ *Vek XX i mir* also participated in the race to officially publish the literary works that had circulated in samizdat during the Brezhnev years. As calls to publish Solzhenitsyn grew louder in 1988, the journal slated the emigre author’s “Live not by lies” for its December 1988 issue until it was stopped by a call from the Central Committee, before later publishing the text in February 1989 – the first of the official press in Moscow to feature Solzhenitsyn’s writing.⁹⁷⁶

In contrast to the limited influence that IMEMO’s high-ranking liberals had on the course of Soviet foreign policy during the collapse of détente, under Gorbachev the institute encountered a fleeting silver age as its researchers’ expertise was channeled in unexpected directions.⁹⁷⁷ IMEMO’s specialists provided support for Gorbachev’s foreign policy summits and were later advisors for the country’s

⁹⁷⁴ “Stenogramma informatsionnoi vstrechi-dialoga redaktorov nezavisimyykh izdaniy 24-25 oktiabria 1987 v Leningrade,” (Stenogram of the information meeting-dialogue of editors of independent publications, 24-25 October, Leningrad.) Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial’no-politicheskoi istorii – molodezhnyi arkhiv (RGASPI-M), f. M-1, op. 95, d. 393, l. 11-12.

⁹⁷⁵ “Barrikady perestroiki,” (Barricades of Perestroika.) *Vek XX i mir* (2) (1988), 12-16, and “Chto my poteriali i chto my ishchem?” (What have we lost and what are we looking for?.) *Vek XX i mir* (8) (1988), 20-34.

⁹⁷⁶ Graffy, “The Literary Press,” 137.

⁹⁷⁷ Petr Cherkasov, *IMEMO: Ocherk istorii* (Essay on IMEMO History) (M.: Ves’ mir, 2016), 7.

transition to a market economy.⁹⁷⁸ Though more generally, the institute worked towards revising Soviet understandings of international relations and its conceptions of socialist and capitalist systems, in line with the new leadership's recognition that much had changed in the world since its hardened Marxist-Leninist theoretical frameworks were originally developed.⁹⁷⁹ The arrival of "new thinking" allowed the reformist institute to return to older projects that had been shelved under Inozemtsev for fear of encroaching on the territory of the hardline party ideologues.

IMEMO's new director, Evgenii Primakov encouraged the overhaul of methodology that prevented accurate forecasting and analysis of global developments.⁹⁸⁰ Those among the wider circle of the former Young Socialists that remained at IMEMO in the wake of the affair were active participants in this process. Taking stock of the recent achievements of Soviet academic journals, in October 1988 Cherniaev noted in his diary that Viktor Sheinis' article in the latest issue of *MEMO*, taken with other publications, contributed to "the destruction of the dogmas and principles with which we lived for two-thirds of the twentieth century."⁹⁸¹ As Marxism-Leninism came to lose its standing as a political ideology in the eyes of most of the Soviet public, its methodology was eliminated entirely in some fields of Soviet academia.⁹⁸² The disintegration of this interpretative framework, which occurred at the same time as Soviet perceptions of the United States suddenly shifted from imperialist enemy to future ally, virtually destroyed the field of American studies as it had existed up to that point.⁹⁸³ Gorbachev's reform socialism received determined support from internationalist scholars: in 1988, Kiva Maidanik's work *Revolución de las esperanzas* (Revolution of Hopes) shone publicity on Perestroika's progressive

⁹⁷⁸ Ibid., 641, 653.

⁹⁷⁹ Ibid., 586-587, 598-599.

⁹⁸⁰ Ibid., 591.

⁹⁸¹ Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, Entry for 28 October 1988: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB250/Chernyaev_Diary_1988.pdf.

⁹⁸² Slava Gerovitch, "Perestroika of the History of Technology and Science in the USSR: Changes in the Discourse," *Technology and Culture* 37(1) (1996), 111.

⁹⁸³ Sergei I. Zhuk, *Soviet Americana: The cultural history of Russian and Ukrainian Americanists* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2018), 230.

agenda in the Spanish-speaking world.⁹⁸⁴ Though as glasnost became radicalised, these dedicated internationalists discovered that their beliefs were out of step with the broader mood of society in the face of strong public criticism of the squandering of Soviet resources in the Third World.⁹⁸⁵ The declining fortunes of ideologically driven interventions and Soviet economic capabilities provided the authority for IMEMO's Third World specialists, Georgii Mirskii and Nodari Simoniia, to express to a receptive audience of the CPSU international department in 1987 that Soviet foreign policy in the Third World needed to be based on realities rather than ideological wishes.⁹⁸⁶

The social environment of the institute was transformed as Perestroika fostered an atmosphere of lively and open discussion with a record number of foreign visitors, though this was balanced by the deterioration of its receptions as shortages of food and basic necessities in the country became worse.⁹⁸⁷ Perestroika's high culture was given a spotlight in IMEMO's assembly hall, where the institute's researchers enjoyed spectacles featuring famed artists, directors and musicians and Primakov could often be found seated in the front row.⁹⁸⁸ Glasnost also made possible the travel abroad of researchers, who had previously been considered politically unreliable and were classified *nevyezdnoi* (banned from foreign travel outside of socialist countries), including the scholars who had become entangled in the affair of the Young Socialists.⁹⁸⁹ During the case's fall out, Tatiana Vorozheikina had been fired from IMEMO until she went to court to fight wrongful termination and won, though it was only under the new director Aleksandr Iakovlev that she and Kiva Maidanik's *spetskhran* access was reinstated.⁹⁹⁰ Mirskii acted as Vorozheikina's

⁹⁸⁴ Tobias Rupperecht, *Soviet Internationalism after Stalin: Interaction and Exchange between the USSR and Latin America during the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 281).

⁹⁸⁵ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 384.

⁹⁸⁶ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 381.

⁹⁸⁷ Cherkasov, *IMEMO*, 586, 616, 627.

⁹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 616.

⁹⁸⁹ In the early 1980s, about 120 IMEMO researchers were classified as *nevyezdnoi*. *Ibid.*, 350, f. 2.

⁹⁹⁰ Interview with Tatiana Vorozheikina and Igor Dolutskii, Moscow, 21 November 2016.

witness in court and like Maidanik was subjected to party discipline.⁹⁹¹ Though, in the thawed conditions of 1988, Mirskii's longtime *nevyeznoi* status was finally lifted. He realised, "All of my countless political statements over the decades no longer mattered," when following brief questioning on earlier interactions with foreigners, the KGB cleared him for travel.⁹⁹² Vorozheikina and Mirskii made their first trip outside of the socialist countries as part of an IMEMO delegation. While Soviet citizens who fulfilled their dreams of the first trip abroad during Perestroika usually selected Europe or the West, these internationalist scholars travelled to Latin America.⁹⁹³ After a twenty four hour flight that allowed for many plane refuellings, they arrived in Argentina and went swimming at Mar del Plata and enjoyed the local food. According to their romanticised recollections, Mirskii, who was a polyglot yet did not include Spanish in his arsenal of languages, addressed a communist party meeting in Buenos Aires on the theme of Stalin and Stalinism in Spanish in a lecture whose anti-Stalinist direction deeply touched some of the elderly Argentine communists.⁹⁹⁴

The Last of the Dissident Émigrés.

In 1981, some of the Young Socialists communicated their feelings of pathos for dissidents who had gone into emigration, yet their perspectives included a sense of disconnection that stemmed not only from the distances of the Cold War era, but also because they were separated from them by a generation:

⁹⁹¹ Petr Cherkasov, *IMEMO: Portret na fone epokhi* (M. : Ves' mir, 2004), 511-512.

⁹⁹² According to various accounts including his own memoirs, Mirskii had not travelled beyond the socialist countries before the affair of the Young Socialists because of political unreliable statements and a refusal to cooperate with the KGB. In Vorozheikina's recollection, Mirskii delivered a toast on 9 May at IMEMO in 1979 that was a particular strike against him: Let's drink to all those who defended their homeland on Malaia zemlia and did not sit things out in the trenches of Stalingrad!" "Vostokoved Georgii Mirskii: 'Zhizn' v trekh epokhakh,'" Round Table with Tatiana Vorozheikina, Aleksei Malashenko and Andrei Ostal'skii: <https://www.svoboda.org/a/27512860.html>. See Georgii Mirskii, *Zhizn' v trekh epokhakh* (M. : Letnii sad, 2001), 244; see also, Chris Miller, "Georgii Mirskii and Soviet Theories of Authoritarian Modernisation," *The International History Review* 41(2) (2019), 309.

⁹⁹³ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 295.

⁹⁹⁴ Mirskii, *Zhizn' v trekh epokhakh*, 245; "Vostokoved Georgii Mirskii: 'Zhizn' v trekh epokhakh,'" Round Table with Vorozheikina, Malashenko and Ostal'skii.

Among political émigrés there are many people who deserve our respect for their activities in the USSR. These people represent yesterday's democratic movement in our country. Unfortunately, some emigrate not only because they are forced to, but also from a feeling of their own powerlessness. Perhaps this is why we are bitterly observing the transformation of Eastern European movements in emigration into permanent émigré movements. The isolation of émigrés from internal dissidentism is probably even more painful for them than it is for us. Unfortunately, there is no real interaction between us and those in emigration, we are even poorly informed about the processes taking place there.⁹⁹⁵

The wave of emigration of the 1970s was the product of the Kremlin's efforts to balance its détente policy with the effective management of domestic dissent.⁹⁹⁶ This cohort included long-term dissidents, who were stripped of Soviet citizenship and physically forced onto a plane, as occurred in the cases of Vladimir Bukovskii and Vladimir Borisov.⁹⁹⁷ Though the more typical profile was that of semi-dissident Soviet Jewish intellectuals, who had encountered antisemitic obstacles in their careers and social environment and no longer saw prospects for themselves or their families, nor the likelihood of political improvements in the Soviet Union after 1968.⁹⁹⁸ The sociologist Vladimir Shlapentokh, who belonged to this category, emigrated to the United States as one of more than 80,000 Soviet Jews who left the Soviet Union during 1978-1979.⁹⁹⁹ He later outlined the serious professional consequences and social ostracism that awaited those who permanently burned their bridges with the Soviet state by applying for an exit visa.¹⁰⁰⁰ From emigration, many former dissidents remained connected to their previous lives and became

⁹⁹⁵ OSA f. 300, s.f. 85, c. 9, box 111, Published Samizdat, AS 4619.

⁹⁹⁶ Barbara Martin, "A Struggle across the Iron Curtain: Soviet Dissidents in exile in the 1970s," in *Mobility in the Russian, Central and East European Past*, ed. Roisin Healy (London: Routledge, 2019), 95-96.

⁹⁹⁷ Joshua Rubinstein, *Soviet Dissidents: Their Struggle for Human Rights* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1980), 233.

⁹⁹⁸ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 312-313.

⁹⁹⁹ Viktor Zaslavskii and Robert J. Brym, *Jewish Emigration and Soviet Nationality Policy* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983), 123.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Vladimir Shlapentokh, *Love, Friendship and Marriage in the Soviet Union: Ideals and practices* (New York: Praeger, 1984), 233.

active lobbyists on behalf of those still in the Soviet Union or participated in the samizdat-tamizdat networks that were detailed in the previous chapter.¹⁰⁰¹

During their years of dissent, the Young Socialists had deliberately limited the scope of their oppositional actions and used conspiratorial measures to protect their promising careers and friendship networks. Emigration entered the minds of most of the circle only in the wake of the consequences of their dissent, and for the majority the idea did not take root. For those who chose to leave the Soviet Union – Nikolai Ivanov, Mikhail Rivkin, Andrei Shilkov and Aleksei Sobchenko, the proximity of Perestroika shaped an easier path to emigration and impacted the political context of their new lives as Soviet liberalisation remade the international Cold War landscape. Glasnost removed many of the negative consequences of seeking an exit visa, which made these former dissidents part of the much larger final wave of Soviet emigration. In 1988, Soviet newspapers reported that emigration applications had nearly doubled while the rate of rejection by UVIR had drastically fallen.¹⁰⁰² The initial hopes that the intelligentsia placed in Gorbachev's reforms meant that those who left during early-Perestroika were less likely to be motivated to emigrate for political reasons than the wave of the 1970s.¹⁰⁰³ When the economic reforms failed, bringing devastation to the scientific and cultural fields, what had been a steady trickle became a stream, as Soviet intellectuals perceived the risks of a descent into Russian fascism and searched for work abroad to secure their own economic wellbeing.¹⁰⁰⁴ Despite being part of this larger, final wave of Soviet emigration that spanned the years 1988 to 1993 and included 1.5 million people, the portraits of those former Young Socialists who chose emigration contained distinctly familiar strokes to the dissident émigrés of the 1970s.¹⁰⁰⁵

The Belarusian historian, Ivanov, who had started a Polish family during his scholarly postings to Wrocław had registered for emigration from the Soviet Union to Poland already in 1981, but his application had been derailed by the Young

¹⁰⁰¹ Martin, "A Struggle across the Iron Curtain," 96.

¹⁰⁰² Brian McNair, *Glasnost, Perestroika and the Soviet Media* (London: Routledge, 1991), 58.

¹⁰⁰³ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 300.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 355.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 355.

Socialists' arrests. He was called in by the KGB as a witness to the investigation, though Fadin and Ivanov's letter to Solidarność and his authorship of the samizdat journal *Novaia nasha niva* remained undiscovered, which saved him from being moved to accused as he had feared.¹⁰⁰⁶ He remembered that in the early-1980s "I was absolutely sure that communism was forever." The idea of leaving had gradually registered with him as he observed the Soviet Jewish emigration of the 1970s. He later explained, "I saw all the stupidity of this ideology," yet felt that the communist system had permeated Soviet society to the extent that nothing could be changed. In his mind, a case in point was its overpowering of even familial bonds: "I could not convince anybody [of my ideas] because I could not even convince my own mother."¹⁰⁰⁷ The strength of Polish civil society that he observed during his academic visits in the years before martial law made a great impression on him, while the comparatively light sentences for political opposition encouraged his belief that "repressions were not real" in Poland.



Nikolai Ivanov, 1980s (IPN).

Ivanov's actively dissenting outlook that was first stimulated in Moscow by the company of the Young Socialists received a boost from the freer political conditions of Poland. He recalled, "My roots were in Russia, in the Young Socialists,

¹⁰⁰⁶ Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, Wrocław, 19 September 2016.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Ibid.

but my roots blossomed in Poland.”¹⁰⁰⁸ His permission to emigrate came with Perestroika in 1985 and he joined his family and took up a professorship in political science at the university in Wrocław.¹⁰⁰⁹ Upon arrival he continued his earlier association with Polish opposition activist Kornel Morawiecki and intensified his publishing in the Polish independent press. In the conditions of martial law, Morawiecki had founded the underground conspiratorial *Solidarność Walcząca* (Fighting Solidarity), that was modelled on the underground partisans of the Second World War.¹⁰¹⁰ It was a radical splinter group of about 1500 activists from *Solidarność* that aimed to overthrow communism – a proposition that took it out of the mainstream in mid-1980s Poland – and replace it with a form of social democracy that Morawiecki had developed called “Solidarism.”¹⁰¹¹

As a participant in *Solidarność Walcząca*, Ivanov learned the more sophisticated techniques of the Polish opposition that included largescale independent publishing, effective countersurveillance of the security services and transmission from underground radio stations.¹⁰¹² By the late-1980s, the Polish opposition had travelled further than virtually anybody had anticipated in its struggle to wrest greater concessions from the Polish United Workers’ Party (PUWP). Delegations of Soviet social democratic activists, including Fadin, Kudiukin and Oleg Rumiantsev, made visits to Poland to learn from the experience of the Polish opposition.¹⁰¹³ In the aftermath of the roundtable negotiations of 1989, Ivanov greeted his former dissident friends at an unofficial conference, that included the

¹⁰⁰⁸ Interview with Nikolai Ivanov, Wrocław, 8 December 2016.

¹⁰⁰⁹ “Kwestionariusz osobowy dla cudzoziemców: składających podanie o zezwolenie na pobyt stały w Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej,” (Foreigners’ Personal Questionnaire: Application for permanent residency permit in the Polish People’s Republic.), 05.09.1984. Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), Warsaw. Personal file of Nikolai Ivanov, IPN WR 237/2642, 16.

¹⁰¹⁰ Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolutions: Central Europe 1989* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 30.

¹⁰¹¹ Krzysztof Brzechczyn, “Freedom, Solidarity, Independence: Political thought of the ‘Fighting Solidarity’ organisation,” in *The Idea of Solidarity: Philosophical and social contexts*, ed. Dariusz Dobrzanski (Washington DC: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2011), 159-167.

¹⁰¹² Interview with Ivanov, 19 September 2016.

¹⁰¹³ Interview with Ivanov, 8 December 2016; Interview with Kudiukin, 1 December 2016; Interview with Oleg Rumiantsev, Moscow, 1 December 2016. See also, Andrei Fadin, “Pol’skii kollazh,” (Polish Collage.) *Vek XX i mir* (5) (1989), 40-46.

participation of Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, which was intended to introduce the Soviets to practices of the Polish opposition. As a facilitator of this transfer, Ivanov's actions were in marked continuity with the dissident émigrés of the 1970s, who had channeled vital contacts, financial resources and access to publishing houses to the domestic movement. Though his location inside the Eastern Bloc put a unique spin on his support for Soviet dissent from afar and aided the strengthening of transnational contacts between the national dissident movements in the Eastern Bloc just as the bloc itself was dissolving. In the post-communist years, Ivanov continued his commitment to the politics of his homeland and was a member of the Belarusian editorial staff of Radio Liberty from 1989 to 2004.¹⁰¹⁴

In his first decade in emigration, Aleksei Sobchenko also took up a posting at Radio Liberty, the institution that had been a critical pillar in the transnational network of dissent. In April 1982, Sobchenko had run from the investigation of the Young Socialists and spent time working construction. After the heat died down, he returned to Moscow and worked as a translator for Roy Medvedev, who paid him with the royalties he earned from the sales of his works in the West. Sobchenko typed up translations of foreign literature in the older historians' apartment until 1984.¹⁰¹⁵ He later worked as a receptionist, while attending meetings of Club Perestroika. Though he was at first struck by optimism in response to Gorbachev's reforms, he also remembered in those years "Everyone wanted to emigrate." Sobchenko married an American woman, who was working as a nurse at the US embassy, and obtained US citizenship.¹⁰¹⁶ Throughout the 1990s, he worked for Radio Liberty in Munich and Prague. The following decade, the talented polyglot was able to fulfil his potential through building the career that he had not been able to make in the Soviet Union. He worked for the US State Department as a translator and interpreter, returning periodically to Moscow on business trips.¹⁰¹⁷

¹⁰¹⁴ "Mikolaj Lew Iwanow," IPN Solidarność Walcząca Portal: <https://sw.ipn.gov.pl/ws/biogramy/5323,Mikolaj-Lew-Iwanow.html>.

¹⁰¹⁵ Interview with Aleksei Sobchenko, via Skype, 27 February 2021.

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰¹⁷ Aleksei Sobchenko, "Vzgliad s drugoi storony okean," (View from the other side of the ocean) in *Dvazhdy dissident: Sbornik pamiati Vladimira Pribylovskogo*, eds. Anatolii Kopeikin and Leonid Romankov (SPb. : Zvezda, 2017), 107.

The almost spiritual connection that Mikhail Rivkin had felt for the human rights movement from afar in his youth was transformed into a religious identity in the camps. During his four year imprisonment, he formed a close connection to the famous refusenik, Iosif Begun, through whom he discovered Judaism.¹⁰¹⁸ Rivkin began to learn Hebrew and found solace in observing Jewish customs with other prisoners.¹⁰¹⁹ He learned the Jewish holidays by copying a religious calendar that Anatolii Shcharanskii (later Natan Sharanskii) had made during his own sentence and dated several years ahead in anticipation of the needs of future prisoners.¹⁰²⁰ Though the ultimate goals of the *pravozashchitniki* and those Soviet Jews seeking aliyah diverged, there was a strong overlap between the participants, practices and experiences of the two movements.¹⁰²¹ Rivkin's spiritual transformation was cemented by this blended culture being passed down to him in the camps. He joined in hunger strikes together with other prisoners to demand news of Anatolii Marchenko, following the veteran *pravozashchitnik's* final hunger strike that resulted in his death, tragically only a couple of months before Gorbachev's general amnesty of political prisoners.

When Rivkin returned to Moscow following his release in March 1987, he was taken aback by the prominence of Fadin, Kudiukin and Kagarlitskii in the blossoming informal political life of Perestroika.¹⁰²² Rivkin reconnected with Andrei Shilkov, the Young Socialists' former contact in Petrozavodsk, who had arrived in Moscow after his own release from prison. By then Shilkov was a journalist for *Glasnost*, one of the major informal publications that carried the mantle of the human rights movement into Perestroika, which was published in Moscow, Paris and New York.¹⁰²³ It was

¹⁰¹⁸ Rivkin published a short memoir of his experiences in the camps: "Dva goda na kame," <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1178396917.html>.

¹⁰¹⁹ "Mikhail Rivkin," *Zametki po evreiskii istorii* (2013): <http://z.berkovich-zametki.com/avtory/rivkin/>.

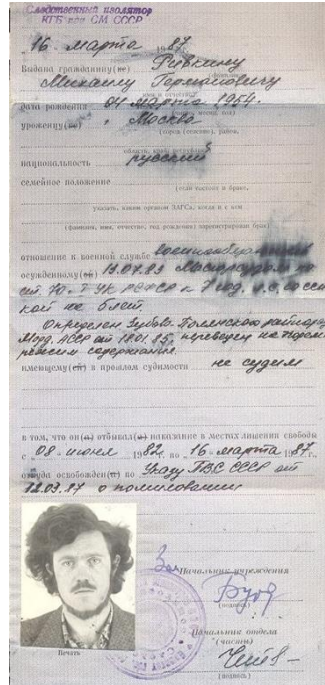
¹⁰²⁰ Rivkin, "Dva goda na kame."

¹⁰²¹ Juliane Fürst, "Born under the Same Star: Refuseniks, dissidents and late socialist society," in *The Jewish Movement in the Soviet Union*, ed. Yaacov Roi (Washington DC: The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 2012), 157, 162-163.

¹⁰²² "Osvobozhdenie bol'shoi gruppy politzakiuchennikh," (Release of a Large Group of Political Prisoners.) *Vesti iz SSSR* (3) (1987): <https://vesti-iz-sssr.com/2017/01/15/osvobozhdenie-politzekov-1987-3-1/#more-2366>.

¹⁰²³ The other was the former *pravozashchitnik*, Alexander Podrabinek's *Ekspress Khronika*. See "Directory of Soviet 'Informal' Political Organisations and Samizdat

edited by the long-time *pravozashchitnik*, Sergei Grigoriants, who had served part of his last prison sentence with Shilkov in Perm and later Rivkin in Chistopol.¹⁰²⁴



Documentation of Mikhail Rivkin's official pardon and release (Facebook).

Rivkin and Shilkov published an account of the affair of the Young Socialists in *Glasnost* in 1989 that presented a highly unflattering portrait of Kagarlitskii, Kudiukin and Fadin's behaviour.¹⁰²⁵ The returned prisoners concluded by linking these past events to the former Young Socialist leaders' increasing authority in the present: "These are people who have already proven their absolute spiritual and moral failure as potential leaders, but still continue to claim leadership positions...And this, of course, is absolutely unacceptable."¹⁰²⁶ Their exposé, which accused Kagarlitskii, Kudiukin and Fadin of conceit, cowardice and betrayal,

Publications," Part I (Moscow and Leningrad) (1988), 14, 17. Independent Political Movements in the USSR Collection, UCL-SSEES Archives, IND 1/14.

¹⁰²⁴ Bill Keller, "Where Cold and Hunger are the Tools of Torture," *New York Times* (22 February 1987): <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/22/weekinreview/where-cold-and-food-are-the-tools-of-torture.html>; Rivkin, "Dva goda na kame"; Andrei Shilkov's short memoirs: pubs.ejwiki.org/wiki/Флибустьер,_не_принявший_отставки._Часть_1.

¹⁰²⁵ Mikhail Rivkin and Andrei Shilkov, "Delo Moskovskikh sotsialistov," (The Affair of the Moscow Socialists.) *Glasnost'* (29) (1989), 238-275.

¹⁰²⁶ *Ibid.*, 275.

circulated widely among the informal political movement. In its aftermath, there were instances at informal meetings where Fadin and Kudiukin were publicly charged by other informal participants with collaborating with the authorities, which was regarded as a violation of dissident ethics, and they were criticised for their unwitting role in Rivkin's imprisonment. Reactions were divided where some swiftly condemned them, whereas others adopted a more conciliatory attitude and commented that almost none of their critics had dared to carry out dissident activities in the Brezhnev years, and did not know how they would have behaved under similar circumstances.¹⁰²⁷



Andrei Shilkov's Glasnost journal press ID (EzheWiki).

Rivkin and Shilkov's exposé was a turning point on their own dissident journeys. The two had found their way to the socialist dissident circle out of an absence of connections to human rights activists. Their involvement in its practical work occurred through the filter of conspiracy that eventually appeared childish to these dissidents, who longed for opportunities to participate in collective open opposition. The conspiratorial foundations of their contact with the circle, instead of the everyday friendships that other members of the circle shared, obstructed their access to the circle's sense of camaraderie, which was so vital to other Young Socialists' memories. Yet Rivkin and Shilkov's participation in the Young Socialists that led to prison sentences paradoxically produced the connections to the *pravozashchitniki* and spiritual engagement that they had originally been seeking.

¹⁰²⁷ According to the then-archivist and leader of the historical informal, *Byloe* (Past), Yaroslav Leont'ev, one such occasion took place at the first meeting of the organising committee of the political club, Moscow Tribune, in 1989, cited in "Ot poslednikh dissidentov k pervym neformalam," (From the Last Dissidents to the First Informals," Interview of Yaroslav Leont'ev by Aleksei Piatkovskii, Part Two: http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remen/1122559056.html.

For Rivkin socialist dissent turned out to be a stumbling block on the path to finding Jewish identity. In February 1989, this road took him to Israel.¹⁰²⁸ He reflected at the time, “Even after I put a kippah and began to learn Hebrew, I had no intention of leaving here.” The transformations of Perestroika paved Rivkin’s new path: “I wouldn’t have left if I hadn’t really been convinced when I was released, that life here was completely different and that I was no longer as badly needed here as I used to be.”¹⁰²⁹ In Israel, Rivkin trained and then practiced as a Rabbi. Four years later at the tail end of the final wave of Soviet emigration, disillusioned by the wild capitalism of the 1990s, Shilkov followed Rivkin to Israel.

Political Transformations.

Following Kagarlitskii’s release from prison, he worked as a lift operator while dedicating himself to a manuscript that analysed recent developments among the international Left and called for the unified pursuit of revolutionary reformism.¹⁰³⁰ From 1986, when Perestroika presented new possibilities for autonomous action, he immediately returned to political life and became a leading figure in successive socialist groupings and left-leaning alliances before becoming part of the executive committee of the newly-established Socialist Party and a deputy of the Moscow City Soviet in 1990.¹⁰³¹ Kagarlitskii recalled that in this new era, “There were a lot of microphones and cameras, moreover Soviet ones.”¹⁰³² The conditions of glasnost, which granted greater access to foreign reporters while

¹⁰²⁸ “Mikhail Rivkin.” *Zametki po evreiskii istorii*.

¹⁰²⁹ Rivkin, “Interv’iu Alekseiu Piatkovskomu i Marine Perevozkinoi ot 1990 goda (s kommentariami M. Rivkina ot dekabria 2007 g.):” <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/dissidents/rivkin/1200923212.html>.

¹⁰³⁰ “Kagarlitskii, Boris Iul’evich.”: http://www.igrunov.ru/cat/vchk-cat-names/others/mosc/1977_1987/vchk-cat-names-other-kagarl.html; This manuscript was later published in English translation during Perestroika as *Dialectic of Change*. Boris Kagarlitskii, *The Dialectic of Change* (London: Verso, 1990), vii.

¹⁰³¹ Sergei Mitrokhin and Michael E. Urban, “Social Groups, Party Elites and Russia’s New Democrats,” in *Russia in Flux: The political and social consequences of reform*, ed. David Lane (Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 1992), 93.

¹⁰³² Shubin, *Predannaia demokratiia*, 117.

transforming Soviet journalists' coverage of previous zones of dissent, thrust the re-styled new leftist with a talent for self-promotion into the spotlight.¹⁰³³



Andrei Isaev, Vladimir Gurbolikov and Boris Kagarlitskii (right) at the Conference of the Federation of Socialist Social Clubs (FSOK), January 1988 (Aleksandr Shubin).

Kagarlitskii's entrance into Soviet public life was infused with the stigma of his dissident record. His former mentor, Roy Medvedev, whose previously unpublishable interpretation of Soviet history was entirely suited to the new leadership's anti-Stalinist mission, was regarded by the reformers as an ideal political personality for the times and received their patronage.¹⁰³⁴ But Kagarlitskii's early pursuit of politics from below with a critical orientation towards Perestroika attracted the old charges of disloyalty in spite of the new conditions. In January 1988, possibly at the direction of the KGB, *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* published an attack on the informal movement, though the authors reserved the bulk of their fire for Kagarlitskii personally. Turning the tables on his recent critiques of the bureaucratism of the Soviet system, they charged: "in Kagarlitskii we see before us a latter-day bureaucrat who is a parasite feeding off initiative, glasnost and democratisation."¹⁰³⁵ His former Young Socialist collaborator, Vladimir Pribylovskii came to his defense in a sharply worded letter to *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* and

¹⁰³³ McNair, *Glasnost, Perestroika and the Soviet Media*, 169.

¹⁰³⁴ Barbara Martin, *Dissident Histories in the Soviet Union from De-Stalinisation to Perestroika* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), 190.

¹⁰³⁵ V. Gubenko and N Piskarev, "Samozvantsy i 'samodel'shchiki'" (The Self-Styled and the "Home grown") *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* (31 January 1988). OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 70, Unofficial Groups.

inquired, “Comrade editor, what were you doing in the period of stagnation?” and upbraided them, “You are now being paid to do what Kagarlitskii was imprisoned for a year in Lefortovo for – criticising this exact stagnation.”¹⁰³⁶ In a sign of the changing times, Kagarlitskii took on *Komsoml’skaia Pravda* and became the first former dissident to win a libel case against a Soviet newspaper.¹⁰³⁷ Less easy for him to dispel was the effect of the Rivkin affair, which tainted his reputation among informal political circles and followed him for years in the independent press.¹⁰³⁸ In the immediate wake of Rivkin and Shilkov’s published exposé, it became a weapon for the growing liberal faction to challenge the socialists within the Moscow Popular Front, when they sent an open note to the organisation’s coordinating committee demanding Kagarlitskii’s removal on the grounds of his alleged collaboration with the KGB.¹⁰³⁹

The Western Left’s sharp interest in the long-awaited democratisation taking place in the Soviet Union occurred at the same time as Cold War borders were disintegrating. In these transformed conditions, the loose international community of the reformist Left that the Young Socialists had attempted to forge links with at the beginning of the decade finally became accessible to the eager Kagarlitskii, who in the words of a Western commentator, became the “unofficial spokesman of the Soviet New Left.”¹⁰⁴⁰ His dissident past, which was uncritically admired by foreign reporters, contributed to his revolutionary reformist rhetoric making an unlikely appearance in such prominent news outlets as *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. But his major audience was likeminded leftists. In a delayed parallel with the Eastern Bloc political emigres of the previous chapter, who had been interpreters

¹⁰³⁶ Letter of Vladimir Pribylovskii to *Komsomol’skaia Pravda*, 11 February 1988. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial. Fond of Federation of Socialist Social Clubs (FSOK).

¹⁰³⁷ Julia Wishnevskii, “Former Detainee Wins Libel Suit,” Daily Telex, 22 July 1988. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

¹⁰³⁸ For example, “Iz chernogo spiska” (From the Black List.) *Ekspress Khronika* 10/31 (6 March 1988), 42. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial. Socialist Initiative Fond, 10/31 and E. Krustkaln and A. Fedorovskii, “Boris, ty ne prav?” (Boris, are you wrong?) *Glasnost’* (11) (August 1990), 7. Independent Political Movements in the USSR Collection of UCL-SSEES Archives, IND 5/9.

¹⁰³⁹ Andrei Sashin, “V Moskovskom NF,” (In the Moscow Popular Front) *Panorama* (September 1989), 2, TsGA OKhDOPIM, F. P-8643, op. 1, d. 108, l., 4.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Walter Lacqueur, “Back in the USSR,” *The New Republic* (14 November 1988), 1988. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

for the dissident cause to Western publics in the 1970s,¹⁰⁴¹ Kagarlitskii made sense of Perestroika's developments for the Western leftist reader directly from Moscow. The Young Socialists' earlier explorations made the now thirty year old Kagarlitskii a canny commentator. Speaking to the British Marxist journal *Critique* in 1988, he hyped up Soviet interest in Trotsky in the course of explaining the re-appraisal of the past which was then underway in the Soviet Union, demonstrating sensitivity for an audience who regarded the revolutionary thinker as an outstanding figure in the Marxist canon.¹⁰⁴² Kagarlitskii's newfound status as the leading light of the Soviet New Left also resulted in some of his writings that were composed before his arrest being translated into English and receiving international attention in a post-tamizdat turn.¹⁰⁴³ His history of the Soviet intelligentsia, *The Thinking Reed*, won the Deutscher prize in memory of the famous Trotskyist historian in 1988, while Western Marxist publications engaged with ideas contained in the work that had first developed in the Young Socialists' milieu.¹⁰⁴⁴ Kagarlitskii's view of the continuity of his political activism across the 1985 divide found expression in his deliberate titling of the bulletin of the Federation of Socialist Social Clubs (FSOK), which he edited, with the name *Levyi povorot*.¹⁰⁴⁵

What was new to Kagarlitskii's politics in the Perestroika years was his self-styling as a "new leftist." This was initially an effort to distinguish his brand of democratic socialism from the vision of the reformist leadership. After 1989, when socialist positions were reviled by the wider democratic movement as unflatteringly close to the authorities, the "new leftist" label emphasised association with the more

¹⁰⁴¹ Kacper Szulecki, *Dissidents in Communist Central Europe: Human rights and the emergence of new transnational actors* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 89.

¹⁰⁴² Suzi Weissman, "Two Interviews with Boris Kagarlitskii from June 30 1988 and August 10 1989," *Critique* 22(1) (1994), 127-128.

¹⁰⁴³ Madeleine G. Kalb, "Dreams of Democratic Socialism," *The Washington Post* (29 January 1989). OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Julian Cooper, "Going Underground," *Marxism Today* (August 1988), 39. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

¹⁰⁴⁵ "Boris Kagarlitskii, One of the Leaders of the Left-Wing Opposition, speaks to Robin Blackburn," *London Review of Books* 10(21) (24 November 1988): <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v10/n21/boris-kagarlitsky/boris-kagarlitsky-one-of-the-leaders-of-the-left-wing-opposition-in-the-soviet-union-talks-to-robin-blackburn>.

palatable Western Left.¹⁰⁴⁶ Later it became an identity to cling to when faced with the fall of communism. By the final years of Perestroika, socialists were a fringe element within the *semidesiatniki*. According to a foreign observer, the second congress of the socialist party in March 1991 was attended by only roughly fifty Soviet representatives, who were mostly under 40 years old. Though the internationally facing element of this identity was underscored by the presence of three foreign attendees from Austrian, Swedish and Norwegian left-socialist parties.¹⁰⁴⁷ Kagarlitskii's unswerving dedication to socialism, even as the other former Young Socialists came to favour market economy solutions, can be understood to be the result of his close intellectual and affective identification with the Western Left. Amid Soviet decline and collapse, in what was a highly unusual development, Kagarlitskii's internalisation of socialist and internationalist values continued to receive sustenance from this alternative foundation. As the Soviet Union was moving to a market economy, Kagarlitskii marshalled arguments about the rampant inequality of capitalism and its exploitation of workers, which were not only traditional Soviet talking points, but were also the reserve of the Western Left. The programme of the socialist party in 1991 elaborated: "The crisis of the old structures of power and the collapse of the system of authoritarian rule are forcing the ruling circles to search for some way to escape the impasse by attacking the rights of working people."¹⁰⁴⁸ Having absorbed the Young Socialists' earlier arguments about the low level of development that would define a Soviet capitalist future, Kagarlitskii assured a Russian reporter, "We are not in danger of a bright capitalist tomorrow," and continued to see a place for a socialist party, even in 1991.¹⁰⁴⁹

As Kagarlitskii evolved into a new leftist, he distanced himself from the *shestidesiatniki*, whose influence had been so critical during his years of dissent. In

¹⁰⁴⁶ Mitrokhin and Urban, "Social Groups, Party Elites and Russia's New Democrats," 94.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Political Scientist Peter J.S. Duncan's Notes of Second Congress of the Russian Socialist Party, 24 March 1991. Independent Political Movements in the USSR Collection of UCL-SSEES Archives, IND 5/9.

¹⁰⁴⁸ "Short Programme of the Socialist Party" (USSR), N.D., most likely 1991. Independent Political Movements in the USSR Collection of UCL-SSEES Archives, IND 5/9.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Natal'ia Kul'neva, "Formiruetsia levaia iniciativa..." *Nezavisimaia gazeta* (31 March 1991), 2. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 9, box 241, Kraus Biographical Files, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

an interview in 1988 with an American-based leftist journalist, he dismissed liberal communists of this generation as “simply trying to say once again everything said during the Khrushchev period”¹⁰⁵⁰ and in the *New Left Review* a year earlier claimed that “the cultural mosaic of the ‘new protest’ is a great deal richer than anything the aging ‘children of the Twentieth Party Congress’ can offer.”¹⁰⁵¹ In contrast, as they were drawn into political club life, Fadin, Kudiukin, Chernetskii and Khavkin, who all occupied social democratic positions from the early years of Perestroika, continued to rely on the *shestidesiatniki* as mentors and collaborators, even as they moved beyond the reform socialist perspective transmitted by this generation.

In 1987, these former Young Socialists began to attend Club Perestroika meetings and quickly came to occupy prominent roles, at a time when the organisation was the main centre of informal political debate in Moscow.¹⁰⁵² Club Perestroika’s gatherings, which were held in the discussion hall of the Central Economic-Mathematics Institute (TsEMI), benefitted from the patronage of TsEMI’s liberal party committee, who also supervised the activities of the club and answered to the Sevastopol party district committee.¹⁰⁵³ This forum, which was located in an area of Moscow dotted with research institutes, attracted a young academic audience, while the club’s roughly fifteen member sized *aktiv* (core working collective), which included Kudiukin and Fadin, were almost uniformly *semidesiatniki*. Typically at club meetings a specialist, who was usually a member of the Soviet liberal intelligentsia of the *shestidesiatniki* generation, delivered a lecture on the political, economic, legal or sociological problems of the day, before the floor opened to the discussion of younger researchers.¹⁰⁵⁴ The *aktiv* invited these more senior speakers to confer

¹⁰⁵⁰ “Glasnost Turns Upside Down: Alexander Cockburn interviews Boris Kagarlitskii,” *New Statesman* (29 January 1988), 21-23. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 5, c. 151, box 58, folder, Boris Kagarlitskii.

¹⁰⁵¹ Boris Kagarlitskii, “The Intelligentsia and the Changes,” *New Left Review* (164) (July-August 1987), 19.

¹⁰⁵² Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian “Democrats”*, 68.

¹⁰⁵³ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 204.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Though the speakers were primarily Soviet academics who specialised in economics, political science, law and history, other speakers included historical personalities and foreign scholars, for example, Anna Larina, the widow of Bukarin and the Western historian and Bukharin specialist, Stephen Cohen. “Istoriia politicheskikh neformalov glazami Igoria Chubaisa,” (The history of political informals through the eyes of Igor Chubais), interview of Igor Chubais by Aleksei Piatkovskii, part one, 21 March 2008: http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remen/1227373853.html; “Oleg

prestige on the club through its ability to attract big names.¹⁰⁵⁵ Though some of its more ambitious members took a longer view of the uses of this *shestidesiatniki* expertise, which they saw as a valuable source for increasing the club's scientific level, in preparation for a future consultative role to party reformers.¹⁰⁵⁶

From the autumn of 1987, Club Perestroika became increasingly divided by its social democratic and liberal factions whose fault lines foremost resulted from the two faction's conflicting views on the club's relationship to the authorities. This division was a product of the club's contested identity. It was at once a successor to the dissident movement and its heritage within a transformed legal setting, and also a reformist force from below that was linked to the intellectual establishment whose members were determined to maintain its official recognition and gain greater political influence. The club's split led to the crystallisation of the two trends that had precipitated its fracturing: the liberals gravitated towards activities associated with traditional practices of dissent and formed Perestroika 88.¹⁰⁵⁷ The reformists founded Democratic Perestroika, where they solidified their social democratic identity and gradually adopted a more openly critical attitude towards the party elite. As this process took root in 1988-1989, the club's activities shifted from an emphasis on collaboration with the establishment reformers to the forging of broader democratic alliances as upcoming elections reshaped the political climate.¹⁰⁵⁸

The discussions at a Democratic Perestroika meeting, which was billed to focus on the problems associated with a transition from really existing socialism to

Rumiantsev: Politicheskii aktivizm za poslednie tridsat' let," (Oleg Rumiantsev: Political Activism for the last thirty years.): <http://last30.ru/issue/activism/heroes/slider/#9>.

¹⁰⁵⁵ This was reflected in the club spokespeople's interviews with foreign journalists where they touted the attendance of members of the status intelligentsia at their meetings. See Leonid Volkov, "Democratic Clubs Pursue 'Mature' Activities," *Liberation* (30 December 1988): 1-2. [Originally published in a French journal. Republished in a RFE report in English.] OSA, f. 300, s.f., 5, c. 150, box 71, Unofficial Groups.

¹⁰⁵⁶ In fact, the club attempted to forge its own consultative role by addressing alternative reform programmes to the Soviet leadership, despite never receiving the desired overtures from the party. Iu Karabasov, "Informatsionnyi material o samodeiatel'nykh obshchestvennykh formirovaniia deistvuiushchikh v g. Moskve," (Information about independent public initiatives operating in Moscow.) (26 August 1988). TsGA OKhDOPIM, F. P-8723, op. 1, d. 7, l. 17.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Devlin, *The Rise of the Russian Democrats*, 90-91.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 288.

social democracy, reflected the expanding possibilities for political action by the end of 1988.¹⁰⁵⁹ According to the notes of an observing party official, the *shetidiesiatniki* specialists from INION and IMRD, B. Orlov, V.G. Vasin and G.B Ardaev at first outlined the experiences of Western European social democratic states to an audience of 500 people.¹⁰⁶⁰ In the course of the discussion that followed, animated *semidiesiatniki* speakers elaborated on a proposal for a movement from below, which would act as a pressure group to help Gorbachev steer a course to democratic socialism, while promoting the theoretical conceptions of social democracy.¹⁰⁶¹ Though the precise nature of the proposed movement – a grassroots organisation or an emergent second political party – remained ambiguous due to the continued political limitations that inspired self-censorship at this juncture.

The speakers considered that social democratic ideas would have an enriching effect on restructuring, while acting as a counterweight to Gorbachev's publicly espoused Leninist sources of democratic socialism, which for many in this audience were inseparable from the first Soviet leader's legacy of democratic centralism and "end justifies the means" principles.¹⁰⁶² As Archie Brown has argued, Gorbachev's frequent invocations of Lenin, which were intended to legitimise Perestroika's policy turns, were filled with a strong emotional attachment to the founding father, though his push toward democratisation determinedly departed from Lenin's doctrines.¹⁰⁶³ But these complex twists and turns in Gorbachev's thinking were not outwardly discernable to this audience, who viewed his intentions

¹⁰⁵⁹ Leaflet for "Diskussiiia 'sotsial-demokratiiia: proshloe, nastoiashchee, budushchee," (Discussion "Social Democracy, Past, Present, Future."), Democratic Perestroika meeting. Collection of Andrei Fadin, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Iurii Chabanov, "O diskussii v klube 'Demokraticheskaiia Perestroika' 13 dekabria 1988 goda po teme 'Sotsial-demokratiiia: proshloe, nastoiashchee, budushchee,'" (On Club Democratic Perestroika's Discussion "Social Democracy: Past, Present, Future."), 13 December 1988, 1. Collection of Andrei Fadin, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa.

¹⁰⁶¹ At this time Democratic Perestroika were participants in the Moscow Popular Front, which attempted to fulfill a similar role of critical support from below, though this organisation was dominated by left-socialists. Liudmila Alekseeva, "O Narodnom Fronte v SSSR," (On the Popular Front in the USSR.), (26 September 1988), 3. OSA, f. 300, s.f. 80, c. 1, box 632, Informal Movements; Viacheslav Igrunov, Sergei Mitrokhin and Michael Urban, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 113-114.

¹⁰⁶² Chabanov, "O diskussii v klube 'Demokraticheskaiia Perestroika,'" 4.

¹⁰⁶³ Archie Brown, *Seven Years that Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 292-294.

with skepticism. Democratic Perestroika's chairman, Oleg Rumiantsev, expressed this attitude in the then-current issue of the club's publication: "The decisive and enlightened new leadership makes no secret of the essence of the new course: a gradual, cautious retreat from the exhausted totalitarian mechanisms toward an authoritarian constitutional regime."¹⁰⁶⁴ He continued, "In essence our reforms recall the Polish situation of the 1980s: a non-functional marketplace combined with an all-powerful police."¹⁰⁶⁵ The responses of the meeting's *semidesiatniki* speakers, which included Kudiukin, all contained this critical attitude towards Gorbachev and a perception that his goals differed from their own.

"The current decrepit and worn out totalitarianism is untenable" was a refrain repeated in different forms at the meeting, which was attached to a broader discourse then in circulation in Soviet society that characterised the communist party's rule as "totalitarian" and society under party rule as "abnormal."¹⁰⁶⁶ This narrative, which was widespread within the intelligentsia after 1988, drastically re-interpreted the Soviet past and present as the illegal seizure of power by Lenin or Stalin and a decades-long dictatorship of a brutal and corrupt minority over a majority.¹⁰⁶⁷ With this entirely changed understanding of Soviet reality, the reform socialist solutions that had inspired sections of this milieu in the Brezhnev years appeared in a new, retrograde light. One participant in the discussion noted: "The CPSU is gradually moving to the position of Eurocommunism, but it [this ideology] is losing influence in Europe, so it is better to develop social democratic goals."¹⁰⁶⁸ This comment revealed the increased standing accorded to developed capitalist societies, even in a leftist setting, following glasnost's shattering of Soviet myths and the accompanying loss of confidence that occurred. Despite its inherently reformist bent, Eurocommunism remained a product of the communist world that emerged from the October Revolution. To many in this audience, who had come to reject

¹⁰⁶⁴ Oleg Rumiantsev, "Authoritarian Modernisation and the Social Democratic Alternative," *Social Research* 57(2) (1990), 495. [Originally published in Russian in the September 1988-March 1989 issue of Democratic Perestroika's official publication, *Otkrytaia zona*.]

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 497.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Chabanov, "O diskussii v klube 'Demokraticheskaia Perestroika,'" 6.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian "Democrats"*, 171, 231.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Chabanov, "O diskussii v klube 'Demokraticheskaia Perestroika,'" 6.

communism wholesale, social democracy appeared to offer the same egalitarian values and concern for social justice without the legacy of revolutionary violence and confrontation. As Perestroika wore on and economic conditions worsened, the social democratic model increasingly gained in stature among those who remained on the Left.

Kudiukin recalled that he, Fadin and Rumiantsev understood that their goal was to establish a social democratic party as early as 1988.¹⁰⁶⁹ The former Young Socialists adopted social democratic views earlier than many other socialist believers, who later made similar intellectual and spiritual journeys.¹⁰⁷⁰ Their previous experience of independent political activity eased their adjustment to the new conditions of legalised of politics from below, and made them more advanced figures in Perestroika's grassroots leftist milieu. Vladimir Kardail'skii, a translator by profession and secretary of Democratic Perestroika recalled, "I advocated a return to Leninism...for almost a year" until interactions with other club members, who were well-informed young researchers from elite social sciences research institutes, opened his eyes to "the criminality [of the regime] and failure of the very idea of the total nationalisation of property."¹⁰⁷¹ The former Young Socialists' historical education and their familiarity with samizdat and other forms of uncensored knowledge had allowed them to arrive at similar conclusions already during the years of their dissent. This earlier access to some of the information that came to light during glasnost protected them from the scale of shock suffered by many of their peers. They found it easier to maintain their leftist orientation because they did not have to quickly incorporate the same scale of new information into their worldviews.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Interview with Kudiukin, 1 December 2016, Moscow. Rumiantsev also later traced their idea to form the social democratic party to 1988, "Interview with Oleg Rumiantsev, Social Democratic Party of Russia," June 1991, in *The Troubled Birth of Russian Democracy: Parties, personalities and programs*, eds. Michael McFaul and Sergei Markov (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1993), 90.

¹⁰⁷⁰ In fact, it should be noted that Chernetskii and Khavkin adopted social democratic views even earlier – already during the Brezhnev era.

¹⁰⁷¹ "Klub Perestroika 1987," interview of Vladimir Kardail'skii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, Part One, December 2008-July 2010: http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remem/1269186609.html.

Yet their years of dissident explorations had inculcated a pragmatic approach into their thinking, which had already taken them beyond a Marxist-Leninist dominated framework to grapple with international variants of reform socialism. The former Young Socialists' detailed investigations of the Prague Spring and Eurocommunism, which were consciously formulated by their reformist architects as the refashioning of the Leninist model along democratic lines, had already opened up these former dissidents' minds to non-Soviet leftist alternatives. When examining the Young Socialists' intellectual development from the vantage point of Perestroika, these reform socialist currents appear in a new light, as a middle ground between these dissidents' earliest notions of neo-Leninism and social democracy.

Their evolution to a social democratic identity constituted a further step along the reformist path. It occurred when the revolutionary heritage was utterly repudiated and Soviet socialism was visibly entering a terminal crisis. This was the endpoint of the long Soviet decline, which began from the time that their generation entered adulthood. The former Young Socialists' highly critical attitude to the Soviet state, which they retained from their years of dissent, caused them to doubt that the high-ranking liberals, even from the position of the general secretaryship, could overcome the morass of the party bureaucracy – a speculation that was confirmed for them as a powerful conservative opposition in the party united against Perestroika.¹⁰⁷² The more radical perspective that the party was an instrument of totalitarianism, which they formed in the late-1980s, encouraged them to support Boris Yeltsin, in spite of the overlapping social democratic perspectives that they held in common with the Gorbachev's reformers in the final years of Perestroika.¹⁰⁷³

Social democratic ideas gradually entered the Soviet establishment with their promotion by academic specialists and the cultivation of contacts with social democratic parties abroad that occurred in the newly open international climate.

¹⁰⁷² Andrei Fadin, "Perestroika' v poiskakh neobratimosti," (Perestroika: in search of irreversibility.) *Vek XX i mir* (June 1988), 36-37. Collection of Andrei Fadin, Forschungsstelle Osteuropa.

¹⁰⁷³ Democratic Perestroika leaflets for rallies in support of Yeltsin can be found in the archives: "Miting v podderzhku B.N. Eltsina" listovka (Meeting in Support of B.N. Yeltsin.), April 1989. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, Democratic Perestroika Fond. From early-1991, the SDPR resolved to independently print leaflets detailing Yeltsin's statements and leave them in public places in order to help him to overcome the information blockade that existed in state-controlled media. Fish, *Democracy from Scratch*, 129.

Although research clusters such as the Interdepartmental Council for Studies of Social Democracy had already formed in the late-1970s,¹⁰⁷⁴ the longstanding official virulence towards the reformist tradition of social democracy, which began under Lenin, created a dogmatically charged research environment that was only defused when interest in reformism developed at the top.¹⁰⁷⁵ In June 1989, CPSU delegates were official observers for the first time at the Eighth Congress of the Socialist International.¹⁰⁷⁶ Gorbachev's close personal relations with foreign leaders made it possible for social democratic ideas to be conveyed directly to the general secretary. The socialist Prime minister of Spain, Felipe Gonzalez held frank and influential conversations with the Soviet leader on the humanist objections that social democrats levelled at the communist tradition.¹⁰⁷⁷

Part of the appeal of Bolshevism's long estranged sibling for establishment reformers was its rich array of left-wing democratic conceptions to sample from in the quest to modernise the communist idea. In November 1990, the researchers of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, an erstwhile bastion of communist orthodoxy, held a symposium with German scholars from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The event was intended to be the beginning of a longer term collaboration directed at a comparative analysis of the programmatic documents of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the CPSU, which was accompanied on the Soviet side by the supplementary goal of discovering ideological inspiration for the developing CPSU programme.¹⁰⁷⁸ The eventual draft that was approved in July 1991 envisaged a role for the party, which was more readily associated with social democratic conceptions than the communist model.¹⁰⁷⁹ A no less important consideration for Soviet

¹⁰⁷⁴ Aleksandr Veber, "Perestroika and International Social Democracy," in *Breakthrough to Freedom. Perestroika: A critical analysis*, ed. Aleksandr Veber (Moscow: R.Valent Publishers, 2009), 102.

¹⁰⁷⁵ According to Chabanov's notes, the *shestidesiatniki* specialists at the above mentioned Democratic Perestroika meeting acknowledged the positive effect of these changed working conditions for their research on social democracy. Chabanov, "O diskussii v klube 'Demokraticheskaja Perestroika,'" 1.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Veber, "Perestroika and International Social Democracy," 104.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 116.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Boris Orlov, *Sotsial demokratiia kak ob'ekt nauchnykh issledovanii v Rossii* (Social Democracy as an Object of Scientific Research in Russia.) (M. : INION, 2000), 129-130.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Atsushi Ogushi, "Why did CPSU Reform Fail? The Twenty Eighth Party Congress Reconsidered," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59(5) (2007), 729.

reformers was the prosperity of Western European social democratic states, which powerfully beckoned to them as they became increasingly aware that the Soviet economic model was systemically defective. In 1988, a group of high-ranking economists, which included Abel Aganbegian and Leonid Abalkin, travelled to Sweden to observe its government's economic practices. A year later Swedish economists were invited to Moscow to provide input into reforming the Soviet economy's tax system, its forms of ownership, pricing policy and other elements of restructuring.¹⁰⁸⁰

By 1990, the blurring of boundaries between the developing Soviet conception of democratic socialism and social democracy had become apparent. It was in these conditions that the February 1990 draft thesis for the Twenty-Eighth Party Congress included the conciliatory statement, "The CPSU repudiates any negative dogmatic stereotypes with regard to other parties of the working people, including social democratic parties."¹⁰⁸¹ At the party sponsored roundtable, which was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the pro-rector of the Institute of Social Sciences and one of the top Soviet specialists on social democracy, Aleksandr Galkin's hesitant reflections demonstrated the total reconceptualisation of the communist identity that was underway among Gorbachev's reformers at the end of Perestroika:

What differentiates the CPSU's conception of democratic socialism from the democratic socialism of the social democratic party? This is a problem, which demands serious theoretical and political elaboration...We see the necessity for very serious progress in our system of priorities, in democracy most of all. The fact is that social democracy already spent a long time having satisfactorily worked out the conception of **democratic** [bold in original] socialism, and its importance. And our problem is to compare the details of our conception of democratic socialism and social democracy's conception of democratic socialism. Honestly speaking, I am not entirely sure I am prepared to answer this question.¹⁰⁸²

In the same year, Gorbachev and his closest advisors were discussing plans to split the party and announce their leadership of a social democratic faction, but as they

¹⁰⁸⁰ Veber, "Perestroika and International Social Democracy," 102.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid., 107.

¹⁰⁸² "Stenogramma vstrechi uchenikh-istorikov za kruglym stolom 'Sotsial demokratie: proshloe, nastoiashchee' podgotovlena lektorskoi gruppoi ideologicheskogo otdela MGK KPSS," (27 September 1990), 37.

delayed the August coup and the collapse of the party's authority instead took place, which made those actions impossible.¹⁰⁸³ These *shestidesiatniki* found their way to social democracy only towards the end of Perestroika.¹⁰⁸⁴ Their slower conversion was due to the difficulty of overcoming long-held ideals, which were formed in the years that they witnessed the victory over fascism, the Soviet Union's superpower achievements and the excitement that socialism generated during the Thaw. The shedding of Soviet illusions was much harder for these high-ranking liberals, who were more attached to the communist identity. Moreover, as guardians of the party, they went to great lengths to pacify their conservative opponents. This limited their freedom to openly maneuver from traditional communist positions to the social democratisation of the party and was one of the reasons that even the left-wing of the democratic movement shifted its support to Yeltsin.¹⁰⁸⁵

As the short twentieth century was drawing to a close, it was the former Young Socialists – Fadin, Kudiukin, Khavkin and Chernetskii – and other members of the *semidesiatniki* generation, who founded the Social Democratic Party of Russia (SDPR).¹⁰⁸⁶ Their initiative was not connected to the older generation's originally conceived project of modernising the communist idea, which had set Perestroika in motion, but was borne of the determination to decisively move away from the revolutionary tradition to committed reformism. The sharp split that occurred between the revolutionary and reformist wings of social democracy at the onset of World War One, as the more moderate European parties united behind their national governments while the Bolsheviks promoted revolutionary radicalism, no longer held relevance in the Soviet Union in the final decade of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁸⁷ From the viewpoint of late-Perestroika, among most of what remained of the left-wing intelligentsia, the seventy years of the Soviet experiment had demonstrated the

¹⁰⁸³ Archie Brown, "Did Gorbachev as General Secretary Become a Social Democrat?" *Europe-Asia Studies* 65(2) (2013), 217-218.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Gorbachev and Mlynář, *Conversations with Gorbachev*, 79.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*, 270.

¹⁰⁸⁶ "Pravlenie SDPR," (Directorate of SDPR.), 15 November 1990. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Charter and Programmatic Documents folder, document 52; Igrunov, Mitrokhin and Urban, *The Rebirth of Politics in Russia*, 205.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Silvio Pons, *The Global Revolution: A History of International Communism, 1917-1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 24.

failure of the revolutionary tradition. From early-1989, Democratic Perestroika had worked with other similarly oriented clubs to establish the union-wide Social Democratic Association (SDA) – a realisation of earlier discussions about a broader social democratic movement from below.¹⁰⁸⁸ But instead of serving as a popular reformist movement for Perestroika, SDA's organising committee was by then filled with greater ambition as they prepared to form their own political party.¹⁰⁸⁹ As the Soviet Union moved to a multiparty system, the SDPR held its founding congress in Moscow in May 1990.¹⁰⁹⁰ By 1991, it had a membership of roughly 5000 – a figure that simultaneously reflected its status as one of the most influential political parties in early post-Soviet Russia, as well as the uniformly small size of newly formed parties, when active political engagement continued to be an unusual choice into the 1990s.¹⁰⁹¹



Vladimir Chernetskii (middle, bearded) at an SDPR demonstration in August, 1991 (Facebook).

¹⁰⁸⁸ "Informatsiia i khronika, izvestiia TsK KPSS," (Information, chronicle and news for the CC CPSU.) (8) (1990). TsGA OKhDOPIM, F. P-8723, op. 1, d. 8, l. 25.

¹⁰⁸⁹ "Interview with Oleg Rumiantsev, Social Democratic Party of Russia," June 1991, 90.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian "Democrats"*, 91.

¹⁰⁹¹ Mitrokhin and Urban, "Social Groups, Party Elites and Russia's New Democrats," 63; Fish, *Democracy from Scratch*, 43; Lukin, *The Political Culture of Russian "Democrats"*, 90.

As could be deduced from the SDPR party programme's prominent pledge of support in 1990 for "the liberation of Russia from totalitarianism," the party's relationship to left-wing traditions was visibly marked by its emergence in a society where socialism had been wholly discredited.¹⁰⁹² An SDPR Pamphlet from 1992 designed to introduce voters to the party brought this reality into even sharper relief:

Question: How do you relate to socialism? Answer: We take into account that under the banner of socialism, the totalitarian regime, where power belonged to the bureaucracy, was forced on people for decades. Now is not the time to prove that there can be a different socialism.¹⁰⁹³

The SDPR fashioned itself in classically social democratic terms as "a party of consistent reformism" oriented to "the constant improvement of social structures with the aim of their humanisation, democratisation and the growth of their effectiveness."¹⁰⁹⁴ Though as representatives of a political tradition that had historically fought for the introduction of socialist policies into the capitalist system, Russian social democrats faced an uphill battle for their identity as they advocated for the transition from socialism to capitalism in 1990. In a description of the party's ideological influences, which included "European humanism and enlightenment, Christianity and international social democracy," these social democrats could not bring themselves to name Marx and instead indirectly referred to him under the umbrella of "thinkers who tried to learn the laws of social development."¹⁰⁹⁵ Kudiukin, who was one of SDPR's three chairmen, recalled at the time of the programme's drafting that he had contemplated what non-Bolshevik Russian roots

¹⁰⁹² "Put' progressa i sotsial'noi demokratii: programma SDPR," (Path of Progress and Social Democracy: Programme of the SDPR.), 1990-1991, 13-14. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Charter and Programmatic Documents folder.

¹⁰⁹³ V.A. Kardail'skii, S.A. Magaril, B.S. Orlov, T.V. Tul'ynina, K.V. Iankov, "Chego khotiat rossiiskie sotsial-demokraty: sto voprosov i otvetov," (What the Russian Social Democrats Want: 100 Questions and Answers.), (1992), 3. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Charter and Programmatic Documents folder.

¹⁰⁹⁴ "Put' progressa i sotsial'noi demokratii: programma SDPR," 13.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid., 14.

the party could claim,¹⁰⁹⁶ which led to the inclusion of “the best features of Russian liberalism, *narodnichestvo* and social democracy (Menshevism).”¹⁰⁹⁷



SDPR rallying in 1991 with Vladimir Kardail'skii in the foreground (VK).

But even within the traditionally left-wing climate of social democratic politics, the former Young Socialist leader found himself to be an increasingly lone leftist advocate in an ocean of liberals. By 1990, a dominant liberal faction had solidified in the SDPR, whose platform asserted, “Our goal is a civil society of social democracy, but not ‘democratic socialism.’ Contemporary social democratic thought reflects general universal values, and its socialist component is considered only as a moral and ethical doctrine that has nothing in common with Marxism.”¹⁰⁹⁸ This perspective was remote from the experience of the former Young Socialists, who had conscientiously studied different currents of Marxism during the years of their

¹⁰⁹⁶ Interview with Kudiukin, 1 December 2016.

¹⁰⁹⁷ “Put’ progressa i sotsial’noi demokratii: programma SDPR,” 14.

¹⁰⁹⁸ “Iz platformy sotsial’no-liberal’noi fraktsii Moskovskoi organizatsii SDPR: ‘Nashe ponimanie sotsial’noi demokratii,’” N.D. likely end 1990 (From the platform of the social-liberal faction of the Moscow organisation of the SDPR: our understanding of social democracy.). Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Charter and Programmatic Documents folder.

dissent. While addressing the SDPR's second congress as party chairman in November 1990, Kudiukin stepped in to defend left-wing political culture:

The political spectrum in our country is sliding sharply to the right...[and] this is also reflected in our party. The process is understandable in a country that is beginning to move away from a totalitarianism that draped itself in left-wing political language to cloak its essence. And yet, for a party that claims to be social-democratic, there must be certain limits to this process... Our party is part of the general Democratic Movement, but we must not lose our cultural identity in it. We must emphasise and develop [this identity], which means not rushing to discard traditional social-democratic political and cultural symbolism, including addressing each other as "comrade."¹⁰⁹⁹

This commitment to traditional understandings of social democracy, which also involved taking what remained usable from the left-wing element of the Soviet legacy, did not have a great number of supporters in a party that generally associated vocal leftism with the authoritative discourse of the Soviet past and viewed social democracy distinctly as a means to turn toward a European future. Yet Kudiukin's steadfast leftism reaffirmed the paradoxical qualities of socialist dissent – as the Soviet Union was making its retreat from the historical stage, this former oppositionist remained more committed than many others to political ideas that had first been transmitted in the Soviet ideological setting. The former dissident was unafraid of embracing a left-wing identity, even as many other Russian social democrats sought to distance themselves from its Soviet associations. This was because according to his own experience, it was not only Soviet, but was shot through with threads of foreign leftist thinking that the Young Socialists had first encountered on their intellectual journey of late-Brezhnev era dissent.

Conclusion.

In the SDPR's short course issued in late-1991, the circle of the Young Socialists entered the party's mythology as its predecessors, along with the Mensheviks and their emigre formations and social democratic inclined

¹⁰⁹⁹ "Politcheskii doklad. Chlena prezidiuma pravlenia SDPR P.M. Kudiukina na II s'ezde SDPR," (Political Address of SDPR Governing Presidium Member, P.M. Kudiukin.), November 1990. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Congresses folder.

underground groups of the post-Stalin era.¹¹⁰⁰ But the Young Socialists – Fadin, Kudiukin, Khavkin and Chernetskii – occupied pride of place in the party’s pre-history as a direct link between reformism in the pre-Perestroika period and the SDPR of the emergent post-Soviet era.¹¹⁰¹ Despite the dissident circle’s multiplicity of left-wing currents, their explorations had been foremost conceived as a reform socialist project located in the communist world. But in the search for a viable past for social democracy in the late-Soviet Union, the Young Socialists’ dissent was re-imagined in a social democratic light.



Left to right (top row): Pavel Kudiukin, Viacheslav Igrunov, Andrei Fadin (bottom row): Evgenii Krasnikov and Lev Sigal – all former participants in Club Perestroika at the ten year reunion of the first *neformaly* meeting-dialog – 1997 (Facebook).

Kudiukin rose to become the leading exponent of the left tendency in the SDPR in the 1990s. The connections to the international reformist left that the Young Socialists had dreamed of making during their years of dissent became a reality as the SDPR took up some of the relations with foreign social democratic parties that had been lost in the collapse by Soviet reformers. In a sign of these new links, Kudiukin was a prominent speaker at a joint conference held by the SDPR and the

¹¹⁰⁰ “Sotsial-demokraticheskaiia partiia rossiiskoi federatsii: kratkii spravochnik,” (Social Democratic Party of the Russian Federation: Short Course.) (1991), 28. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Charter and Programmatic Documents folder.

¹¹⁰¹ Fadin participated in the founding of the SDPR though did not become a member, instead cooperating with its governing bodies in an expert capacity.

German social democratic Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Moscow in 1992.¹¹⁰² The former Young Socialist leader's post-Soviet political career flashed brightly, though only momentarily – a characterisation that applied to all of those from the former dissident circle who were active in politics in the 1990s. In November 1991, Kudiukin became the first politician from the democratic movement to be appointed to Yeltsin's government when he was made deputy minister for labour, a post which he held from 1991-1993.¹¹⁰³ Others in the Young Socialists' wider orbit, such as Viktor Sheinis and Oleg Rumiantsev, served as parliamentary deputies and played major roles in drafting the Russian constitution.¹¹⁰⁴ Kagarlitskii was elected to the Moscow City Soviet as part of the Democratic Russia bloc. He served as a deputy from 1990-1993 during which time he founded a "Moscow left" faction.¹¹⁰⁵ During the Russian constitutional crisis, Kagarlitskii participated in the defense of the White House and was briefly arrested and then released after international outcry from his left-wing supporters.¹¹⁰⁶

As a consequence of Yeltsin's prioritisation of economic transformation over political reform, the outlook and background of those *semidesiatniki* who played defining roles in the new Russian government was markedly different to that of the former Young Socialists.¹¹⁰⁷ In contrast to the traditional dissident perception that afforded primacy to political culture over economics – a trait that wholly applied to the *shestidesiatniki* and also extended to the former Young Socialists' milieu – Yeltsin's *semidesiatniki* experts were of an altogether different vintage.¹¹⁰⁸ After the

¹¹⁰² "Fond imeni Fr. Eberta, SDPR. Teoreticheskaia konferentsiia, 'Sotsial-demokratiia v posttotalitarnom obshchestve,'" (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, SDPR Theoretical Conference: "Social Democracy in a Post-Totalitarian Society.") Conference Programme, June 1992. Archive of Contemporary Political Documentation, Moscow Memorial, SDPR Fond, Conferences folder.

¹¹⁰³ Mitrokhin and Urban, "Social Groups, Party Elites and Russia's New Democrats," 77.

¹¹⁰⁴ Viktor Sheinis, "The Constitution," in *Between Dictatorship and Democracy: Russian Post-Communist Political Reform*, eds. Michael McFaul et al. (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004), 57-59.

¹¹⁰⁵ A.G. Papovian, "Kagarlitskii, Boris Iul'evich." Moscow Memorial, F. 155 Collection of Personal Files, Boris Iul'evich Kagarlitskii.

¹¹⁰⁶ "Boris Iul'evich Kagarlitskii": http://www.igrunov.ru/cat/vchk-cat-names/others/mosc/1977_1987/vchk-cat-names-other-kagarl.html.

¹¹⁰⁷ McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, 129, 142.

¹¹⁰⁸ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 182-183.

spectacular failure of the *shestidesiatniki* economic thinking that accompanied socialism with a human face, the Russian president had reached down to talented economists and foreign policy experts – people such as Egor Gaidar and Andrei Kozyrev – from the generation below.¹¹⁰⁹ These *semidesiatniki* accorded primary importance to building a market economy and were inclined to view democracy and other “abstract” political questions as secondary issues that even crossed into the realm of “useless chatter” during the dire economic conditions of the early-1990s.¹¹¹⁰

As the global neo-liberal turn that had been underway since the 1970s took hold in Russia and the former communist world, the former Young Socialists discovered that their leftist politics were even more out of time than they had been in the late-Soviet Union.¹¹¹¹ Their disillusionment with the social cost of Gaidar’s shock therapy and privatisation reforms and the events of the Russian constitutional crisis saw their permanent return to opposition.¹¹¹² Kudiukin continued to play a leading role in the SDPR throughout the decade, though Kagarlitskii opted for academia and entered the Institute of Comparative Political Science of the Academy of Sciences, where he was a researcher on the labour movement and its connections to left-wing political parties.¹¹¹³ Fadin headed the political department at the private sector funded newspaper, *Kommersant* (Businessman) – a publication that was credited with setting the tone for post-Soviet journalism.¹¹¹⁴ He later published award-winning reporting as a correspondent in Grozny during the first Chechen war, before his life was tragically cut short by a motor accident on Kutuzovskii prospekt in 1997.¹¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰⁹ Andrei Kozyrev, *The Firebird: The Elusive Fate of Russian Democracy, A Memoir* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019), 31.

¹¹¹⁰ Vladimir Gel'man, Otar Marganiia and Dmitrii Travin, *Reexamining Economic and Political Reforms in Russia, 1985-2000: Generation, Ideas and Changes* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 22-24.

¹¹¹¹ On the weakness of the Russian non-communist left in the 1990s, see Paul T. Christensen, “The Non-Communist Left, Social Constituencies, and Political Strategies in Russia,” *Demokratizatsiia* 7(1) (1999), 136, 140.

¹¹¹² Marc Garcelon, *Revolutionary Passage: From Soviet to Post-Soviet Russia, 1985-2000* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 226.

¹¹¹³ Sigman, *Oppozitsiia bez dissidentstva*, 418.

¹¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 403-406.

¹¹¹⁵ Sergei Mitrofanov, “Pogib zhurnalist Andrei Fadin,” (Journalist Andrei Fadin Killed.) *Kommersant* (202) (22 November 1997), 3: <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/188217>.

Conclusion and Epilogue.

Responding to the text of the 1982 Politburo discussion of the Young Socialists' case, from the distance of April 2020, the Russian writer Denis Dragunskii remarked: "Perfect. The country was going to hell and these comrades were fighting with Fadin and Kudiukin."¹¹¹⁶ This exchange on Pavel Kudiukin's Facebook on the anniversary of his arrest can be interpreted as an expression of the communicative memory of Soviet dissent that exists within a community of *semidesiatniki* intellectuals, now in their sixties.¹¹¹⁷ As a younger generation in the socialist underground, the Young Socialists were on the edges of the dissident movement during the Brezhnev era. Yet after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the resurgence of authoritarianism in Russia, they became familiar faces in a community united by memory of past opposition to the state.¹¹¹⁸ In Poland, Nikolai Ivanov established the Foundation "For Your Freedom and Ours" that celebrates the Day in Memory of Natalia Gorbanevskaia in Wroclaw. This event, which annually draws together two generations of former Soviet and Polish dissidents, was attended in recent years by two of Gorbanevskaia's fellow demonstrators at Red Square in 1968,

¹¹¹⁶ Facebook Post by Pavel Kudiukin, 6 April 2020: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=3357406884274231&id=100000148573232.

¹¹¹⁷ According to Jan Assman, "The concept of communicative memory includes those varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications." Communities of communicative memory can be "families, neighborhood and professional groups, political parties, associations, etc., up to and including nations." Jan Assman, "Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* (65) (1995), 126-127.

According to Kudiukin, he, Fadin, Chernetskii and Khavkin used to meet annually on the anniversaries of the Decembrist uprising, the French Revolution, and their arrests, though the meetings declined in regularity after the deaths of Fadin and Khavkin and stopped in 2004. Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 1 December 2016.

¹¹¹⁸ There are, of course, exceptions to this unity, especially due to recriminations based on informing during the Soviet era. For example, the former *pravozashchitnik*, Aleksandr Podrabinek, published memoirs that included a scathing account of the Rivkin affair. He described the Young Socialists in the following terms: "They considered themselves tough *podpol'shchiki*, great experts in conspiracy, who were in the same league as Che Guevara, Latin American revolutionaries and fighters against the Pinochet dictatorship." Aleksandr Podrabinek, *Dissidenty* (M. : ACT, 2014), downloaded copy without correct page numbers.

Pavel Litvinov and Viktor Fainberg.¹¹¹⁹ In Moscow, Kudiukin and Tatiana Vorozheikina are regular roundtable speakers at the Sakharov Centre and Memorial, an organisation that formed in the late-1980s to commemorate the victims of the Stalin era, which continues to hold historical discussions and protest human rights abuses.¹¹²⁰

Another, less obvious, institution for those that identify with the memory of Soviet dissent is the Gorbachev Foundation. In the post-Soviet decades, shared reflections on the Soviet past developed among some former dissidents and party reformers, whose views once again drew closer together after being sharply distanced during Perestroika. In contrast to the overriding narrative that Gorbachev's reforms unleashed economic catastrophe, which could be described as the dominant memory of Perestroika among the Russian public, for both of these sections of the intelligentsia, the period was defined by the failed project of building Russian democracy.¹¹²¹ This interpretation was reinforced in exchanges of communicative memory at the foundation's "Gorbachev Readings" a series of conferences held in the 2000s that focused on reformist turning points in Soviet history. The two sets of intellectuals did not come to the same views, but an overlapping intellectual heritage and elements of shared historical experience were felt. Those present at the Gorbachev Readings included the former high-ranking liberals, Fedor Burlatskii, Anatolii Cherniaev and Nikolai Shmelev, and the former dissidents, Kudiukin and Vorozheikina, Viktor Sheinis, Liudmila Alekseeva, Roy Medvedev, Arsenii Roginskii, Aleksandr Daniel' and Adam Michnik.¹¹²²

The former dissidents' delayed conclusion that the party reformers had been allies in their commitment to democracy – a view that most did not hold to the same degree during Perestroika – developed only after the disappointments of Yeltsin's

¹¹¹⁹ The programmes of the days in memory of Natalia Gorbanevskaja can be found on the website: <https://gorbaniewska.zawolnosc.eu/ru/>.

¹¹²⁰ In one of the developments that there was not sufficient space to examine in the thesis, Kudiukin was on the organising committee for the founding of Memorial in 1988-1989. Kathleen E. Smith, *Remembering Stalin's Victims: Popular memory and the end of the USSR* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 96.

¹¹²¹ Nikolai Mitrokhin, "Strange People' in the Politburo: Institutional Problems and the Human Factor in the Economic Collapse of the Soviet Empire," *Kritika: Explorations of Russian and Eurasian History* 10(4) (2009), 870.

¹¹²² The transcripts of the conferences can be found at "Gorbachevskie chteniia," (Gorbachev Readings.): https://www.gorby.ru/activity/projects/show_27842.

rule in the 1990s. The Russian president's appointment of a former KGB officer as his successor and the country's gradual slide back to authoritarianism strengthened this interpretation and contributed to Vorozheikina's reflection in 2009 that during Perestroika, the politicised *semidesiatniki* "did not understand the meaning and nature of the possibilities that then opened up and did not act in accordance with them."¹¹²³ The failure of the SDPR to find common cause with the social democratic faction in the CPSU was also dwelt upon by Kudiukin at the roundtable in 2008: "The political naivety of the democratic movement, of course, contributed to the fact that it was not possible to find a common language with the in-system reformers," though traces of deference to Gorbachev should be detected in his comment.¹¹²⁴ The barriers that had separated socialist dissidents from the in-system reformers were belatedly bridged in the second post-Soviet decade when Kudiukin and Gorbachev, who had been in attendance at the 1982 Politburo meeting that opened this conclusion, participated together in the creation of the second SDPR in 2001.¹¹²⁵

These social democratic endings were a long way from the early-1970s, when the future Young Socialists arrived at MGU still under the impression of the Leninist influences of their younger years of schooling. These politically engaged youth entered their formative years at the university more than half a century after the revolution, at a time when society's connections to October had already begun to fade. Instead of storming new barricades, the leadership pursued a course of stability that aimed to preserve their life achievements, which inevitably dissociated the younger generation from a sense of active participation in an enduring revolutionary project.¹¹²⁶ These matters did not weigh on the minds of most late socialist youth, who were occupied by private lives that were stimulated by the postmodern,

¹¹²³ Tatiana Vorozheikina at the roundtable on the First USSR Congress of People's Deputies: 20 years later, 21 May 2009. *Gorbachevskie chiteniia* (7) (M. : Gorbachev Fond, 2010), 130.

¹¹²⁴ Pavel Kudiukin at the roundtable on 1968-1988-2008: the fate of ideas, 26 November 2008. *Gorbachevskie chiteniia* (10) (M. : Gorbachev Fond, 2015), 54-55.

¹¹²⁵ In fact, Kudiukin later asked Gorbachev if he had been part of any deliberations or was aware of any interventions in the case of the Young Socialists as a Politburo member in these years. Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

¹¹²⁶ Amir Weiner, "Robust Revolution to Retiring Revolution: The Life Cycle of the Soviet Revolution, 1945-1968," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 86(2) (2008), 230.

heterogeneous society that the Soviet Union had become.¹¹²⁷ Yet for a small minority, the lost thread of the revolution and the signs of stalling socialist development that they saw in the everyday life of the early-1970s constituted a distinct source of alienation. Using a micro-historical approach to study a prominent left-wing dissident circle, this thesis has explored the experiences of some of the individuals that remained committed to socialism and opposed its stagnation through the Brezhnev years. As we have seen, over the course of the 1970s, these young intellectuals' early attempts to stimulate change in their immediate environment progressed in a determined, oppositional direction, that took on transnational forms as the path of Soviet decline continued into the next decade.

As a contribution to new scholarship on the Brezhnev years, this study's continued emphasis on "stagnation" distinguishes it from other recent cultural histories that have to different degrees challenged this older characterisation of the period.¹¹²⁸ Indeed, stagnation, or *zastoi*, as a politically charged term used by the Soviet leadership to justify the post-1985 break, fits more smoothly into explanations for what was happening to the country's septuagenarian leaders and the economy than it does for the vibrant cultural life of the period.¹¹²⁹ In a recent collection, historians stressed that society's embrace of post-collectivist values, consumerism, innovative forms of leisure and the increasing number of possible ways to live a Soviet life all suggested a quiet dynamism.¹¹³⁰ One of Donald Raleigh's Soviet baby boomers – who experienced late socialism from a similar standpoint in the social strata to my own subjects – reflected, "The awareness of stagnation came only when they began to call the period that."¹¹³¹ This thesis has used the more developed picture of the period's social and cultural life that has been advanced by recent scholarship to conceptualise the broader social climate that the politicised

¹¹²⁷ Juliane Fürst, "Where Did All the Normal People Go? Another Look at the Soviet 1970s," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14(3) (2013), 639.

¹¹²⁸ Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Whither Soviet History?: Some Reflections on Recent Anglophone Historiography," *Region* 1(2) (2012), 228.

¹¹²⁹ Maike Lehmann, "When Everything Was Forever," *Slavic Review* 74(1) (2015), 2.

¹¹³⁰ Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova, "Introduction: What was Late Socialism?" in *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964-1985*, eds. Neringa Klumbyte and Gulnaz Sharafutdinova (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013), 11.

¹¹³¹ Donald Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: A history of Russia's Cold War generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 240.

semidesiatniki moved about in. Yet its return to the “older” theme of dissent makes it seemingly one of the more unusual new cultural histories of the period, where my subjects’ close attention to Kremlin politics, the Soviet economy and the declining environment of international communism all affirm the value of the stagnation paradigm for understanding the topic under study.

As students at MGU in the early-1970s, some of these politicised *semidesiatniki* sensed the stagnation of Soviet political culture. In their eyes, the Soviet state displayed a declining revolutionary idealism that permeated its propaganda and trickled down to influence the level of the everyday, where they saw that socialist ideology was failing to mobilise the other students in their midst. They felt the way that communist ideology was being presented through this uninspiring propaganda was an essential factor for explaining the gap between their idealised vision of socialism and the reality of their surroundings. They were frustrated by the routinised activism of the Komsomol, which they viewed had become repurposed into a career building factory. This disaffection from the stagnating political culture at home was counterweighted by the inspiring power of the revolutionary wars and foreign socialist experiments that were taking place in the Global South. The entanglement with Third Worldism, which was so central to the protest cultures of 1968, belatedly links the politicised *semidesiatniki* at MGU in the early-1970s to this transnational moment, although in this research I have chosen to emphasise the specifically Soviet conditions that gave rise to this activism.¹¹³² In juxtaposing Latin America’s ability to fuel anti-capitalist discourses against the cultural escapism of the imaginary West, this thesis has shown how the outside world was not only a supplier of Western cultural trends that gave late socialist youth some of the tools for living *vnye*. It could also provide critical stimulation for the development of diverse left-wing political identities containing critical hues that both challenged Soviet socialism and countered the political disengagement of their peers.

Coming only five years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile was an event that resonated within the critical student milieu of this generation.¹¹³³ It united like-minded *semidesiatniki*,

¹¹³² Silvio Pons, *The Global Revolution: A history of international communism, 1917-1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 255.

¹¹³³ It also impacted the wider university environment beyond the critical milieu that this thesis focuses on. See, for example, Aleksei Borzenkov, *Molodezh’ i politika:*

who were drawn together by a shared sense of grief that was politically mobilising. Nevertheless, the demise of this democratic socialist experiment affected a much smaller community than the impact that the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had on an entire generation half a decade earlier. This much smaller scale was one of the defining features of political engagement in the last Soviet generation. Moreover, it is not coincidental that the case study addressed in this thesis was located within the elite youth milieu in Moscow. This environment provided convenient access to the intellectual and cultural resources that were preconditions for critical political engagement. The party authorities in Moscow were much more permissive of unorthodox behaviour than their provincial counterparts. Finally, the greater propensity for political risk taking of children from the elite set them apart from youth of less privileged backgrounds, and particularly students from the provinces in Moscow, who were less likely to deviate politically out of fear reversing the fortunes that they had worked hard to achieve. These findings broadly overlap with the narratives related to the elite youth in Hungary and Poland that pursued critical left-wing politics, which scholars have associated with the generation of 1968.¹¹³⁴

Recently Iurii Slezkine argued that communism foundered on the Bolsheviks' inability to pass on their own revolutionary consciousness to their children.¹¹³⁵ By contrast, in the case of the politicised *semidesiatniki*, we see that the transfer of beliefs within families did occur among a small number and was the source for their unusual leftism. A case in point was TMEFP activist, Georgii Schalike, who was from a family of high-ranking German Comintern functionaries that settled in Moscow after fleeing the Nazis.¹¹³⁶ However, the transfers of experience more often

Vozmozhnosti i predely studencheskoi samodeiatel'nosti na vostoke rossii (1961-1991) (Youth and Politics: The Possibilities and Limits of Grassroots Student Activism in Eastern Russia.) (Novosibirsk: Novosibirsk State University, 2003).

¹¹³⁴ Péter Apor and James Mark, "Mobilising Generation: The idea of 1968 in Hungary," in *"Talkin' 'bout my generation: Conflicts of generation building and Europe's "1968,"* ed. Anna von der Goltz (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2011), 100-101. See also Malgorzata Fidelis, "Red State, Golden Youth: Student Culture and Political Protest in 1960s Poland," in *Between the Avant-Garde and the Everyday: Subversive Politics in Europe from 1957 to the Present*, eds. Timothy Brown and Lorena Anton (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2011), 145-153.

¹¹³⁵ Iurii Slezkine, *The House of Government: A saga of the Russian Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 957.

¹¹³⁶ Georgii Schalike, TMEFP Meeting, Moscow, 20 November 2016.

emphasised in this thesis were primarily not familial, but occurred across intellectual contexts, where the reformist and internationalist discourses that had been developed by the *shestidesiatniki* held considerable sway for these politically engaged youth in the next generation. Though this reform socialist thinking was only one of the ideological trends that existed within the wider number of political currents that were in circulation after 1968. As we have seen, by no means were all politically alert students oriented to socialism. The future Young Socialists rubbed shoulders with nationalists, human rights sympathisers and even Stalinists in the MGU Faculty of History in the early-1970s, and some of those currents could be found within room 242 itself. Nevertheless, the ubiquitous presence of socialist slogans and ideology in the Soviet landscape, especially in the education system, made a “good” socialism at least the initial belief system that most politically engaged *semidesiatniki* seized upon. The appeal of this ideology can also be put down to the years of this generation’s upbringing coinciding with the Soviet Union’s rising superpower status. Though the 1970s proved to be the turning point into decline, this generation saw living standards improving at home and socialism spreading globally during their childhood. They were part of a privileged section of society during the most stable period of the Soviet state’s existence. For all of these reasons, in the 1970s, socialism still retained the capacity to attract critical youth from the elite.

The year after their graduation from MGU, Fadin and Kudiukin founded the Young Socialists, while still caught up in the romantic revolutionary passions of their student years. As we have seen, friendship, its associated element of trust, and the access to wider networks that it brought, were all vital ingredients for this endeavour. These bonds of friendship enabled Fadin and Kudiukin’s social circle to push their own risk-taking friends in the dissidents’ direction. The Young Socialists adopted the format of underground conspiracy not only to give their dissident activities the chance to gain wider momentum, but also to preserve their chances for conventional life paths. This return to the socialist underground in the 1970s reflected the continuing pull of the state’s revolutionary propaganda, but it was also based on these young intellectuals’ rejection of the path of the *pravozashchitniki*. The Young Socialists’ *shestidesiatniki* mentors were those who had walked out of the meetings at their academic institutes during the vote of support for the Soviet invasion, not the dissidents who protested on Red Square in 1968.

The blending of everyday life with conspiracy was a fundamental element of the group's lived experience of dissent. Vladimir Pribylovskii, who knew most of the circle through everyday connections, later recalled the dynamic: "We met quite often for work, for university, for catching up and drinking, and at the same time we decided these [oppositional] questions."¹¹³⁷ Yet at the same time Pribylovskii had conspiratorial contact with Mikhail Rivkin, with whom he had a twice monthly standing appointment at the statue of a *muzhik* with a grenade near Krasnopresnenskaia metro to covertly exchange samizdat. The Young Socialists' academic careers similarly intertwined with their dissent, as was shown earlier through Andrei Danilov sharing the Soviet economic data that he encountered in his research at IMEMO with Boris Kagarlitskii for inclusion in *Sotsializm i budushchee*. Meanwhile, the relationships that the Young Socialists formed with their *shestidesiatniki* mentors at IMEMO, Marat Cheshkov and Viktor Sheinis, transferred elements of lived experience from these former socialist dissidents of the Thaw into the consciousness of the second generation. Coming into contact with them as middle aged, liberal intellectuals in the late-1970s, the Young Socialists were also influenced by Sheinis and Cheshkov's contributions as scholars to debates on theories of development and Marxist perspectives on the Third World.¹¹³⁸ In particular, the younger dissidents transferred Cheshkov's concept of *etakratiia* from the Third World to understand the class structure of the Soviet Union in their samizdat. The transfer of this generation's intellectual heritage was physically embodied through Kudiukin's borrowing of Kiva Maidanik's heavily marked collected works of Lenin, which he later used to aid Mikhail Gefter's historical explorations of the transition to the NEP.

The exploration of these intersecting currents of reform socialism and dissent that occurred at the lower levels of the political-intellectual establishment has produced a different picture of the reformist environment. The devotion to Lenin was shared by Anatolii Cherniaev, who recorded in his diary in July 1977, "All day I read Lenin, including *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautskii*. If you

¹¹³⁷ "Inakomyshliashchaia zhizn' v epokhu zakata razvitogo sotsializma, Moskva, 1970-1980e" (Dissident Life in the Era of the Decline of Developed Socialism, Moscow 1970-1980s), Interview of Vladimir Pribylovskii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, 25 July 2005: <http://www.igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-dissid/smysl/1058065392/1123140153.html>.

¹¹³⁸ Interview with Pavel Kudiukin, Moscow, 7 November 2016.

ignore the historical specifics, he is still right and very relevant in his way of thinking and internal logic. And what brilliance of thought and phrase! Sometimes I would jump up and run around the room, chuckling with delight.¹¹³⁹ Though the younger dissident and the in-system reformist were united by the unusual practice of seriously reading Lenin at the end of the 1970s, this scene illustrates the degrees of differentiation that existed within reformist culture. The Young Socialists, who declared themselves as “socialist, Eurocommunists and social democrats” to the French journal *L’Alternative* in 1981, had already adopted positions that were much closer to Kautskii.

As the 1970s wore on, the politicised *semidesiatniki*’s sense of stagnation grew more acute. The social democratic activist, Vladimir Kardail’skii later remembered that he “literally cried” after the Twenty Fourth Party Congress in 1976 when Brezhnev did not retire. “And not only that, he remained at the next.”¹¹⁴⁰ As we have seen, the Young Socialists viewed both the high-ranking liberals and the *pravozashchitniki* as incapable of creating momentum for Soviet reform. They instead calculated that an approaching economic crisis would generate the conditions for the circle to agitate among the working class to build a popular movement for reform. Yet while Soviet economic problems mounted but did not reach breaking point, the romantic attitudes that had inspired the dissident circle’s creation began to slowly drain away, as they increasingly felt that there was no application for their activities. This growing sense of hopelessness echoed general sentiments among both the dissident movement and in-system reformers in the final Brezhnev years. Following Jonathan Bolton’s lead, I have not positioned my narrative towards the collapse, but rather considered the Brezhnev years discretely, to recreate the lesser known moments of the real sense of despondency and doubt that existed among both dissidents and in-system reformers, when it was far from clear that Perestroika was on the horizon.¹¹⁴¹

¹¹³⁹ Diary of Anatolii Cherniaev, Entry for 17 July 1977: <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/dc.html?doc=3730600-The-Diary-of-Anatoly-Chernyaev-1977>.

¹¹⁴⁰ “Klub Perestroika 1987,” interview of Vladimir Kardail’skii by Aleksei Piatkovskii, Part One, December 2008-July 2010: http://igrunov.ru/vin/vchk-vin-n_histor/remen/1269186609.html.

¹¹⁴¹ Jonathan Bolton, *Worlds of Dissent: Charter 77, the Plastic People of the Universe and Czech culture under communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 44-46.

The Young Socialists' countered their dampening hopes for Soviet reform by rooting for left-wing and reformist movements abroad. As we have seen, the leftist imaginings of Latin America as a location of renewed socialism from their student years soon gave way to more nuanced scholarly assessments in their positions at IMEMO. While Fadin and Vorozheikina's emotional attachment to events on the ground in Latin America continued – and here they were joined by their older internationalist mentor Maidanik, Latin America became a field of study rather than a model for socialist renewal. Instead, the Young Socialists' dissident explorations were re-focused on Europe as a location that offered more relevant reformist models for the Soviet Union. The Young Socialists' proximity to elite intellectual structures that carried information on foreign affairs into the USSR, that included the research setting of IMEMO and Moscow's samizdat networks, allowed the dissident circle to engage with foreign reformist currents through reading. The combination of the dissident circle's associations with foreign left-wing journalists and the participation in Eastern Bloc scientific exchanges later enabled incipient transnational exchanges that took the form of letters of support to *Solidarność* and the Italian Communist Party.

One of the ambitions of this research has been to place socialist dissent in a transnational context, to counter perceptions of its insularity, through locating its development in the broader contexts of the overlapping histories of the international Left and dissent across the Eastern Bloc in the 1970s and 1980s. Two decades after the Twentieth Party Congress, the full force of its shocks had reshaped the landscape of the European radical Left and cultivated Eurocommunism and other reformist left movements that were critical of the Soviet experience. The Young Socialists saw ideological continuities with their own thinking and an overlapping agenda in the publications of the reformist Left that they read from Moscow. However, this reading gave broad impressions that they aligned with their own idealistic internationalist attitudes, rather than a nuanced understanding of the priorities and problems of the reformist Left that influenced its international coherence. This loosely associated movement that was unable to exercise real influence was much less oriented to dissident affairs than the Young Socialists imagined. What also emerged was the impression of ships passing in the night, where Soviet isolation was too great to broker deeper understanding or more comprehensive exchange. This conclusion echoes into the Eastern Bloc, where the desire for communication between the

different national dissident movements was strong, but the state security measures restricted dissidents to mainly to learning of each other's views on the radio.

The experience of socialist dissent accelerated the former Young Socialists' adoption of social democratic and new left identities during Perestroika. Their years of dissident explorations had already taken them beyond a Marxist-Leninist dominated framework to engage with different currents of reform socialism that opened up these former dissidents' minds to non-Soviet leftist alternatives. When examining the Young Socialists' intellectual development from the perspective of Perestroika, these reform socialist currents appear in a new light, as a middle ground between these dissidents' earliest notions of neo-Leninism and social democracy. The evolution to a social democratic identity marked the final step on the reformist path. It occurred when the revolutionary heritage had been totally discredited and Soviet socialism was visibly undergoing a terminal crisis. This was the endpoint of the long Soviet decline, which began from the time that their generation entered adulthood.

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UCL Statement of Impact.

This thesis contributes to understandings of the history of the Soviet Union in its final two decades. It has expanded perspectives of the late Soviet intellectual elite by broadening scholarly focus beyond Mikhail Gorbachev and the Perestroika era leadership to instead devote attention to the lower levels of this strata, whose contemporaries are now the generation in power in Russia. Seeking to move beyond prevailing conceptions that this last Soviet generation was detached from communist politics, it has introduced a case study of an elite socialist dissident circle, with the aim of furthering discussion about political engagement and its role in the final decades of the Soviet Union. Emphasising the significance of internationalist and reformist discourses among different pockets of the political-intellectual establishment, this thesis has documented the degree of engagement with the outside world and the continued commitment to socialism that existed in this influential section of Soviet society. Addressing the trends of reform and dissent during the years of Soviet decline and collapse, this thesis has given shape to the possible forms of political action that are open to intellectuals in an undemocratic society. This research is primarily a contribution to historical scholarship, though it also has resonance for scholars and political commentators, who are seeking to enrich their perceptions of the social forces at work in contemporary Russia. As a study that addresses recent history, it has relevance for understanding the contemporary post-Soviet space and the recent conflicts that have arisen in the region, whose sources can be found in the final decades of Soviet history that are the subject of this thesis.