

Forging the Enemy in Soviet Fiction and Press

1945-1982

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Abstract

My dissertation offers a new approach to the study of Soviet official prose in the context of Soviet politics and of the Cold War. The Cold War was an ideological contest between two blocs: capitalist and communist. To gain victory, the Cold warriors needed to shape the minds of both foreigners and their own people.

An excellent way to understanding the Soviet political consciousness is literature, the “second government,” to use Alexander Herzen’s words. In Russia, since the 19th century, literature has been a unique realm where public discourse could be expressed. In 1932 Socialist Realism became the official doctrine, consequently, the language of power. Aesthetics aside, in my PhD study I consider official prose as purely political texts. The dissertation focuses on a number of Soviet novels written between 1941 and 1981, most of which gained various State Prizes. Although these novels were the most read at the time, today they have fallen into oblivion. However, by reading these novels one can draw quite an accurate picture of Soviet cultural life and mentality of that period, revealed in particular in the images of the enemy and in relation to the West. In my research, I take into consideration the German political thinker Carl Schmitt, for whom ‘the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy.’

The thesis argues that, during forty years, the enemy has become more subtle: in the Stalin period the “Western threat” was destructive, but under Khrushchev the same threat became seductive. The danger came from the appeal for Western values capable of contaminating Soviet citizens. Under Brezhnev, the introspective questioning of the intelligentsia was considered as the seed of ideological and moral corruption. Thus, the analysis of the crafting of the enemy in various case studies from the late Stalinist period until the “Stagnation period” will allow me to track the evolution of the Party line. As Alexey Yurchak proved, these metamorphoses of ideology have progressively led to the rift between the official discourse and the Soviet reality, making the collapse of the empire ‘simultaneously unexpected and unsurprising, and amazingly fast.’

The originality of my research lies in its interdisciplinary approach to decipher Soviet ideology, resorting to political scientists, historians and anthropologists. Moreover, it includes authors not previously studied, unpublished materials I collected in the archives of the Soviet Writers’ Union (Moscow), and the literary criticism of the epoch.

I don't believe in a man's love for his friend or for his banner if I don't see in it the efforts to understand the enemy and his banner.

José Ortega y Gasset

Introduction

The new world that emerged after World War II is, for today's people near and far, familiar and unknown. Indeed, it seems quite unrealistic for my generation and even the previous one ('the baby boomers'), who have only known peace and a comfortable life, to imagine the mentalities of those Europeans struck by bombings, hunger, devastation and death. For sure, such experience bequeaths singular and incommunicable fears and sufferings, and also, once the war was over, new hopes and expectations. But, at the same time, the United Nations, the European Union, the ambiguous relationship with Russia and the whole contemporary geopolitical balance date back from that period. In that sense, the Yalta Agreement was the last Peace of Westphalia. Since then, the history of the last seventy years – and in particular of the Cold War – has permanently been written and told in the media, in textbooks, by heroes, politicians, scholars or simple citizens. The enormous amount of such narratives and the high frequency of memorial practices (such as the celebration of Victory Day in Russia or the interest in Nazi camp survivors' testimonies) hint at the feeling that we still live – at least mentally – in post-war Europe.

Deciphering Soviet Ideology

On this new map of Europe, the Soviet Union was hidden behind the "Sovietological curtain": Soviet studies happened to be entangled with the ideological contest between East

and West,¹ and with the domestic struggle for power. The latter implied control over the national narrative, i.e. over the archives and oral memory. Hence, most of the existing literature on the Cold War Soviet Union resembles an indictment – or a plea – meant to disqualify – or praise – the Soviet rule as such. I admit that the work of the historian cannot be done without resorting to moral concerns, but sometimes by imposing our own moral categories on a foreign reality, one can conceal a part of the object of study.

Katerina Clark, in her monograph on Socialist Realism, brings the reader's attention precisely to the fact that, "some of the problems derive from applying Western "highbrow" literary criteria in studying a literature that was not intended to meet them."² At the beginning of the book, she suggests three reasons according to which an analysis on Socialist Realism is

¹ During the whole conflict, the 'Sovietological approach' (in other words, the trend observed by the American Sovietologists) played a significant role in the relationships between the two blocs; it was almost one of the protagonists of the contest. There were three main different schools in American Sovietology, corresponding to different epochs of the Cold War. At the turn of the 1950's, we find the Realist School (Adam Ulam and George Keenan). With their refusal of moralistic and ideological bases of the Soviet rulers, they thought that the Soviet Union could change, but that it would take time. Later the Political Cultural-historicist School appeared (Richard Pipes, Zbigniew Brzezinsky), assuming that the Kremlin was motivated by a set of ideological values in continuity with the Czarist regime. They were supposing that the Soviet Union was aggressive to Western values. The Pluralist School (Jerry Fincher Hough, Harold Gordon Skilling) argues that some Soviet elites supported détente and an increasing of exchanges with the West.

In the 1960s and 1970s a revisionist stream emerged, questioning the Soviet imperialistic-expansionism and acknowledging American imperialism, see William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: World Publishing Co, 1959). Then the neo-revisionist trend materialized, assuming that the hardening of the American Foreign Policy was detrimental for domestic individual liberties, see Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace. The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977).

Besides, the question of Soviet expansionism, led by the Communist ideology, was at the core of all the debates. John Lewis Gaddis, in *We Now Know* (Oxford University Press, 1997), eventually reaffirms the importance of the imperialistic-expansionism in the Soviet doctrine, legitimizing the American policy of containment.

"American studies" in the Soviet Union have believed in this ideological component from their Western counterparts. Boris Marushkin argues in *History and Politics* (Moscow: Nauka, 1969), that the Cold War historiography itself, and Sovietology in particular, were used as a "weapon against the Soviet Union" (p.377); Gennady Kostyrchenko embraces the same view, saying that, "historiography was between history and politics," see *Khrushchev's Secret Policy* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenya, 2012), p. 450. Georgy Arbatov's *A Prolonged Recovery. 1953-1985* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenya, 1991) gives an idea as thorough as possible of the perception of the US by the Soviet elites.

² *The Soviet Novel. History as a Ritual* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. xi. One century before, anthropologist Gustave Le Bon had pointed to the cultural gap between different nations, noticing that "Napoleon had a marvellous insight into the psychology of the masses of the country over which he reigned, but he, at times, completely misunderstood the psychology of crowds belonging to other races; and it is because he thus misunderstood it that he engaged in Spain, and notably in Russia, in conflicts in which his power received blows which were destined within a brief space of time to ruin it." in *The Crowd. A Study of the Popular Mind* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications Inc., 2002, first published in 1895), p. xiv.

a taboo topic in Slavonic scholarship: “it is patently bad literature (...) it derivates from a historical experiment which has cost so much human suffering (...), and it is lifeless and dull.”³ Notwithstanding those objections, she bravely undertook an interpretive cultural history of the Soviet novel. My research was to a great extent influenced by her purely scientific approach, free of any moral – and, as it seems to me, reductive – prejudice. I like the way she deals with Socialist Realism as a historical phenomenon and as a ritual – namely, a collective practice for Soviet society to describe and maintain itself. I find particularly illuminating the comparison between Soviet writers and medieval icon painters; for Clark, “Socialist Realism is a canonical doctrine defined by its patristic texts.”⁴ She draws on what she calls the “master plot” – the general scheme of all Socialist Realist novels, which is divided into six stages and where, she notes, “the tale of task fulfilment fuses with that of the hero’s ritual maturation.”⁵

I was fascinated by the way Clark applies anthropological methodology to Soviet novels in order to extract their symbolic meaning, such as Van Gennep’s rites of passage, and the portrait of the positive hero (on the basis of the Soviet medievalist Likhachev’s works). As for me, I endeavour to do the same, for example, when I resort to Aleksandr Panchenko’s analysis of the holy fool in ancient Rus’ in order to explain Daniel’s trial. That said, my research adds another anthropological scheme, which does not appear in Clark’s work: the idea that the Thaw is inscribed in the realm of the carnival, according to Bakhtin’s theory (see Chapter 4.2). For this reason, I cannot agree with Clark’s statement saying that “the Khrushchev years do not constitute a homogenous era. To mark them off as a distinctive time period is to make a rather arbitrary time division, motivated by a sort of “cult of personality” of its own (Khrushchev’s, that is).”⁶ I see the Thaw as a consistent cultural and time unit, and

³ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, pp. ix-x.

⁴ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 4.

⁵ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 256.

⁶ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 212.

the phenomenon of the carnival looks to me as a key without which it becomes hard to understand the complexity of that period, reflected in such features as: the tightening of space; the use of masks (and the literary production was one of them); popular scenes of collective rejoicing as well as Khrushchev's theatrical performances and, last but not least, the reversal of values explaining why, as Clark herself notices, "the attempt at a 'heroic revival' [has] failed."⁷

Apart from her normative and anthropological contributions to the study of Socialist Realism, Clark underlines the great importance in that genre granted to politics and ideology. When I began my dissertation, her remark reinforced my opinion on the fruitful potential for an academic research on the trope of the enemy in the Soviet novel. Resorting to the scholar of myth Mircea Eliade, when studying the opposition between a mythic Great Time and a profane time, Clark widens the scope of the novel and characterizes its role as "repository of official myths (...). According to her, Socialist Realism performs an essentially mythological task."⁸ Indeed, I think that the mythological approach is by far the most relevant in the Soviet context and in the case study of the enemy in particular, because it links the revolutionary and Stalinist cosmogony to epics and characters of Soviet literary and cinematographic production. Hence, the mythological study of Soviet novels is a big help to understand Soviet ideology. To this extent, one can regret that in the part of the book dedicated to Soviet fiction since World War II, Clark does not address at all the issue of the Cold War – although it was a crucial point since 1947, which also displayed its own mythology. Besides, it is a common feature of Soviet post-war literary scholars not to include the impact of the Cold War in their field.⁹ In my research, I tried to remedy this omission and to show how the two mythologies

⁷ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 233.

⁸ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, respectively pp. 10 and 252.

⁹ There are two exceptions. First, Olga Voronina's work, *A Window with an Iron Curtain: Cold War Metaphors in Transition, 1945-1968* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 2010), where she analyzes the origins and use of Cold War metaphors. But except from the last chapter dedicated to Anna Akhmatova, most of the text deals with materials taken from political speeches and the media. As for David Cauter, in his book, *Politics and*

were interwoven: which role the Cold War has played in the Soviet novel and reciprocally, how the tropes created by the Soviet writers had an impact on Cold War mythology. Explaining those interactions is very useful to have an insight into the “pictures in the heads”¹⁰ of the Soviet people, its citizens and elites and in the final analysis, into Soviet ideology.

Another strategy to apprehend Soviet official literature is to focus more on its producers than on its products; such is Evgeny Dobrenko’s methodological choice. I agree with him when he says that, “the main issue is *the changing of the “artist’s” blood composition* <...> this problem allows to remove the conversation on Soviet literature from the endless debates on the Soviet writer’s freedom / lack of freedom <...> according to that binary logic the Soviet literature *cannot be properly understood*.”¹¹ So, the best way to have an accurate picture of Soviet literature, he suggests, is to study the peculiar relationship of its members with power.

In my dissertation, I resort to Dobrenko’s approach based on his two main assumptions. The first one is that the nature of Soviet literature is essentially dynamic, “the historico-literary process is [understood as] the living process of human activity, the meeting of different political, ideological intentions, the confrontation of interests and personalities, the real struggle between people.”¹² Soviet writers are typically viewed as an army of docile executioners at the service of the propaganda state, which is by far, too simplistic. I think that the presentation of official literature as an evolutionary process is much more credible and interesting.

the Novel during the Cold War (New Brunswick – London: Transaction Publishers, 2009), he studies literature from the point of view of the Cold War historian. Besides, the title is a reference to Irving Howe, *Politics and the Novel* (New York: Horizon Press, 1957). Cauter is more interested in their impact on the Cold War narrative than in the authors themselves. Moreover, his comparative perspective on the world scale counts only a few pages dedicated to Soviet novels, most of which relate to dissident prose.

¹⁰ Walter Lippmann *Public Opinion* (New York: MacMillan, 1922), p.25.

¹¹ Evgeny Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer* (Saint-Petersburg: Akademicheskii Proekt, 1999), p. 7.

¹² Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p.7.

From this perspective, the ultimate outputs of Soviet literature are the Soviet readers and writers themselves – this is the second approach of Dobrenko’s thesis that I lean on.¹³ Further, he points to the paradox of co-authorship between power and individuals, “The rough reduction of authorship in Soviet literature, when the real author of ‘artistic production’ is power itself, does not prevent the obvious fact that Soviet literature was after all created by concrete prose writers.”¹⁴ To Dobrenko, that paradox is solved, thanks to the concept of self-censorship, allowing the writer to epitomize the intention of power, “The most rugged censor of the Soviet writer is the Soviet writer himself: the Soviet writer is a censor. In this way, the Soviet culture was able to overcome the gap between art and life.”¹⁵ So, as a reminder of today’s financial traders thoroughly following the curve of the stock exchange index, the Soviet writers were operating a permanent attunement between their prose and the evolutions of the Party line. Finally, Dobrenko concludes that, “Socialist Realism is a form of bureaucratic writing.”¹⁶ In my research, I take over the axiom establishing Socialist Realism as the language of power. I consider official prose as purely political texts; the specific question of political literature will be elaborated below in this introduction, in relation to propaganda and national narratives.

However, despite the fact that Dobrenko himself regrets that many studies on Socialist Realism are one-dimensional and exhorts scholars to apply a multidisciplinary approach (admittedly, it seems difficult to produce a pure literary comment on Socialist Realism that would not relate, *de facto*, to Socialist Realist criticism), my objection is – like Clark’s study – that the international dimension almost misses in his theoretical frame, not to mention the impact of the Cold War. And yet, one can hardly deny the weight of the relationship with the rest of the world in Soviet self-perception. Notably, since the nineteenth century conflict

¹³ “The genuine products of socialist realism are people: readers and writers,” in Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p. 12.

¹⁴ Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p. 8.

¹⁵ Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p. 13.

¹⁶ Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p. 479.

between Slavophiles and Westernizers, the United States and Western Europe has always been an ambivalent object of marvel and fear, attraction and hatred. The various answers that were given to this question have divided the intelligentsia and played the role of a compass to define Russian identity, urging sometimes an inferiority complex, sometimes waves of national pride, sometimes both (see Chapter 4.3 on the fear of contamination of Soviet society by Western values during the Thaw). Such topics as Soviet messianism or the peace movement make little sense in the narrow limits of the domestic politico-literary debate. On a more empirical level, the alternation of phases of tensions and détente in the Cold War have had major influence on Soviet mentalities, especially concerning the perception of the enemy.¹⁷

My second reservation is that *The Making of the Soviet Writer* may perhaps rely on “too productivist” premises: all happens as if ideology were the one and only ‘mould’ of the Soviet consciousness. Nevertheless, one can observe common cultural trends across a number of European countries, independently from their political regime, but which share similar historical backgrounds and generational watersheds: the post-war youth movements (*shestidesiatniki* including the *stilyagi* in the USSR, ‘baby boomers’ and hippies in Europe and the United States); the debates on new forms of the novel in the 1950s and 1960s; the fascination for space and the literary genre of sci-fi; the fear of the nuclear threat and so on. Moreover, inside the totally ideological state, the overwhelming quantity of information and cultural production makes it dubious that ordinary citizens were aware of it, even partly. For sure, Socialist Realism was a mass phenomenon and people were exposed to the signals sent by the ideological machine from an early age and all their life long: at school, at work and

¹⁷ Yuri Aksiutin, a historian specialized in the relations between power and the mass, has underlined the importance of international issues (such as the reconciliation with Yugoslavia, the building of the Berlin Wall or the Caribbean crisis) in the formation of public opinion. See *Khrushchev's 'Thaw' and Public Opinion in the USSR in 1953-1964* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2010), pp. 135-151, 345-359, 360-388. Boris Grushin, a philosopher and sociologist who founded the Institute of Public Opinion in 1960 under the auspices of the newspaper *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, has studied the role of foreign models in the perception of the future and the shaping of values amongst youth, see *Four Lives of Russia in the Mirror of Public Opinion Monitoring*, in four volumes (Moscow: Press-Traditsia, 2001), vol. I pp. 69-111, 159-222, 391-430.

everywhere in the public space. But, after all, is today the democratization of the Internet and the availability of Wi-Fi in every home, restaurant and railway station, proof that every single owner of a laptop or a smartphone (the equivalent of the Soviet literate public) reads the daily press and has watched the last blockbuster?¹⁸ I do not think so. Some people do not have time, others are focused on their relationship with their beloved or on the conflict with their relatives or neighbours, and others are interested in nothing except in their collection of butterflies or the latest model of Volga... To put it briefly, the big narrative of Socialist Realism, and hence of Soviet ideology, has definitely produced its own heroes – the Soviet readers and writers. But those characters also belong to other stories, both universal and trivial. In spite of the efforts of the total ideology to promote the Soviet New Man, the latter never became the totally ideological subject.¹⁹ Unlike the purely conceptual gaze of the literary historian, he could not escape from the material and emotional uncertainty proper to his human condition.

In this respect, Polly Jones looks closely at the gap between theory and practice, between official ideology and human reality. In her impressive monograph on the official Destalinization rhetoric,²⁰ she analyzes the popular reaction that followed Khrushchev's

¹⁸ In the realist novel *L'Assommoir* (1877), the heroine Gervaise, a washerwoman, heads with a group of friends and relatives to the museum of the Louvre, "Gervaise asked the subject of the *Wedding at Cana*; that was stupid not to write the subject on the frames. [Her husband] stopped in front of *Mona Lisa* and found she resembled one of his aunts. Boche and Bibi-Grilling were sniggering at the sight of naked women." (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), p. 66. In that satirical episode, Emile Zola deals with the issue of access of the masses to art and with popular emotion. Although the workers are shown as ignorant, the author prefers their naive interest and spontaneity to the dogmatism of art critics (embodied by the character of Madinier, the most educated of them). Also, by showing the discrepancy between the works of art and their reception by the public, Zola questions one's ability – and willingness – to get rid of his everyday crude reactions and to become familiar with high culture. In the Soviet Union and today, the question remains just topical as ever, concerning high and mass culture as well.

¹⁹ See also Elena Zubkova, *Stalin and Public Opinion. 1945-1953*, in *Stalin's Cold War Decade: facts and hypothesis*, edited by A.O. Chubaryan and N.I. Egorova (Moscow: Nauka, 1999). In her paper, Zubkova analyzes Stalin's failure to mobilize Soviet society, which was not politicized. She explains Stalin's involvement in the Cold War as an attempt to divert people from the post-war despair and to channel their anger toward the West.

²⁰ Polly Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma. Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union, 1953-70* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013); on the same topic, see also Polly Jones, 'From the Secret Speech to the burial of Stalin: real and ideal responses to de-Stalinization', in *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinization*.

Secret Speech. Displaying a huge quantity of archival material, she aptly shows that the Soviet power was not at all expecting how people would react to the process of Destalinization. Fearing the unintended consequences of the latter, the party tried to keep control over the Destalinization process, by launching attacks on critics considered as excessive (such as Dudintsev or the journal *Voprosy Istorii* in 1957) and so drawing the line between the tolerated discourse on Stalin and the forbidden one.²¹ By describing the fluctuations of the memorial policy, Jones gives a fascinating account on the complex relationship to Stalin across the Thaw and the first years of the Brezhnevian Stagnation. Moreover, her methodology using literary works to track the evolution of Soviet ideology was very inspiring for me and I tried to reproduce it in my research.

More incidentally, the collective monograph edited by Evgeny Dobrenko and Galin Tikhanov on literary criticism,²² as well as John and Carol Garrard's *History of the Writers' Union*²³ are essential to have a good grasp of the mechanisms of Soviet censorship and self-censorship. We find also valuable descriptions of post-war literature in the books by Neil Cornwell,²⁴ Geoffrey Hosking,²⁵ Naum Leiderman and Mark Lipovetsky.²⁶ Ivan Zhukov's *Fadeev*²⁷ is a great help to become familiar with the numerous protagonists of the Soviet literary life, since my research addresses the issue of the evolution – and sometimes new forms – of the Socialist Realist novel. Apart from Ilya Ehrenburg, most of the writers in my scope are barely known – rather ignored – by Soviet scholars for the reasons mentioned above.

Negotiating cultural and social change in the Khrushchev era, ed. by Polly Jones (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 41-63.

²¹ See Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, Chapter 3, entitled 'Forgetting within Limits: Censorship and the Preservation of the Stalin Cult', pp. 97-130.

²² *History of Russian Literary Criticism. Soviet and Post-Soviet Times* (Moscow: NLO, 2011).

²³ John and Carol Garrard, *Inside the Soviet Writers' Union* (London-New York: Tauris, 1990).

²⁴ Neil Cornwell (ed.), *Reference Guide to Russian Literature* (London: Routledge, 1998).

²⁵ Geoffrey A. Hosking, *Beyond Socialist Realism. Soviet Fiction since Ivan Denisovich* (London: Harper Collins, 1980).

²⁶ Naum Leiderman and Mark Lipovetsky, *Contemporary Russian Literature, 1950-1990* (Moscow: Akademya, 2003).

²⁷ Ivan Zhukov, *Fadeev* (Moscow: Molodaya Gvardia, 1980).

Because of the “Sovietological curtain,” and even more after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the status of “official writer” is likened to be the “first violin” in an orchestra, which would have played out of tune. As a result, even after seventy years and the opening of most of the archives, many questions still remain: who were these writers, what was their intellectual background, path, and convictions, in particular, related to the party? I also try to understand the interdependence between literature and ideology, and the role it played by the writers: have they only implemented the policy from above, getting explicit orders? Or, were they unconscious reproducers of the ‘general ambiance’ resulting from the Cold war context and inner Party debates? Or did they obey specific motivations - political, philosophical or personal? Did they get access to restricted-access collections in order to strengthen their credibility or did they feed themselves from the phantasmagoric mythology they contributed to? To what extent did they create new mythologies or tinker with the representations created by their Soviet colleagues, by the Americans? Can we retrace their genealogy and East-West journeys of some of the Cold War tropes, like the incendiary capitalists, as did Olga Voronina in her study on Cold War metaphors?²⁸ Among all those post-war imaginary and cultural tropes, the main one is the trope of the enemy to which this study is dedicated.

In Search of the Enemy: Towards a Methodology

Enemy is the true hero of fiction. Along with the cult of the positive hero, the figure of the enemy is also central in novels and films of late Stalinism. Often the trigger of the plot, he is also the point at which all the actions of the protagonists converge and being unmasked, his disappearance from the scene concludes a story. For sure, the enemy is also the main character in Cold War mythology.

²⁸ Voronina, *A Window with an Iron Curtain: Cold War Metaphors in Transition*.

Generally, the enemy can be boiled down into two approaches: subjective and objective. On the one hand, the very concept of enmity is often put into doubt by a number of the authors who studied the topic – that is the subjective approach.²⁹ On the other hand, in my research, I consider that the enemy has an objective dimension by the simple material rivalry of interests. This is true for the contest between two empires when the very existence of one empire questions the universal value of the other. By and large, in geopolitics and in particular in the case of the Cold War, it seems difficult to define the enemy as a sort of delusion we have to struggle with and eventually, deny it as such. That is why I support rather the objective definition of the enemy, in the wake of Schmitt's theory.³⁰

Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) is the main thinker of enmity. A German jurist and a political theorist; he remains controversial due to his allegiance with the Nazi regime. However, his scientific works have influenced many philosophers and political authors, including Giorgio Agamben, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Derrida, and Slavoj Žižek. Schmitt defines the enemy as the genesis of the political, of any political and cultural struggle, “the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and

²⁹ Some authors, like Sam Keen (*Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986)), and James Aho (*This thing of Darkness: A Sociology of the Enemy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994)) consider the concept of enemy as a somewhat artificial construction. To them, the other would be a projection of a part of ourselves that we cannot stand, of our “dark side.” Keen cherishes the hopes of *Homo amicus* to whom he devotes the last chapter of his book *Facing the Enemy*; Aho tries psychoanalytically to deconstruct the enemy revealing his nature as a shadow of our own fears and thus totally unoriginal. Droit, whose work is focused on the term “barbarian” (for him it is an equivalent to enemy) eventually concludes that it would be “wiser” to get rid of the very concept of “barbarian.” Hence, according to Droit, any enunciation of a norm or cultural standard is denounced as totalitarian, see *Généalogie des barbares* (Paris : Odile Jacob, 2007). As for Robert Robins and Jerrold Post, they consider the perception of an enemy as a “political paranoia” that must be fought against; paranoia is a mental illness developed to avoid “the humiliation of helplessness,” see *Political Paranoia: The Psychopolitics of Hatred* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 301. Aleksander Fateev is more pragmatic: to him the concept of the enemy is nothing else than the gimmick of power to “make the Soviet people fool and control them,” see *The image of the Enemy in Soviet Propaganda, 1945-1954* (Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 1999), p. 126.

³⁰ Among other reinterpretations of the concept of enemy, one can find Franz Borkenau, *The Totalitarian Enemy* (London: Faber & Faber, 1940); Vamik Volkan *The Need to Have Enemies and Allies* (London: Jason Aronson Inc., 1997), and Elena S. Senyavskaya ‘The Perception of the Enemy by the World Wars Soldiers’ in *Voprosy Istorii*, 1997, 3, pp. 140-156.

enemy.”³¹ In other words, according to Schmitt, the distinction between friend and enemy represents the extreme degree of unity or disunity, so the essence of the political. In the next sentence, he postulates “this provides a definition in the sense of a criterion and not as an exhaustive definition.” Such a criterion is particularly appropriate in the Soviet case. Hence, official literature, with its wide collections of characters, friends and foes, mirrors the ideology of the party. By studying the enemy in various Socialist Realist novels, my goal is to identify the political discourse at a precise time.

Besides, Russian sociologist Lev Gudkov does not question Schmitt’s hypothesis, pointing to the archaic instinct to share the world between “we-them.”³² He even extends it by saying that it creates a culture of fear and hope and such a political consciousness capable of mobilizing the masses; he defines the paradox of enmity as a “necessary lethal threat.” Yet, by mobilizing itself *against* the enemy and the threat it stands for, the Soviet Union, expresses itself as a vital organism making its ideological choices. In other words, to represent the enemy in artistic works is to construct its own identity.

Throughout history, Soviet politicians have often resorted to the perception of the enemy in order to create the image of a common communist camp. As early as 1937, in his speech Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissar, identified enemies as “parasites, saboteurs, and spies from Trotskyite and foreign intelligence.”³³ He also distinguished the enemies at the Shakhty Trial (1928-1930), linked to “the bourgeoisie, the White guards movements abroad and foreign spies, far from our Party”³⁴ and the new ones, “who have a Party card and use it to deceive us and edge their way to places they could never

³¹ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (University of Chicago Press, 2007. 1st edition 1927), p. 26.

³² Lev Gudkov *The Negative Identity* (Moscow: NLO, 2004), chap.1.

³³ Vyacheslav Molotov, *Stalin’s Enemies – Enemies of Russia* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2013), p.40.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 57.

access otherwise.”³⁵ One can notice that between 1930 and 1937 the enemy was grafted onto the Party, which has made him especially dangerous and elusive.³⁶ Such an invisible threat ‘naturally’ legitimized terror and the mass purges of 1937-1938. On the exterior front, enemies were the “White Finnish,” the “White Poles” and the Japanese militarists.³⁷

The Cold War period is more complex. Unlike the debates of the 1930s, where the pursuit of the enemy for the Soviets remains a domestic (or at worst neighbouring) ‘witch-hunt,’ the enemy after 1945 already reaches the world scale and he corresponds to the standards of international law. Indeed, the ground for the Cold War is to be searched in the aftermath of World War I and its political philosophy. What I mean is the moment when war *per se* was put under the ban of the Treaty of Versailles. Here I allude to Julien Freund’s thesis,³⁸ according to which pacifist legalism and its derivatives (the Society of Nations, the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the Organization of United Nations, and the Cold War itself) transformed international society into “a kingdom of judges and culprits.” Instead of recognizing the legitimate interests of sovereign nations, pacifist legalism replaced war by a moral court. Consequently, international relations are no longer aimed at finding a political compromise but their goal is to assign blame. The enemy is no more considered as a political interlocutor, no bargaining is possible.

The paradox of the Cold War nemesis was that it occurs in the time when the (political) enemy was denied as such. According to the universal laws bequeathed by Versailles, the enemy *cannot* exist philosophically. He is converted to an *ideological* enemy, i.e. to a political shade with neither rights nor legitimate means to defend his interests. Another proof of the ideological nature of the conflict is its high emotional intensity whereas, according to Schmitt,

³⁵ Ibid. p. 58, 104.

³⁶ This is precisely the plot of *The Party Card* by Ivan Pyryev (1936).

³⁷ Alexey Nazarov, “The Transformation of the Presentation of the Enemy in the Soviet Cinematographic and Photographic Chronicles. June-December 1941” in Lev Gudkov ed., *Presentation of the Enemy* (Moscow: OGI, 2005), pp. 175-188.

³⁸ Julien Freund, *L’Essence du Politique* (Paris : Sirey, 1965). See the chapter “The Negation of the Enemy.” Julien Freund was Schmitt’s disciple.

the political enemy has nothing to do with personal hatred, but only with power rivalry. No wonder propaganda and cultural war play the unprecedented role during the Cold War and public opinion becomes the new battlefield and judge in the final analysis. We use the term “battlefield” because, as Schmitt states, outlawing the war does not suppress the distinction between friend and enemy. On the contrary, the new ways to point to these concepts give them a new content and a new life. Both adversaries are not allowed to declare themselves ‘enemies’ that quite naturally results in the game of moralizing one-upmanship. During the Cold War, good examples of this tendency are the ‘convergence theories,’ which have treated the US and the USSR as subjective and temporary enemies.

During the periods of *Détente* (just after Stalin’s death and in the 1970s) the ideological vision again became political (in Schmitt’s sense): as soon as the Other’s power ceased to represent a direct lethal threat, he was no more considered as an enemy. The reasons for this shift were three-fold: economic reasons, because the Soviet Union needed to import the consumers’ goods, which could not be produced in the country, and so to support its economy; political reasons corresponding to the ideas of the new leaders who came to power in both countries; and finally, psycho-social reasons, since the population of the two superpowers were exhausted from the first round of the Cold War and were supporting the peace movement.

In the present research the focus will be laid upon how the two superpowers *practically* used enmity in propaganda and fiction in particular. Production and reception of literature and press are processes, which reveal as much the perception of the Other by the Soviets as their perception of themselves. To this extent, the definition of the enemy corresponds to the trope of the “imagined Other.”³⁹

³⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

But like Socialist Realism itself, the main feature of this “imagined Other” in Soviet novels is its *fluidity*. Actually, there is little in common between the American financial magnate John Vandengheim, who appears in 1930s in Shpanov’s book, and Bondarev’s Soviet painter Vasilyev forty years later. In his monograph on the late Soviet Union,⁴⁰ Alexey Yurchak analyzes the evolution of the Soviet discourse, “This book set out to explore the paradox of the Soviet system by closely examining the internal shifts, at the level of everyday life, in the discourse language, ideology, ethics, social relations, time, and space on which this paradox was predicated.”⁴¹ Yurchak’s thesis consists of the observation that with time, the official discourse has become totally disconnected from the Soviet citizens’ life. The latter were keeping up practising the same rituals, not because of any feeling of faith or fear of punishment, but because they were giving new meanings to those rituals. Hence, little by little, the Soviet Union disintegrated and eventually, its collapse was at the same time “unpredictable and unsurprising.”⁴² Further, he explains that “the very feeling of Soviet life’s fixed, eternal and immutable nature was necessarily and constitutive of the system’s continuous and internal and deterritorialization. The more the system seemed immutable, the more it was different from what it claimed it was.”⁴³ The dynamic nature of Socialist Realism, already underlined by Dobrenko, is widened in Yurchak to the whole ideological discourse.

I decided to apply Yurchak’s approach to the trope of the enemy, and it appears that its permanently changing faces argue for the fundamental instability of Socialist Realism. Hence, the enemy belongs to such representations, whose meaning varied in order to safeguard the seeming consistency of Soviet ideology. Furthermore, my thesis on the culture of the Thaw related to the realm of carnival goes in the same direction. As early as under Khrushchev, the

⁴⁰ Alexey Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005).

⁴¹ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 295.

⁴² Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 295.

⁴³ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 309.

rift between the state discourse and reality had become so obvious and unbearable that people were seeking for release in common celebrations, in the private space, wearing masks (practically or metaphorically) and reversing official values. To put it briefly, the carnival performance was allowing them being *vnye* (in Yurchak's sense).⁴⁴ But, finally, this literary illusion failed and the initial version of Socialist Realism was not sustainable throughout the whole history of Soviet literature. The party's political fiction was able to preserve neither politics – the Soviet state ultimately disappeared –, nor fiction – Socialist Realism as a literary style did not survive after 1991. In order to better understand this process of decay, it is important to have a good knowledge of what political literature is.

What is political literature? On the 'storytelling animal' and propaganda

I call political literature the codified genre of novels dealing with political events and where the protagonists (i.e. their physical, psychological and moral qualities) are determined by the camp they belong to. In such novels, narrative and images suggested by the text are meant to convey to the reader a set of ethical as well as aesthetic values supporting the given ideological model. Concerning literary categorization, in the same way as Leona Toker⁴⁵ proposes creating a sub-genre out of Gulag narratives, it might be interesting to define political literature as a sub-genre of Soviet literature, with such topics as: the World War II novel, the Cold War novel, and the novel about an artist. Also, a good definition of the political novel was given by the Russian-American novelist, screenwriter and political philosopher Ayn Rand in 1943, "It's time we realized – as the Reds do – that spreading our

⁴⁴ Being *vnye* means, "being simultaneously inside and outside of some context such as, being within a context while remaining oblivious of it, imagining yourself elsewhere, or being inside your own mind. It may also mean being simultaneously a part of the system and yet not following certain of its parameters (...) these styles of living generated multiple new temporalities, spatialities, social relations and meanings that were not necessarily anticipated or controlled by the state, although they were fully made possible by it," in Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 142.

⁴⁵ Leona Toker, *Return from the Arkhipelago: Narratives of Gulag Survivors* (Indiana University Press, 2001).

ideas in the form of fiction is a great weapon, because it arouses the public to an *emotional*, as well as intellectual response to our cause.”⁴⁶

In *The Storytelling Animal* Jonathan Gottschall precisely offers a stimulating study of how fiction influences our lives. The title is taken from Graham Swift’s *Waterland*, “Man – let me offer you a definition – is the storytelling animal. Wherever he goes he wants to leave not behind a chaotic wake, not an empty space, but the comforting marker buoys and trail signs of stories. He has to keep on making them up. As long as there is a story, it’s all right.”⁴⁷ The hero of the book is “*homo-fictus* (fiction man), the great ape with the storytelling mind.”⁴⁸ The author mentions that when we experience a story, we allow ourselves to be invaded by the storyteller. Fiction subtly “shapes our beliefs, behaviors, ethics.”⁴⁹ Gottschall also includes in his study the last discoveries of neurosciences. For example, he quotes one study where psychologists gave personality tests to people before and after reading *The Lady with the Little Dog*: in contrast to a control group of nonfiction readers, the fiction readers experienced meaningful changes in their personality profiles directly after reading the story. Moreover, “knowing that fiction is fiction does not stop the emotional brain from processing it as real.”⁵⁰ The author draws the attention to the fiction paradox discovered by Aristotle in his *Poetics*: fiction gives pleasure but what it contains is mostly unpleasant. What he means is that reading about murderers, tragedies and sorrow makes us excited, whereas we get bored by a story about untainted lives emerged in an everyday happy routine. As author Charles Baxter puts boldly it, “Hell is story friendly.”⁵¹ Following that, one can add, “Enemy is story friendly.”

Further, Gottschall describes the role of stories in sacred fiction, such as religions and national narratives. So “fiction tends to preach... [and] poets are unacknowledged legislators

⁴⁶ Ayn Rand to DeWitt Emery, May 17, 1943, in John Sbardelatti, *J. Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies. The FBI and the Origins of Hollywood’s Cold War* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2012), p. 161.

⁴⁷ Jonathan Gottschall *The Storytelling Animal. How Stories Make Us Human* (New York: Mariner Books, 2013), p. 87.

⁴⁸ Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, p. xiv.

⁴⁹ Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, p. xvii.

⁵⁰ Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, p. 62.

⁵¹ Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, p. 51.

of the world.”⁵² Just as Soviet writers, whose novels were “forms of bureaucratic writing,”⁵³ as we have already put it. In my research I make an attempt to follow the print left by political debates on official literature and to record to what extent they propose their own *literary* answers. As “legislators of the world,” Soviet writers were involved in the Cold War. After 1945, the major battleground was the cultural one; as President Truman declared in his speech on April 20 1950, “the Cold War was, above all else, a struggle for the minds of men.” After the intense work during World War II, the Soviet and American media were well trained to produce effective tropes, both at home and abroad.

These representations were systematically nourished by facts and phrases taken from international politics. As an example, one can mention the appearance of the theme of the American and German neo-fascist militarism in autumn 1950, just after the beginning of the Korean War and the Pleven plan aimed to create a European army, which implied *ipso facto* the remilitarization of Germany. In that way, knowing the precise events that shaped the Cold War atmosphere allows us to better understand the different faces of the enemy. The aim of our research is to study the features and the evolution of the post-war Soviet ideology and power through the representation of the enemy. The study of the content of ideology from both sides of the ocean is required to learn the techniques of propaganda⁵⁴ and in particular, the historical phenomenon known as the cultural Cold War.⁵⁵

⁵² Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, p. 135.

⁵³ Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Writer*, p. 479.

⁵⁴ To mention just a few famous theorists of propaganda: Walter Lippmann underlines the necessity of propaganda in a democracy for “the making of a common will,” in *Public Opinion* (New York: MacMillan, 1922). Forty years later, his Marxist counterpart Jacques Ellul distinguishes agitation and integration propaganda; the former urges men to rebellion, the latter makes him adjust to desired patterns. Moreover, Ellul considers school not as a place where one learns how to emancipate from propaganda, but as a preliminary to enhance his receptivity to it. See *Propaganda: the Formation of Men's Attitudes*, trans. Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York: Knopf, 1965). The documents of the Communist Party show the development of the propagandist machinery from its beginning : *Propaganda and agitation in the decisions of the CPSU* (Moscow, Vysshaya Partiinaya Shkola: 1941). As to Bertrand Taithe, Tim Thornton and Robert Jackall propose two collections of articles dedicated to propagandist history and traditions, during revolutions, wars, State-building and in modern societies.

⁵⁵ Concerning the ‘cultural war,’ Frances Saunders focuses on the Cold War on the European battlefield and on the activities of the Congress of Cultural Freedom run by Michael Josselson, *Who paid the piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 2000). Scott Lucas shows how a State-private network was

My analysis is based on narrative texts and contemporary literary criticism; I also use documents from the State Archives (letters, stenographical reports from the Soviet Writers' Union...) gathered during a specific training scheme in Moscow led by Oxford University (Spring 2013). The materials of this study were chosen with regard to the political topics they cover, and in such a way as to have a representative overview of the main international issues of each period. So, Shpanov engages with the alleged causes of World War II (including the European and Asian theatres of operations) and with the beginning of the Cold War from behind the scenes; Ehrenburg deals with the same events, but he chooses an epic style to show the suffering of people across Europe; Eriomin's *Storm over Rome* is a unique literary testimony on the 1948 Italian elections. Maltsev's book, which came out three years after the Stalin-Tito split, is focused on the liberation of Yugoslavia and to the leading role of the Red Army. Kochetov, a Stalinist orthodox, addresses the typical question for the Thaw conservative wing: how to avoid being contaminated by Western values and to remain faithful to the Stalinist dogma? As to Bondarev, the official author of high Brezhnevism, he presents a double interest: he represents the generation of writers who have fought the war and their psychological maturation during the next thirty years; his life experiment – as well as political consciousness – includes both the dawn and the twilight of the empire.

All the authors I selected offer typical examples of political fiction. In history, the use of propaganda has been widespread in numerous revolutionary contexts. Charles Walton, in his

established (including the International Rescue Committee, the MIT's Center for International Studies or the American friends for Russian freedom) in order to create the illusion of a spontaneous effort independent of the State), *Freedom's war. The US Crusade against the Soviet Union 1945-56* (Manchester University Press, 1999). In *Truth is our Weapon* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1953) and *Behind Closed Doors* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1950), Edward W. Barrett and Ellis M. Zacharias, both former CIA officials, describe the wings of the Cold War and how the American establishment has shaped up its politics from the view of the contemporaries, stressing on, "how strong is Russia" (Zacharias, Chapter 18), dealing with, "the problem of words" (Barrett, chapter 10) and the necessity of "waging peace" (Barrett, Part III). Later on, *Ike's Spies* (New York: Doubleday, 1981) by Stephen Ambrose is focused on Eisenhower's cultural war and on the skills he learnt from the British and above all from Winston Churchill. Walter Hixson insists on the importance of cultural infiltration as a better weapon than open psychological warfare in order to "part the curtain," *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-61*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997). Ron T. Robin, in *The Making of the Cold War Enemy. Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton University Press, 2003), takes into account the input in the military complex from the behavioural sciences.

monograph dedicated to the problems of the limits of free speech and public opinion in late eighteenth century France, argues that, “the French Revolution produced lethal repression and moral fanaticism in the short term <...> [then] the Terror ended [but] the policing of public opinion did not.”⁵⁶ He shows that the French government launched what he calls the ‘remaking of mœurs’ in order to secure the gains of the revolution and to build the new society. That policy was conducted through legal means and press campaigns at the same time. In the Soviet case, the policing of Soviet mentalities was being operated on mainly through political fiction and remarkably, it was far from being a unidirectional activity.

Policing Soviet Mentalities: an Interactive Process

The fashioning of Soviet mentalities was not only the result of an ideology imposed from the top to the masses; even a dictatorship, as the Soviet Union was, was innervated by strains from the bottom. Those strains are mainly of two kinds; social and intellectual.

As the revisionist historian Sheila Fitzpatrick has shown, thanks to the invalidation of the previous elites’ privileges and to the educational policy launched by the government in the frame of the First and Second Five-Year Plans in 1929 and 1933, a large part of the Soviet population had a direct interest in supporting the Stalinist regime in order to improve their social and material situation. For sure, the ruling party, in its turn, has taken advantage from this source of legitimization.⁵⁷ By playing an active role at work and in the party committees,

⁵⁶ Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution : the Culture of Calumny and the Problem of Free Speech* (New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), respectively pp. 12-13 and 225.

⁵⁷ “The new Soviet intelligentsia was as loyal and committed to Soviet goals as the working class and peasantry, for the majority of its members were no longer offspring of the old privileged classes but of the toiling masses. Specialists were no longer ‘Red’ or ‘bourgeois’, but simply ‘Soviet’ (...) The great majority of persons with higher education in the 1930s were graduate of the First and Second Five-Year Plan period who had entered during the years of *vydvizhenie* and socially discriminatory admissions. This not only suggests that a high proportion of the men in command positions were of working-class and peasant origin. It also implies that a substantial number were former workers who had risen during the *vydvizhenie* in the First Five-Year Plan,” in Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921-1934* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), respectively pp. 235 and 240.

the members of this new elite have brought with them in the public space – and in particular, in places of cultural consumption, such as public readings, theatres, cinemas, art exhibitions, and so on – their own expectations, personality and sensibility. That is why Vera Dunham, in her study on the relationship between power and the middleclass citizen in the Stalin’s last decade, argues that, “literature [was standing] between the regime and the people, and [constitutes] the conversation between the two.”⁵⁸ Her famous expression “Big Deal” means that Stalinist literature was expressing a consensus between rulers and middle-class values. That idea, according to which no shift in public opinion can happen resorting to external strains only and exists in dialogical relation toward the inner state of the masse, is confirmed by the ideological evolution of journals like *Novyi Mir*: “the case of *Novyi Mir* and its readers suggests that for large groups of people to begin thinking differently in such a society, new ideas need to work from within the established culture, to take forms acceptable and familiar to the environment in which they spread (...) Tvardovskii and his colleagues worked from within the existing order rather than attempting to negate it.”⁵⁹ Last but not least, Socialist Realism was under the readers’ influence not only because it was taking into account their “horizons of expectations,” but also because all of the writers were readers too.⁶⁰ Hence, the making of the Soviet novel, as well as of the Soviet public, was definitively an interactive process. This research proposes to study the respective inputs of the various participants to literary production, resorting not only to prose works by the writers, but also to their private correspondence or political articles, to official party documents, Cold War events, as well as to opinion polls, and readers’ letters.

Summary

⁵⁸ Vera S. Dunham *In Stalin’s Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 25.

⁵⁹ Denis Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi Mir. Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), p. 328.

⁶⁰ Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Reader*, p. 15.

My research falls into three parts, corresponding to the rules of the three Soviet leaders, from the end of the war until the beginning of the 1980s. The thread of the dissertation will be the trope of the enemy in its various metamorphosis during almost forty years. Leaning upon Schmitt's thesis, defining the enemy as the highest criterion of the state's political essence, my research examines the succeeding faces of the enemy in order to decipher the slow degradation of Soviet ideology, from its moment of glory until the eve of its demise.

The first part begins with the last Stalinist decade. Our goal in Chapter 1 is to get a clearer picture of how certain political and cultural moves at the end of the World War II and in the first years of the Cold War truly contributed to the shaping of the two superpowers' mutual perceptions – and rather misperceptions. During this period, Socialist Realism has been epitomizing the Stalinist canon (Clark). According to Schmitt's theory, the more precisely defined and assertive the communist ideology was, the more its enemies must have been identified with absolute certainty and graphic details. So, the triumphant state has produced the triumphant narrative on mythical enemies, taken from the postwar geopolitical landscape, including the capitalists, the European corrupted elites, the Nazis who survived the war, and Tito's followers. Chapters 2 and 3 both examine the outside enemy; the former is dedicated to the enemy in capitalist countries, whereas the latter concerns the enemies inside the Communist movement.

The second part of the research offers a new perspective on the Thaw. Chapter 4 shows the vanishing of the outside peril and the shift from the lethal enemy to a (too) seducing rival; the chapter ends with a case study of Kochetov's novel *What Do You Want Then?* This book is relevant here because Kochetov embodies the typical neo-Stalinist writer during the Thaw and the work illustrates some Stalinist tenets and fears that have remained after the 20th Congress. Relying on Jones' findings on the complexity of the Destalinization

process, I put forward in Chapter 5 the hypothesis that the Thaw was a carnival period, characterized by the reversal of the former (Stalinist) values. The ‘small society’ – like the one of the carnival – of the Thaw was then threatened by the social parasites that did not observe its moral rules. The risk has also come from the appeal for Western values, able to ‘contaminate’ the Thaw microcosm. To this extent, the liberal intelligentsia, as the vehicle of these contagious ideas, was the special target of the Party sentinels. In Chapter 6 I trace precisely how, during the Thaw, the Party guards were operating as a literary ‘morality police’. Hence, getting back to Schmitt’s model, the progressive disintegration of the enemy (the physical and visually identified character was transformed into an undistinguished Soviet citizen praising dangerous values or ways of life in a convoluted way) reveals the deep crisis of the communist rule following the revelations of the 20th Congress.

The third part is dedicated to the enemy during the Stagnation, the post-carnival period. As I try to demonstrate in Chapter 7, this time of re-Stalinization and stability was suitable for reassessment of the past and psychological introspection. At that stage the cracks in the ideology were irreversible and the language of power had nothing in common with reality anymore (Yurchak). Even as soon as twenty years later, the system would break apart. The collapse of Soviet ideals is mirrored in the erosion of the enemy. The heroes of Yuri Bondarev are the subjects of Chapters 8 and 9. As representatives of the intelligentsia, they show the features of a vanishing and even invisible enemy, hidden at the heart of the Soviet self.

First Part: The Stalin Era.

The Enemy with a Cloak and a Dagger

Chapter 1 – The Cold War begins: Historical and Cultural Background

Marshal of the Soviet Union, Stalin came out of the war endowed with glory and a stronger legitimacy so that, in the late forties, Stalinism was at its height. As Clark put it, “the most dominant clichés of Stalinism derived from literary models (...) The story in myth (Socialist Realism) informs the rituals of the culture in which it exists.”⁶¹ Hence, Soviet ideology was at the same time the mould and the product of Soviet novels. Literary works were determining the main rituals of Soviet society concerning, among others, the hierarchy inside the factory, the rites de passage to be accepted by the group and to become a full-fledged Communist citizen, as well as the distinction of heroic features. But on the opposite of rituals, meant to preserve society, literature has also generated a broad mythology of enmity, of those who threaten the power order. By his destructive projects and denial of the fundamental values of society, the enemy highlights the specificity of the state as the political body. For this reason, according to Schmitt, the enemy is the criterion par excellence of the political. In this chapter, we analyze how the ‘super-ideologized’ state and the ‘super-enemy,’ visible, cruel and almighty, have funded and reinforced each other. This ‘super-enemy’ emerged from the ruins of the war and from the first skirmishes between the two blocs.

⁶¹ Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, p. 253.

1.1.A Fragile Grand Alliance

At the outbreak of the Cold War, almost everyone in the world was wondering how the yesterday allies so rapidly became sworn enemies. The rupture of “personal continuities”⁶² may be viewed as one of the reasons, however one must acknowledge that the “seeds of discord” evoked by Stalin in his interview of March 1946 (in response to Churchill’s *Fulton speech*) really existed from the very beginning of the conflict. As Robert Cronin puts it provocatively, “it is now a common place to say that the Grand Alliance was neither Grand nor much of an alliance. Certainly there were built-in stresses and suspicions in the coalition, as there were clashes between the Allies over the basic strategies to win the war. Furthermore, there were fears on each side about the other side making a separate peace, and finally, there was serious disagreement over the fate of Eastern Europe and the way the postwar world should be run.”⁶³ In particular, the bone of contention between the Allies is the opening the long-awaited second front on the West.

As early as in September 1941, Ivan Maisky, Soviet ambassador in London, demands a second front from Churchill. But until the counterattack launched by General Zhukov on the 6th December, Great Britain and the United States don’t believe that their Soviet ally would withstand the Nazi advance. In spite of Roosevelt’s inclination towards Stalin’s request, the priority is given to landings in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.⁶⁴ The climax is reached in June 1943 when Roosevelt informs Stalin that the opening of the second front is out of question before the spring 1944. Stalin is upset: “The Soviet Union confidence in its Allies is subjected to severe stress.” On June 24, he recalls his ambassadors in London and Washington. On the

⁶² At the Yalta conference, Stalin said to Churchill and Roosevelt: “Ten years from now, none of us might be present.” Stalin’s prophecy was fulfilled earlier than he expected, since two months later Roosevelt passed away and within another three months Churchill lost general elections. See Paul Dukes, *The Superpowers: a Short History*. London & New York, Routledge, 2001, p. 88.

⁶³ Robert C. Cronin. *Natural Enemies: The United States and the Soviet Union in the Cold War, 1917-1991* (Boston: Lexington Books, 2001), p. 35.

⁶⁴ Respectively operation Torch (August 1942), operation Husky (July 1943), and operation Avalanche (September 1943).

eve of the *Overlord* operation, Churchill personally sends a message to the Soviet leader about the Allied landing on the French coast, but Stalin cannot believe it.

The long-awaited second front brings some appeasement to the coalition. And from August 21 to October 7, at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, the delegations from the three allies and from Republic of China deliberate over proposals for the creation of the United Nations to maintain peace in the world. However, the Tolstoy conference held in Moscow two days later shows that Stalin's trust in Churchill is more than moderate; evoking Rudolph Hess flight to Britain in May 1941, the master of the Kremlin "refuses to believe that nobody in the British government has discussed peace terms with him."⁶⁵ Time and again, the Soviets complain about what they consider like compliance from the Anglo-Saxon powers toward the representatives of the Nazi regime in general and towards Hess in particular. This grievance gives start to the figure of the "capitalist-Nazi conspiracy" which appears in the Soviet press from autumn 1945 and, after no compromise was found at the London conference, in Soviet cinema (*The Secret Mission*, 1950) as well as in the overt criticism of western militarism in Korea and Europe. Nevertheless, during the winter 1944 and until the Yalta conference in the next February, the anti-Hitler coalition keeps up working on military plans to hold final victory and to prepare the post-war world. In Yalta Stalin appears as the *victor imperator* who negotiates from the position of strength: the Red Army is at less than hundred kilometers from Berlin. He wants the confirmation of the division of the Balkans and Poland decided in Moscow. As to Roosevelt and Churchill, their goal is to get Stalin's promise of a military campaign against Japan within three months after German capitulation. Both sides leave the conference with a feeling of achieved goals.

⁶⁵ See Steven Merritt Miner's commentaries in Kenneth M. Jensen (ed.), *Origins of the Cold War: The Novikov, Kennan and Roberts 'Long Telegrams' of 1946* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), p. 89.

1.2. The Bipolar Brinkmanship: First Round

After President Roosevelt passed away in April 1945, partnership is quickly transformed into a silent hostility. The stance of the Kremlin is simple: they want to maintain at all cost the anti-Hitler coalition and rely on an American loan to rebuild the country devastated by the war. As to the new Truman administration, its main fear was the growing Soviet influence in the Eastern Europe, namely Stalin's expansionist policy threatening the whole continent.⁶⁶ Already during the first months of his presidency Truman draws an anti-Yalta line on three occasions: firstly, in a telegram to Churchill he disapproves the Polish issue; secondly, during his first (and tough) meeting with Soviet ambassador Gromyko; and thirdly, by the position of the American delegation at the San Francisco conference. In January 1946, Truman's declaration that he is “tired of babying the Soviets” is two months ahead of Churchill’s famous Fulton speech on the Iron curtain. In his interview one week later, Stalin blames both leaders for being “war incendiaries” (opposed to the alleged peaceful Soviet policy) and for their unwillingness to apply the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. At the moment international affairs are focused on Greece, Iran, the German problem, and Eastern Europe. In July 1946 and following the Baruch Plan, the leitmotiv of American “nuclear diplomacy” shows up in the Soviet press,⁶⁷ however the Soviet leaders try not to exacerbate tensions still relying on American credit. Soviet Censorship even tries to cool down those propagandists who demonstrate too virulent anti-Americanism. Moreover, certain Soviet diplomats, led by former ambassador in Washington Maxim Litvinov, share an opinion that after the war the United States would return to isolationist policy and will have no part to play

⁶⁶ Churchill even thinks out a plan to counter an eventual Soviet attack. See *Jonathan Walker, Operation Unthinkable: The Third World War: the British Plans to Attack the Soviet Empire 1945* (The History Press Ltd, 2013).

⁶⁷ B. Isakov and M. Marinin «American diplomacy and its maneuvers », РЦХИДНИ 17/ 3/ 1041/ 29.

in Europe.⁶⁸ One year later, the Truman doctrine, hammering Soviet expansionism, and the Marshall Plan, targeting above all the countries of Western Europe, put an end to any hope of financial aid from former Atlantic partner. Initially Secretary of State Viatcheslav Molotov intended to take part in the recovery plan as proposed by Washington, but after he went to the reconnaissance mission to Paris, Molotov viewed the absence of the Soviets as rather an advantageous punch to the exacerbation of tensions between the capitalist states. He finally rejects the plan in July.

The ghost of coalition, formally died in Fulton, definitely disappears in the summer 1947 and gives way to open confrontation. The Zhdanov doctrine echoes Truman's one and divides the world between the "imperialist and anti-democratic" and the "anti-imperialist and democratic camps." It marks the definite return to the political line of Revolution and the Civil war, stressed in the 1924 Constitution and erased in the 1936 Constitution.⁶⁹

At the same time a political journalist Walter Lippmann publishes booklet named *The Cold War* where he criticizes the concept of containment proposed by another key political player George Keenan. Without questioning the Soviet expansionist drive, Lippmann treats Kennan's doctrine (*aka* Mr. X) as too optimistic⁷⁰ and badly conformed to American military power. He recommends separating the Red Army from the Red International and enabling the instauration of a balance of powers in Europe.

In January 1948, the conflict expands towards historiography. The US department of State publishes a collection of documents titled *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*. It includes accounts on the

⁶⁸ Vladislav Zubok and Constantin Pleshakov *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 30, 38.

⁶⁹ Alexander Fateev *Ibid.* p.38.

⁷⁰ « In Mr X's estimates there are no reserves for a rainy day <...> He asks us to assume that the Soviet power is already decaying. He exhorts us to believe that our own highest hopes for ourselves will soon have been realized" in Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1947), pp.13, 40.

meetings between Soviet and German officials during negotiations regarding the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as well as the “Secret Additional Protocol” on the division of Eastern Europe into spheres of influence between Germany and the Soviet Union. One month later, the *Sovinformburo* retaliates with *Falsifiers of History*. Stalin personally edits the book and rewrites the whole sections. *Falsifiers* holds European and American leaders responsible for the outbreak of the war in 1939: the rearmament of Germany by American bankers and industrialists, cowardice at Munich in 1938, knowing that it would encourage Hitler's drive toward the East (*Drang nach Osten*). The Soviet Union plays the role of the white knight trying to negotiate a collective security against the Nazis and to defend its kingdom against an unavoidable aggression.

During the year 1948 a series of skirmishes and local wars by proxy take place between the two superpowers: the Czech coup (February), the Italian elections (April), the Berlin blockade, the turn of the Israeli leaders to the capitalist camp, and the Tito-Stalin clash (all in June).

But far from the battlefields and the electoral campaigns abroad, the cold warriors in their headquarters improve their propaganda apparatus. The National Security Act of 1947 creates the Central Intelligence Agency,” a bureaucratic structure to launch a campaign of “peacetime” psychological warfare aimed to undermine the Soviet and East European regimes.”⁷¹ After their return from a tour of Europe, Republican senator H. Alexander Smith of New Jersey and Representative Karl Mundt of North Dakota are outraged by the “Soviet campaign of vilification and misrepresentation” targeting America. To straighten up that situation, the Smith-Mundt Act of January 16, 1948 is passed “to promote the better understanding of the United States among the people of the world and to strengthen cooperative international relations.” To a historian of cultural war Walter Hixson, “under the

⁷¹ Walter L. Hixson *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-61*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 10-11, 13.

impetus provided by the Smith-Mundt Act, Washington launch[es] an aggressive campaign of anti-communist propaganda.” Invoking the “vicious covert activities of the USSR”, the NSC 10/2 authorizes in June a new CIA covert operations branch. It previews measures such as propaganda, economic warfare, sabotage and anti-sabotage, subversion against hostile states including assistance to the underground resistance movements, guerillas and refugees, and support of indigenous anti-communist elements.

On the Soviet side, Stalin, feeling not sufficiently informed, creates in May 1947 the Committee of Information, a super agency for intelligence and analysis. Molotov gets under his supervision the First Directorate of State Security (MGB) and the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU). It comprises, among others, the setting of intelligence stations and illegal networks in Soviet embassies in London and Washington.⁷² The writers are also granted a role on the frontline of the Cold War: in April 1947 the Office for Agitation and Propaganda launches a “Plan of measures for the propaganda of ideas of Soviet patriotism among the population.” On July 31 the resolution on *Literaturnaya Gazeta* transforms a modest literary newspaper into “a socio-political and literary organ under the same name.” Since then its aim is to maintain “propaganda of the Soviet socialist culture and its world significance; divulging the reactionary essence of modern bourgeois culture and affirming ideas of Soviet patriotism and national pride of the Soviet people; mobilizing public opinion against war incendiaries <...> against all ideological agents of imperialism; unmasking lies and slanders on the Soviet people and culture; struggle for enhancing ideological and artistic level of Soviet literature and art...”⁷³ The number of copies is increased by ten (until 500 000) and the frequency by two. Each edition is divided into four sections: domestic life, international life, science and technique, and literature and arts. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* comes after *Kultura i Zhizn*, the review of the Office for Agitation and Propaganda, created in June, 1946 and which became

⁷² See Vladislav Zubok and Konstantine Pleshakov, *Ibid.* p. 87.

⁷³ РЦХИДНИ 116/ 317/ 5-7, quoted in A. Fateev, *Ibid.* p. 42.

“the compass of the ideological staff.”⁷⁴ On October 16, 1947, a few weeks after the announcement of the Zhdanov doctrine, *Sovinformburo* is given an international organ: “*For a strong peace and popular democracy!*” Its print run reaches 110 000 copies and comes out in Russian, English, and French. The political line is oriented towards “the unmasking of the US expansion and of the rightist socialists, struggle against bourgeois ideology, and promotion of the peaceful campaign.”⁷⁵

The most significant phenomenon is the effort made by the Soviets to coordinate the numerous actors of the ideological war. International affairs involve the propaganda and diplomatic apparatus, and the World Committee of Partisans for Peace; the domestic policy resorts to the Office for agitation and propaganda, the Committee on artistic affairs, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Soviet writers’ Union. The mobilization of all the branches of the propaganda machine and their systematic work will play from 1949 onwards a key role in psychological warfare.

In 1949 we witness the strengthening of the blocs as much inside as outside. NATO is founded in April (joined three years later by Turkey and Greece); then in May the Federal Republic of Germany emerges, followed on the East by the German Democratic Republic in October of the same year; the Kremlin-led COMECON offers a symmetric equivalent to the Marshall plan. Two major events let think the Reds call the tune: the successful test of the Soviet nuclear bomb and the Mao's conquest of China. The Sino-Soviet Pact four months later increases Washington worst fears. Against a backdrop of economical moroseness in Europe and anti-colonialist movements in Asia, the Soviet propaganda proclaims the beginning of the "era of the collapse of capitalism.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 25.

⁷⁵ G. M. Adibekov *Kominform i poslevoiennaia Evropa* (Moscow, 1994), pp. 82, 83, 85.

⁷⁶ Academician M. Mitin, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, November, 5, 1949.

The harsh refreshing of international climate brings about political purges and the hardening of the political line on both sides. In the previous year, the term “cosmopolitan” was coined in an article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* as a concept resulting from “sycophancy” (*nizkopoklonstvo*) toward a foreign culture to “treason.”⁷⁷ During summer and autumn 1948, a series of article deals with the complicity between the US and the so called “cosmopolitans.”⁷⁸ From January to March 1949, the Soviet press bolsters a poignant “anti-cosmopolitan campaign,” colored with unabashed anti-Semitism. Having as its primary target “a group of antipatriotic theatre critics,” it then oozes into a larger public such as “peoples’ traitors”⁷⁹ and “enemies of Soviet patriotism.”⁸⁰ After the creation of NATO, the campaign swayed to denouncing “cosmopolitans” in the capitalist states and in Eastern and Central Europe to not erode the “moral and political unity of the Soviet camp.”

Over the Atlantic, the Red Scare reaches its peak. The Executive Order 9835 signed by President Truman in March 1947 has created the “Federal Loyalty Programs” aimed at determine the “Americanism” of Federal Government employees and dismiss those convinced in spying for the Soviet Union or suspected of being “Un-American.” Afterwards several state legislatures’ loyalty acts are passed.⁸¹ The investigations of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) and the committees of Senator Joseph McCarthy investigate people deemed as being “American communists.” The Department of State is the core target of the campaign.⁸² McCarthy and his inquisitors ruthlessly threaten (and often breakdown) the

⁷⁷ *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, April, 17, 1948, quoted in A. Fateev, *Ibid.* p. 49.

⁷⁸ M. Yuriev, « Loudspeakers of the nuclear empire », *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, September 11, 1948.

⁷⁹ A. A. Elistrotovaya « Peoples’ traitors » in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, March, 21, 1949.

⁸⁰ Resolution of the scientific council of the Soviet political Academy V.I. Lenin (VPA), at the suggestion of vice-President of Agitation and Propaganda F.M. Golvenchenko.

⁸¹ For example California’s Levering Act in 1950, requiring state employees to subscribe to a loyalty oath that disavowed radical beliefs: “I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United (...); that I do not believe in, and I am not a member of, nor do I support any party or organization that believes in, advocates, or teaches the overthrow of the United States Government (...), that I am not a member of the Communist Party (...).”

⁸² See McCarthy’s speech at Wheeling on February, 7, 1950. He points « an immense communist conspiracy especially among the Foreign Service.”

careers of high-ranked diplomats including George Kennan himself.⁸³ The militarization of the Cold War in 1950 through the Korean War and the Plevan Plan accumulates fears in both camps providing of ammunitions for the psychological war.

In April and May 1949, on the suggestion of writer Konstantin Simonov to Georgy Malenkov, the Office for Agitation and Propaganda launches a “Plan of measures for the strengthening of anti-American propaganda in the near future.” It allows a systematic work with the mobilization of all the Soviet propaganda players in media, cinema, literature, theatre, and so on. Impressive polemical production blossoms in the coming years until Stalin’s death in 1953.

The American psychological salvo begins later but with much power. In April 1950 the NSC 68 is issued, increasing the pressure against the Soviet Union and its satellites. Indeed, the goal of containment of communism is replaced by the “liberation” of the countries from the Eastern bloc: "The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself." It sanctions a more than tripling of military expenditures, including augmenting the arsenal of tactical and strategic weapons; it supports the construction of a chain of military bases and the intervention in other nations’ internal affairs in the name of “national security.” Six days later, President Truman unveils his ‘Campaign of Truth’, “a struggle, above all else, for the minds of men <...> in reaction to imperialistic communism <...> or we will lose the battle for men’s minds by default.” The Council for Cultural Freedom (CCF) is created in June in West Berlin on behalf of the CIA in order to aggregate intellectuals against Communism and to promote an artistic production founded on the liberal democratic principles. The CCF has operative offices in 35 countries and produces many publications, musical works and international events. In October the project TROY defines “the intellectual framework for waging total Cold War” and

⁸³ In 1953 Kennan delivered a speech at Notre-Dame against the excesses of McCarthyism. Later, he recalls: « The X article saved my skin from McCarthyism. Yes, indeed, but I was very nearly gotten away.” *In* Walter L. Hixson *George F. Kennan: Cold War Iconoclast* (Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 165.

proposes models of cooperation between universities and National State bureaucracy to get information into the Soviet Union. One year later, Soviet authorities will bear a double strike. On 10 October 1951 Mr. Truman, the President of the United States of America, signed the “Mutual Security Act of 1951” which provides for special appropriations to the amount of 100 million dollars for the financing of persons and armed groups in the territory of the Soviet Union and a number of other states for the purpose of carrying out subversive and diversionary activities within those states. Two weeks later, the US magazine Collier’s gathers contributions of Western politicians, economists, and writers expressing their hostility to communism. The editorial board elaborates the scenario of a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. Needless to say, this opus is a reason for Soviet cold warriors to emphasize the threat of a “third World War” and “Wall Street militarism”, and ironically denounce “Washington peacemakers.”⁸⁴ As Alexander Fateev observes, “at the beginning of the 1950s the American propagandist apparatus exceeds the Soviet one but still remains inferior on the ideological plan until 1956.”⁸⁵

1.3. The Soviet ‘Peace Offensive’

Just after the outbreak of mutual animosities, pacifism becomes the core task of Soviet diplomacy. This fact needs an explanation. First, this priority responds to the imperative of domestic policy: the population exhausted by the war would not understand if its leaders would have promoted another motto but peace. Moreover, any would-be war could provoke waves of panic along with the clearing out the stores of unrationed consumer goods such as matches and salt.⁸⁶ Second, as the historian Lawrence Wittner argues, the Soviets fear an

⁸⁴ *Trud.* November, 16, 1951. *Literaturnaya Gazeta.* November 15, 27.

⁸⁵ Alexander Fateev *Ibid.* p. 126.

⁸⁶ See the “informative account on the workers’ mood after the publishing of Churchill’s Fulton speech.” March, 23rd, 1946. Classified Top secret. In *Sovetskaya Zhizn. 1945-1953* (eds.) E.Y. Zubkova et al. (Moscow:

American attack at a time when the United States have become the first military power and the only owner of the nuclear bomb.⁸⁷ Third, “propagandists [need] to underscore the “peace-loving nature of Soviet foreign policy” in order to give the USSR higher moral grounds than the bellicose, warmongering Americans.”⁸⁸ Fourth, after the Fulton speech, the Truman doctrine, the booklet “Nazi-Soviet Relations,” and regular speeches focused on the Soviet expansionism, the Kremlin takes on a defensive position. Incidentally, this position lasted until nowadays.

Let us dwell on the main events that characterize the pacifist movement in the early Cold War epoch. Although since 1945 there have been many circumstances when Soviet representatives have exposed the Soviet peaceful intentions,⁸⁹ the Peace Offensive really begins with the Zhdanov doctrine of September 1947 which puts forward the idea that the world is divided between a democratic and peace-loving camp, led by the Soviet Union, and the anti-democratic, belligerent camp led by the United States. A couple of days before, on September 18, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Vyshinsky delivered his speech “For peace and friendship among nations, against the war incendiaries” in which he supports the ban of nuclear weapons declaring that President Truman’s policy does not respect the principles of United Nations.⁹⁰ Members of the Writers' Union in their turn carry on the Soviet “peaceful offensive” and publish the collective letter “Masters of American culture,

ROSSPEN, 2003), pp. 613-614. In several major regions, workers express their concerns about Churchill’s speech and expect tragic consequences: “in some places there is a rumor that “war with England has already begun” and that “one has to keep food to hand.” In some cases (Kalinin and Vladimir oblasts) prices of food have risen and queues in the shops have stretched out.”

⁸⁷ Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Vol. 1 of *The Struggle Against the Bomb*) (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).

⁸⁸ Tony Shaw and Denise J. Youngblood *Cinematic Cold War: the American and Soviet Struggle for Hearts and Minds* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), pp. 41, 47.

⁸⁹ Ilya Ehrenburg « Bor’ba za Mir, » *Izvestia*, September 25, 1946, 3. One can also read Ehrenburg’s account on his American trip with the writer Konstantin Simonov and General Mikhail Galaktionov during the summer 1946: “V Amerike,” *Izvestia*, August 9, 1946, 4 and *Liudi, gody, zhizn,’* vol.3 (Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel,’ 1990), pp. 37-70.

⁹⁰ *Pravda*. September, 19, 1947.

Who Are You Staying With?” warning against the fascist threat and war incendiaries.⁹¹ At the same time Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the future founders of the Movement of the Supporters of Peace, writes an article “On Friends and Foes”⁹² responding to Walter Lippmann’s *Cold War* booklet: he accuses those “who have called themselves our allies. In 1942, they used to say: “Why rush into a second front?” and now: “Why tarry the third war?” “Who are on earth these defenders of the “European Culture?,” he angrily goes on, "are they the Hiroshima experimenters who erected a monument in memory of the goats perished during the nuclear bomb tests in Bikini?” Further, he condemns “those supporters [of Europe] who support German industrialists... nuclear usurers... on their order blood is shed across the whole world... our struggle against rude predators... leaders of high culture defend life from death, art from the world of Ku-Klux-Klan.”

On 6 August 1948 the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace meets in Wroclaw. The participants elect a Permanent International Committee of Intellectuals in Defence of Peace and call for the establishment of national branches and national meetings. Consequently, a Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace is held in March 1949 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York.

During the first half of 1949, more than fifty articles dedicated to peace appear in the Soviet press. The fourth conference of *Cominform* held in Hungary in November of the same year states that “the struggle for stable and lasting peace... should now become the pivot of the entire activity of the Communist Parties and democratic organizations.”⁹³ In April 1949 is held The World Congress of Advocates of Peace in Paris, inspired by the Zhdanov doctrine. It establishes a World Committee of partisans of peace and chooses Picasso’s dove as its symbol.

⁹¹ *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. 1947. September 20, 24, 27.

⁹² « On Friends and Foes », September, 1947, in *Sovest' Narodov* (Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1956) pp. 4-11. See also the booklet *For peace! (Za Mir!)* Published by the same author in 1950.

⁹³ Resolution of the Information Bureau on ‘Defence of Peace and the Fight against the Warmongers’, in ‘Meeting of the Information Bureau of Communist Parties in Hungary in the Latter Part of November 1949’, Prague; 1950, p.11.

At the end of the year, committees are created in 70 countries. October 2nd is declared the “International day of the struggle for peace”. Central newspapers publish about forty articles criticizing America and its allies.

In October 1949, *Literaturnaya Gazeta* publishes 50 000 copies of *Conspiracy against peace: Notes of an English journalist* by Ralph Parker.⁹⁴ He puts forward the thesis of “the knife in the back” and blames Western allies for preparing a plot against the Soviet Union at the very moment when the Red Army was struggling for the anti-Hitler coalition. He also proclaims that American diplomats carry out intelligence activities. Parker’s work is part of the “Plan of measures for the strengthening of anti-American propaganda in the near future” launched in April 1949. Along with other books,⁹⁵ the journalistic style of the *Conspiracy* allows to convey the political message of the Kremlin and to set the ideological tone among the masses.

With the Stockholm Appeal in March 1950, the World Peace Council makes a new step forward: the supporters of peace present petitions gathering more than 273 million signatures (including the entire population of the Soviet Union) and “demand the outlawing of atomic weapons as instruments of intimidation and mass murder of people and strict international control to enforce this measure.” At the same time the Supreme Council passes a law where war propaganda is strictly forbidden. The second World Peace Council takes place in October and November 1950 in Warsaw. The initial venue was scheduled in Sheffield but the British authorities considered the Congress as a "bogus forum of peace with the real aim of sabotaging national defence" and refused visas to many attendees. The delegates condemn anew the atomic bomb and the Korean War. On the other side of the world these claims are echoed in Vyshynsky’s speech at the tribune of the United Nations.

⁹⁴ Ralph Parker, *Conspiracy Against Peace: Notes of an English Journalist* (Moscow: Literaturnaya Gazeta, 1949).

⁹⁵ According to sections 5, 6, 10, and 11 of the Plan, from July 1949 to January 1950, books by M. Gorky, A. Claude, D. Grey, D. Spivak, the booklet on the “Intervention of the U.S. in Soviet Russia in the years 1918-1920,” and others are released. See A.V. Fateev, *Ibid.* p. 76.

The international climate is still tense, as one can see in the propaganda posters of 1952: “Peace activists are against the war” (V. Brisikin) on American militarism, “A Curse upon the Butchers” (L. Samoilov) on the victims of the Korean War and “Peace to the World!” (V. Brisikin) where the Anglo-Americans appear as armed to the teeth half-human and half-animal fanatics. But the Congress for Peace held in Vienna in December 1952 announces the first signs of the *Détente*. It contributes to the evolution of the conflict in Korea, and eventually to the armistice signed in next July.

So, pacifism becomes a cross-disciplinary subject appearing in many works of the post-war period: in cinema *The Russian Question* (1948) and *The Meeting on the Elbe* (1949), in literature *Struggle for Peace* by Fedor Panferov is awarded the Stalin Prize in 1951 and the collections of poetry works *Peace to the world* by Alexei Surkov and *At the Second World Peace Congress* by Nikolai Tikhonov in 1952. Furthermore, struggle for peace becomes the plot in the majority of “political fiction,” especially in the authors tackled in this research (Ilya Ehrenburg, Dmitri Eriomin, Orest Maltsev, and Vsevolod Kochetov). But the most eloquent and wordy stalwart of pacifism is undoubtedly Nikolai Shpanov.

His novel *Incendiaries* (1949) is dedicated, as we learn from the editor’s preface, to “the revelation of the secret springs of American ‘peaceful’ policy, leading to the cunningly masked support to aggression and conflagration of World War II.” Later, in “Peace to the World!,” the last chapter of his political essay *Diplomats with a Cloak and a Dagger* (1952), Shpanov condemns the “criminal plot against the entire humanity, masterminded and organized over the ocean” (p. 77). He blames “the American monopolists for displaying strategic raw material to German factories” (p. 77); according to Shpanov, “NATO is a creature of Wall Street and an instrument of aggression directed at the peaceful people of the world” (p. 78); he quotes a letter to Dean Acheson from Ayvor Montaigu, an English film

director and a member of the permanent Committee of the World Peace Council who was refused a visa for his trip to the US.: “The time is gone when people obeyed cannon fodder. The gibbet of Nuremberg awaits the war incendiaries” (p. 79). “They can dress their ‘diplomats’ with angels’ immaculate white clothes, nobody will hold them for angels of peace” (p. 80). Further he mentions with irony “the American flying fortresses” (p. 82) and compares the US to a “gangster with a knife in his teeth and rolled up sleeves who cleanses his victims’ pockets” (p. 83).

Besides, except the *Diplomats* and other polemic texts such as Ilya Ehrenburg’s “War Incendiaries are the Worst Enemies of the Peoples” (March 1951), made in a journalistic genre, writers usually prefer to convey their political messages in fiction. Indeed, “at the end of World War II, Soviet literature-centrism [is] at its peak <...> there is a remarkable craving for the printed word in the immediate postwar years <...> Literature remains at the center of the intellectual and linguistic order.” The writer Yuri Trifonov explains it by “the atmosphere of heightened expectations from literature that existed among the readers in the late 1940s and early 1950s.”⁹⁶

1.4. Postwar ‘Politerature’ and the ‘Manufacture of the Enemy’

Aesthetics aside, we consider official prose as *purely political texts* i.e. ‘politerature’. Besides, politerature is not the prerogative of the Communists. Walter Lippmann (1889-1974), an American writer and political commentator, who coined the “Cold War,” considers that in democracy, crowds are not able to grasp political issues. Consequently, governments must organize the “manufacture of consent” through the media and propaganda of all kinds. In

⁹⁶ Denis Kozlov *The Readers of Novyi Mir. Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Cambridge/London: Harvard UP, 2013), p. 24, 41.

1922 he writes: “the manufacture of consent is capable of great refinements <...> and the opportunities for manipulation open to anyone who understands the process are plain enough <...> within the life of the generation now in control of affairs, persuasion has become a self-conscious art and a regular organ of popular government.”⁹⁷ Later on, the founder of public relations industry Edward Bernays (1891-1995) and the prominent political scientist Harold Lasswell (1902-1978) follow Lippmann’s path recommending the use of propaganda for “democratic social engineering.”⁹⁸ In 1953 Edward W. Barrett, former assistant to Secretary of State and a coordinator of the "Campaign of Truth," puts forward that “the newcomer [in the State Department] <...> soon recognizes that the mass opinions of large groups or of entire populations, abroad and at home, have far more impact on international developments than in years gone by. <...> A minority [of diplomats] look upon this potent new force as a challenge and an opportunity. <...> We Americans have no wise choice but to master the techniques of international persuasion.”⁹⁹ These techniques include psychological warfare and cultural infiltration. Indeed, “both Soviet and American policymakers realize that to “win the minds of men” in Europe, they need to appeal more to their cultural than to their political identity.”¹⁰⁰ More precisely, “culture in the study of international relations may be defined as the sharing and transmitting of consciousness within and across national boundaries.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, p. 248.

⁹⁸ Edward L. Bernays “The Mechanics of Propaganda” in *Propaganda* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1928) and Harold D. Lasswell “The function of the Propagandist” in *International Journal of Ethics* 38 (3):258-268 (1928). See also the interesting article by Craig Brandist where both authors are quoted: “Rhetoric, Agitation and Propaganda: Reflections on the Discourse of Democracy (with Some Lessons from Early Soviet Russia)” in *Language, Ideology, and the Human. New interventions* by Sanja Bahun and Dusan Radunovic (eds.) (Farnham-Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 75-93.

⁹⁹ E. W. Barrett *Truth is our Weapon* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1953), p. 5-6.

¹⁰⁰ Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Culture and the Cold War in Europe”, in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd A. Westad (eds.) *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* in 3 vol. (Cambridge University Press, 2010) vol. 1 pp. 398-419, p. 401.

¹⁰¹ Akira Iriye “Culture and International History” in M.J. Hogan and T.G. Paterson (eds.) *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge UP, 2004), p.242.

In the world of literature, the convention of fiction invites myth as a guest of reality; thus, “the novel rides escort to contemporary history,”¹⁰² providing “Soviet and Western fictional responses to the Cold War”¹⁰³ and shaping the consciousness of the readers. Taking into consideration Schmitt's concept of the enemy and its high political potential, one can say that the ‘manufacture of the enemy’ in Soviet novels can be seen as the other side of the coin of what Lippmann refers to as the ‘manufacture of consent.’ If Fateev argument can be seen too unequivocal when he says that the enemy is used by power (and nomenclature in particular) only as a tool to manipulate and hoodwink the minds of the masses,¹⁰⁴ it is of course true that the image of the enemy is displayed by propaganda to create political consensus. Actually, “there are millions of people being exposed to exactly the same stories [on the enemy] and undergoing exactly the same process of neural, emotional and physiological attunement <...> story is the grease and glue of society <...> story homogenizes us; it makes us one.”¹⁰⁵

In 1932 Socialist Realism becomes the official doctrine of the Soviet Union, consequently, the language of power. Socialist Realist novels show the archetypal portraits of the post-war enemies. These characters give birth to the Cold war mythology, the first world epic over the next fifty years. At the beginning of the Cold War the Soviet Union already has a twenty-year experience of propaganda literature. In the 1930s the Red Army viewed fiction as "one of the most powerful tools for the organization and education of the masses."¹⁰⁶ According to the axiom proposed in 1934 at the First Congress of the Soviet writers, “socialist realism is the basic method of Soviet literature and literary criticism. It demands of the artist

¹⁰² David Caute *Politics and the Novel during the Cold War* (New Brunswick-London: Transaction Publishers, 2009), p.351.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p.1.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 126.

¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*, pp. 137-138.

¹⁰⁶ "Boevoj otryad na fronte literatury" [Service Troop on the Literary Front], *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, August 5, 1930 quoted in Hooker M.T. *The Military Uses of Literature. Fiction and the Armed Forces in Soviet Literature* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996), p.2.

the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Moreover, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic representation of reality must be linked with the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism.” As Yuri Olesha puts it, the writer is “the engineer of the human souls” whose task is to make people support the Party and its struggle for the victory of Communism. This doctrine is maintained after Stalin’s death. In 1954, at the Second Congress of writers, Aleksej Surkov, First Secretary of the Directorate of the Writers’ Union, proclaims that “Literature is the sharp-edged weapon of socialist-political action. It is tightly connected to politics and is subordinate to the latter.”¹⁰⁷ In other words, Socialist Realism is a story between writer-politicians and people-reader.

Importantly, Socialist Realism is – or, at least, ought to be – a mass phenomenon. “Saying “readers,” one implies “people.” In our country almost every literate person is a reader, as to the illiterate they are rare, it is an anomaly. The “people-reader” believes us, the Soviet writers.”¹⁰⁸ Such “people-reader” (or “worker-readers”)¹⁰⁹ is a great asset in the cultural war. Soviet literature has a strong social dimension. As Vera Dunham argues, “literature [stands] between the regime and the people, and [constitutes] the conversation between the two”¹¹⁰. It is an *agora* where the members of society can meet and deal with political issues. Besides, many fiction writers used to taking on a political function, producing texts with a totally political content. That is, for example, the case Nikolai Shpanov (*The Diplomats with a Cloak and a Dagger*, 1952 mentioned above or “Writer and Vigilance,” 1953), Orest Maltsev (“Tito’s Chronicler,” 1949) and yet Vsevolod Kochetov (“The Naked

¹⁰⁷ A. A. Surkov, "O sostoyanii i zadachakh sovetskoj literatury" [On the Condition and Tasks of Soviet Literature], published in *Vtoroj s'ezd sovetskikh pisatelej: Stenograficheskij otchet* [The Second All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers: Stenographic Record] (Moscow: Sovetskij pisatel', 1956), p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ Vsevolod Kochetov. «Writer and Reader», *Neva*, 1955 № 1, p. 175, quoted in Evgeny Dobrenko, *The Making of the Soviet Reader. Social and Aesthetic Contexts of the Reception of Soviet Literature* (Saint-Petersburg: Gumanitarnoye Agenstvo – Akademicheskij Proekt, 1997), p. 11.

¹⁰⁹ As James von Geldern puts in *Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda*, eds. Kevin M.F. Platt and David Brandenberger (The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 2006), p. 333.

¹¹⁰ Vera S. Dunham *In Stalin's Time: Middleclass Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 25.

Kings. On the United States' Aggressive Politics," May 1960). Because of this social interaction "literature [is] not only a receiver of signal but a sender of them <...> [and] the most dominant existential clichés of Stalinism derive from literary models."¹¹¹

From 1941 to 1943, the Party focuses its attention mainly on the war affairs and arts are not of paramount importance. However after the Stalingrad battle, zhdanovism (*zhdanovshchina*)¹¹² dissipates any hope of appeasement; on the opposite, the series of 'ideological resolutions' passed at the suggestion of the Head of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee, Andrei Zhdanov, lets the Soviets an aftertaste of the late 1930s. After manifestations of bravery by the conscripts and their exposition to the West, the goal of these documents is to muzzle intelligentsia and to prevent any lack of loyalty to the regime: "The more will last the incontrollable flow of military memories <...>, the more definitely will appear the image of the disaster that has just occurred. The victory cannot conceal the failures of the regime. There is no doubt that Stalin understands it." Besides, even the spontaneous expressions of enthusiasm are forbidden: "sincerity frightens by its unexpectedness."¹¹³ Zhdanov dies in 1948, but the high ideological tension resulting from the resolutions (combined with the Cold War escalation) lasts until Stalin's death. Concerning their form, one has to keep in mind that the "main difference between the 1946-1948 resolutions and the previous ones is revealing: these are public documents <...> they are symbolic documents demonstrating power itself <...> they are the prelude of the campaign "against cosmopolitanism" and of the new purge that Stalin planned to launch if death had not stopped him before."¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Nove*, p. 253.

¹¹² Concerning the Zhdanov resolutions, see Evgeny Dobrenko, Galin Tikhanov (eds.) *Istoria russkoi literaturnoi kritiki: sovetская I postsovetская epokha* (Moscow: NLO, 2011), pp. 379-401.

¹¹³ Natalya Gromova *Raspad. Sud'ba sovetskogo kritika: 40-50ie gody* (Moscow: Ellis Lak, 2009), pp. 11-12.

¹¹⁴ Evgeny Dobrenko, Galin Tikhanov (eds.), *Ibid.* p. 381.

The first “ideological resolution,” which comes out on December 3, 1943: “On Raising the Responsibility of Secretaries of Literary Journals,” means to keep an eye on all possible ideological and political mistakes. New debates now focus on truth in the representation of war warning against “polishing” (*lakirovka*) as well as on the articulation between the individual and collective *epos*. Since Zhdanov was appointed by Stalin to direct the Soviet Union's cultural policy in 1946, he comes to grips with problem. Already on August 14, 1946 he issues, perhaps, the most sensational resolution under the title “On the Journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*.” Both journals face a barrage of criticism from Zhdanov after welcoming Akhmatova and Zoshchenko on their pages. During his speeches at the meeting of the Party leaders and at the meeting of the writers in Leningrad Chairman of the Soviet of the Union hammers *Zvezda* and *Leningrad* for “the serious errors” as to have published the bourgeois, individualistic works of the poet and the satirist. The polemic talks are a mixture of the RAPP rhetoric of the 1920s-1930s (“apoliticism, bourgeois aristocratic aesthetics” and the like) and of the Terror of the 1930s (“sycophancy toward the West”). As a result, after such severe criticism of the editorial board, *Leningrad* is closed. On 14 May, 1947 a meeting takes place in the Kremlin gathering Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov, and the leadership of the Writers’ Union. The meeting concludes in a document, edited by Stalin himself that prescribes to struggle against intelligentsia bent toward “sycophancy toward the West.” This was the beginning of a wide-scale campaign against the influence of the West. Fadeev re-enters the fray a couple of weeks later at the meeting of the Writers’ Union, and opposes the revolutionary tradition to the Veselovsky School based on comparatism and stressing the importance of Western European contribution to the Russian culture. Fadeev speech urges a debate on Veselovsky during the summer and autumn of 1947 in *Literaturnaia Gazeta* and *Oktiabr*. For the critic

Lev Plotkin, the comparative method, presenting Russian culture as a permanent borrowing to Europe, is “self-humiliating.”¹¹⁵

The resolution on music (February 1948) and the article in *Kul'tura i zhizn* “Against bourgeois liberalism in literary studies” (March 11, 1948) shows the shift from sycophancy to “cosmopolitanism.” The latter is systematically opposed to the “patriotic education of Soviet people.” The press widely echoes the message: “The dark henchmen of Churchill and Truman work in the shadows under the flag of cosmopolitanism.”¹¹⁶

The anti-cosmopolitan campaign hardens in January 1949 with the article “Against the antipatriotic group of theatre critics.”¹¹⁷ It is also a weapon of internal bureaucratic war for Fadeev, the general secretary of the Writers' Union, to struggle against the rising influence, after Zhdanov death, of the chief of Agitation and Propaganda Dmitry Shepilov. Indeed, the latter has published the articles of these critics on propaganda fiction. In 1947-1948, following Zhdanov resolutions, many plays were focused on patriotism. But from this 1949 campaign, cosmopolitanism is clearly associated with anti-Semitism. The *Pravda* article is soon followed by a series of arrests of the members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee as well as voicing in press “international Zionist conspiracy.” Soon the literary critics are included in the “cosmopolites without kith or kin.” Most of them, who took part in the Zhdanov policy, lost their job and party card. Some of them even praised the “patriotic plays.” Regardless of their blind loyalty, they become part of numerous victims of the post-war purge orchestrated from above. The only relevant criterion is the national one. Gradually, the campaign extends in all the spheres of art and culture (music, cinema, philosophy...). After the creation of NATO in April 1949, cosmopolitanism is given the second place due to the tightening of the Soviet bloc. Moreover, the fear of the “Tito virus” draws the attention of the propagandists to trace

¹¹⁵ Lev Plotkin “Aleksandr Veselovsky I ego Epigony,” *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 1947. September, 20.

¹¹⁶ Anatoly Tarasenkov “Cosmopolity in Literary Studies,” *Novy Mir*, 1948 № 2, p. 127.

¹¹⁷ *Pravda*, January 28 1949.

cosmopolitan traitors in the Eastern bloc and among the capitalist countries. However, some articles on the “poison of cosmopolitanism” concerning USSR can still be found in 1950.¹¹⁸

With the reinforcement of the Cold War and the financing of covert action (Mutual Security Act, October 1951), the leitmotiv of vigilance toward the “diplomats with a Cloak and a Dagger” is on everyone’s mind. The surfacing of this word announces the return of the internal enemy after almost four years of absence (since the press campaign were previously focused on the external enemy, see Chapter 2) . Khrushchev’s speech at the XIXth Congress of the Party in October 1952 is dedicated to this topic along with “the encirclement by capitalist countries, which send us their spies striving to take advantage of oblivious citizen and to conduct subversive actions.”¹¹⁹

So, simultaneously with the Red Scare in America, issues of domestic policy combined with the Cold War pressure have resulted in the solid taking in hands of the arts – and especially literature – by the Party. Stalin, “the first reader in this country of readers”¹²⁰ is personally involved in the cultural policy: he reads himself the main novels, oversees the content of the literary journals, and holds the last word in attributing the Prizes. But “besides Stalin’s benevolence and the editors’ agendas, another force that shaped literature <...> is the readership itself <...> more often they write to praise the work, but occasionally the readers could be quite critical. At times they even write to object to an opinion expressed in *Pravda* <...> although massive, widespread, and open defiance of officially expressed viewpoints <...> that would in a few years become central to the atmosphere of the Thaw are not yet visible.”¹²¹ Hence, the possibility for the readers to demonstrate their vigilance and take an

¹¹⁸ See, among others, Yuri Zhukov “The Poison of Cosmopolitanism”, *Novy Mir*, 1950 № 3.

¹¹⁹ A.O. Khanskyi (ed.) Materials to 19th Congress of the CPSU, published on February 19, 2013 on the site stalinism.ru/dokumentyi/materially-xix-s-ezda-vkp-b-kpss.html consulted on October 6, 2017.

¹²⁰ Denis Kozlov, *Ibid.* p. 27.

¹²¹ *Idem* p. 42.

active part in the ‘enemy hunt.’ Like a stock market index, these books record with precision any significant change in the domestic debates or international relations.

Confirming Schmitt’s theory, the highest intensity of Communist propaganda during Stalin’s last decade correlates with the representation in fiction and press of a concrete and powerful enemy. Thus, the analysis of the crafting of the enemy in the coming case studies will allow to better understand the Soviet policy and mentalities of that time.

Chapter 2. Case Studies: The Enemy Outside. The Works of Ilya Ehrenburg and Nikolay Shpanov

1- Presentation

The four novels below investigate the roots of World War II. They consist in two sets of two-volume books by Ilya Ehrenburg and Nikolay Shpanov, both stalwarts of Socialist Realism. In them the enemy ideally corresponds to the Stalinist tenets: he is the political enemy (the capitalists or their allies) and represents a material, physical and lethal threat to the Communists and to European proletarians, whom the Soviet Union pretends to protect

Ilya Ehrenburg

Ilya Ehrenburg (1891-1967) was a writer, journalist, play writer, poet, and translator. After his childhood in Kiev and Moscow, in 1908 he set off for Paris where he had stayed eight years, then came back to Russia. In the 1920s and 1930s he has frequently traveled across Europe and the Soviet Union working as a reporter for the newspapers *Izvestia* and publishing his novels and poems. He saw the rise of totalitarian ideologies and the birth of fascism in Europe: he happened to be in Austria before the *Anschluss*, in Spain at the moment the civil war burst out in July 1936, and he sheltered in the Soviet embassy of Paris when the Nazis invaded the city in June 1940. Then Ehrenburg flew back to Moscow and, after the Barbarossa began one year later, he became a prolific war correspondent who wrote about three thousand newspaper articles during the war period. His propagandist columns were aimed to support actively the Soviet people both on the front and behind the lines. After the Allied Victory, Ehrenburg, already a notorious cultural figure with “boiling energy, always in

movement,”¹²² devotes himself to the struggle for peace and against fascism. As a leader of the communist peace movement, in March 1950 he took part in the Stockholm Appeal of the Permanent Committee of the World Peace Congress. In his speech, Ehrenburg stresses his “hatred towards the warmongers” and calls for the total prohibition of nuclear weapons.¹²³

Because of his intense political activities, some critics have thought that in Ehrenburg the journalist prevailed over the artist. In her paper devoted to the 70th anniversary of the writer,¹²⁴ the literary critic Galina Belaya makes clear this question by quoting Pablo Picasso: “when I hear people talking about the growth of the artist <...> it seems they don't understand that it is all the same image, reflected at various surfaces;” the critic goes on: “Ehrenburg is a lyric poet <...> he creates pictures that touch us by their humanity.” This statement is confirmed by the writer himself when he says in one interview that “a book cannot be written on order. “One should go through the novel first.”¹²⁵ In the article “Ernest Hemingway,” he also states that “a book cannot be written according to a plan: “One has to fall sick with the book.”¹²⁶ But “at the same time,” Belaya continues, “Ehrenburg reaches an epic scale <...> he shows the life of society through the stories of numerous human destinies <...> he puts time to the test of man and man to the test of time <...> his works reveal not as much the nature of the people than the nature of the epoch.”

The Fall of Paris was written from September 1940 until January 1942 and first came out in the journal *Znamia* (1941, №3-6; 1942, № 3-4) and then, in 1942, as a separate book. His essays “Defeat of France”¹²⁷ and “The Fall of Paris”¹²⁸ on the same subject preceded the novel, but then the theme of the Nazi invasion of France was marginalized due to the

¹²² Galina Belaya “Fighter for Peace”, *Trud*, January 26th, 1961, p. 4.

¹²³ Ilya Ehrenburg “Warmongers are the worst enemies of the people” (speech at the Stockholm mass meeting), *Pravda*, March 21st, 1950, p. 3.

¹²⁴ Galina Belaya “Ilya Ehrenburg (70th anniversary)”, *Oktiabr*, 1961 №1, pp. 182-186.

¹²⁵ Ilya Ehrenburg, *Literatura i Zhizn'* № 98, August 16th, 1959.

¹²⁶ Quoted by Alexandre Dymshits, *V Velikom Pohode. Sbornik Statei*. Moskva: Sovetskij Pisatel, 1962, p. 233.

¹²⁷ Ilya Ehrenburg, *Trud*, 1940 № 202, 205, 208, 211, 215.

¹²⁸ Ilya Ehrenburg, *Ogonek*, № 24-27.

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The plot develops from the early 1936, tainted with the climate of hope and fervor before the elections, until July 14th, 1940 in the “dead and occupied Paris”.¹²⁹ The aim of the novel is to show that “defeat of France didn't happen on the shores of the Maas but much more earlier, in the silent Parisian cabinets during autumn 1938.”¹³⁰ Speaking of his work twenty years later, the author points to some defects: “Where was I wrong? Showing people totally engaged in the political battle <...> I haven't found enough colors, I often used black and white brushstrokes to describe them <...> and I eventually oversimplified some characters or situations.”¹³¹

It is interesting to compare Ehrenburg's novel with the book written by Herbert R. Lottman¹³² under the same title which came out half a century later.¹³³ Based on many unpublished archive materials, it looks like a day by day chronicle of Paris life from May 9th until June 23rd. The reader can discover a crowd of refugees, native Parisians, diplomats, government officials, and foreign journalists including Ilya Ehrenburg. One can learn that after the German invasion, the Red herald found refuge in the Soviet embassy where he “was watching the exodus” (p. 281). Walking around the garden of the embassy, he would hear “happy shouts and singing wafting from inside the Italian compound. He could even identify the song, the fascist hymn *Giovinazza*” (p. 252). The book also reveals that Ehrenburg was on a diplomatic mission: on the recommendation of Charles Hilsum, the head of the Paris Soviet Bank, on May 24th French Public Works Minister Anatole de Monzie asked Ehrenburg to convey a request for Soviet planes to the *chargé d'affaires* Nikolai Ivanov. Ivanov did send a cable to Moscow but Paul Reynaud, Prime Minister and Minister of War, eventually objected and stopped the case (p. 113-115).

¹²⁹ Ilya Ehrenbourg, *Ogoniok*, 1941 № 14, p.8.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ilya Ehrenburg, *Liudi, Gody, Zhizn'*, books 3-4 (Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel', 1963), p. 780.

¹³² Herbert R. Lottman (1927-2014) was an American historian and biographer specialized in French intellectual life. He settled in Paris in 1956 and published 17 biographies. He also served as an international correspondent for *Publishers Weekly*.

¹³³ Herbert R. Lottman, *The Fall of Paris: June 1940* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992).

Ehrenburg's novel is composed of three parts. The first one, covering the period from early 1936 until Spring 1938, deals with the victory of the Popular Front at the Parliamentary elections, the wave of strikes that followed, also the decision of the government not to intervene in the Spanish Civil War broke up in July 1936. The second part runs from the moment Daladier came to power until the beginning of the "phoney war;" it is the time when the Munich agreement was signed, dividing France between two camps. Moreover, a part of public opinion considered that the Popular Front had weakened the country with a number of social reforms. Pacifism is very popular among the "generation of fire"¹³⁴ which has gone through the World War I. As to France, she is diplomatically isolated and unprepared from the military point of view; the headquarters expect a defensive war having nothing in common with coming Hitler's *Blitzkrieg*. The third part of the novel describes the "phony war" with its demoralized, downtrodden soldiers and the lightning defeat followed by the armistice in June 1940. The main protagonists can be gathered into three groups: French elites (generals Breteil, Lerideau, Picard; politicians Paul Tessa, Auguste Viard, Foujé, Grandel; businessmen Montigny and Desser; journalist Joliot). All of them – except Desser who repents during the novel – are preoccupied with their own career, wealth, and narrow wellbeing. The second group of protagonists stands for the French people who, on the contrary, join the Resistant movements and are ready to sacrifice their lives in order to save their motherland: painter André Carnot, engineer Pierre Dubois and his wife Agnès, actress Jeannette. Among the *resistants* one can find the faithful communists such as Michaux, Jeannot, Legré, and Denise. The last group counts some foreign officials, German officers and Anglo-American diplomats who represent the threat or, at best, show themselves unable to provide any help against the enemy invasion.

¹³⁴ Serge Bernstein, Pierre Milza, *Histoire du XX^{ème} siècle. Vol. 1 1900-1945 : La fin du « monde européen »*, p. 434.

The novel was warmly acclaimed by the critics. In order to understand the context of such a reception, one has to keep in mind that “the book came out in 1942, when the Soviet people were enduring the bitterness of retreat and it was particularly important to unveil the genuine reasons of the French defeat.”¹³⁵ As Alexandr Fadeev writes, it is “a novel on the recent past from which one can learn a few historical lessons”¹³⁶; Alexandr Dymshits holds with this opinion saying that the “book that teaches much ¹³⁷ <...> one needs it and it is indispensable to life.” Evgeny Petrov considers the book as “one of the most convincing testimonies (документов обвинения) against the genuine culprits of the French defeat”.¹³⁸ Even the “bourgeois newspaper” *Daily Telegraph*¹³⁹ could not hide that “in Ilya Ehrenburg’s novel one can find the clearest presentation of the events which have led to the French defeat.” No wonder that Western newspapers were much less enthusiastic: “the author is unkind only to the socialists,”¹⁴⁰ regrets the rightist socialist Pierre Motal; “the Soviet author is not a philosopher <...> he describes the ruling class as if it were composed exclusively of indecisive and shabby people <...> as to the working class, in the book it is deprived of any apparent defect.”¹⁴¹ The book itself has become a symbol of resistance; according to some testimonies in 1942, in Novocherkassk, the Germans shot down an old school teacher for the only reason that they found in his house a copy of Ehrenburg’s novel.”¹⁴² At home the Soviet critic N. Filippov¹⁴³ evaluates *The Fall of Paris* as the “artistic triumph of Ehrenburg and of the Soviet literature as a whole” since the “Soviet Union is the only country where an instructive chapter of French history can be written.” Indeed, he laments, “the majority of the works dedicated to the French defeat (memoirs, military and strategic studies, diaries, political

¹³⁵ S. Lube in his commentaries to the complete works of Ilya Ehrenburg, (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1964, vol. 4), p. 549.

¹³⁶ Alexandre Fadeev, *Pravda*, April 12th, 1942.

¹³⁷ Alexandre Dymshits, “A book, that teaches much” in *V Velikom Pokhode*, Ibid.pp. 230-238.

¹³⁸ Evgeny Petrov, *Na Voine*, Moscow: Ogoniok, 1942, p. 81.

¹³⁹ December 24th, 1942, quoted by S. Lube, Ibid., p. 550.

¹⁴⁰ Pierre Motal, *France* (newspaper published in Algiers), January 26th, 1943.

¹⁴¹ *New York Herald Tribune*, June 6th, 1943.

¹⁴² Galina Belaya, « Ilya Ehrenburg (70th anniversary) », Ibid.

¹⁴³ N. Filippov, *Izvestia*, May 14th, 1941.

pamphlets) written by the French authors are nothing else than the perpetuation of the political struggle of the Third Republic <...> Ehrenburg's task is much more grave and noble." Along with other critics, such as T. Motyliova¹⁴⁴ and I. Lezhnirov,¹⁴⁵ Filippov appreciates the character of the communist Michaux: "this representative of French worker, clever and resolute, is very nice." Motyleva states that "the reader expects the mass print of *The Fall of Paris*;" "the book will be greedily read with the tireless attention, and it deserves it." She considers the book as historical because the described events are not only shown but also interpreted." Illustrating Belaya's remark, Motyleva asks the following question: "do we have here a novel or a report? One thing is certain: the Ehrenburg as a journalist helped much Ehrenburg as a writer." The book was awarded the Stalin Prize (first grade) for 1941. The same year the Stalin Prizes were given to the works which show "the titanic struggle of Soviet people for the honor and freedom of its motherland <...> which reveal the villainous and bestial face of German fascism."¹⁴⁶

Six years later, Ehrenburg was anew awarded the Stalin Prize, already for his novel *The Tempest* published in the thick review *Novy Mir*.¹⁴⁷ "Thoughts on *The Tempest*, as the author later recalls, dated from the war period <...> To me, the war began in the summer 1936 and, when it finally ended on May 9th, 1945 I wished it ended for me as well. I knew if I began to write this book, the war would remain in my office, on my desk, in my consciousness and heart. I started this work because I could not escape from my memories, I could not shirk what I felt was my duty."¹⁴⁸ The literary critic S. Obratsov is not far from the

¹⁴⁴ T. Motyliova, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, May 11th, 1941.

¹⁴⁵ I. Lezhnirov, *Ogonek*, 1941 № 14.

¹⁴⁶ Alexandre Fadeev, « Zamechatel'nye proizvedeniya sovetskoi literatury », *Pravda*, April 12th, 1942.

¹⁴⁷ 1947, № 4-8.

¹⁴⁸ Ilya Ehrenburg, « Pisatel' i Zhizn' » in the collection *O pisatel'skom trude*, Moscow: 1953, pp. 356-357.

truth when he says that “Ehrenburg could not refrain from writing *The Tempest* since it contains the overall results of the whole part of his life.”¹⁴⁹

The beginning of the Cold War matched with the years when the book was written: “these years convinced Ehrenburg that peace is still fragile.”¹⁵⁰ In his article “Word as the Weapon,” he stresses an aspect of war especially important to him: “Absorbed by the war, many failed to notice the extent to which the world changed.”¹⁵¹ According to Belaya, “like in *The Fall of Paris*, the writer focuses his attention not on the battlefield but on the subjective perception of the world at a time of huge social changes. That is why the main conflict of the epoch – the confrontation between fascism and antifascism – is exposed in *The Tempest* through the abundance of individual fates all dependent on the enormous social conflicts <...> Like in his previous book, Ehrenburg’s aim is not to recreate the clash of two worlds, the struggle of two ideologies but to reveal the psychological context of politics, to write “on the break of the front, not like on a military operation but like a movement of the people’s conscience”¹⁵² <...> Ehrenburg sees the roots of the German defeat not so much in the strategic miscalculations of the German generals but in the instability and corruption of the German society <...> the writer is concerned about the way fascism depraves people and “dulls” of their minds.”¹⁵³

The novel is divided into six parts: the first one describes the climate in the pre-war Europe, characterized by carelessness and treasons in France and, on the contrary, obvious tensions in Moscow; the second part deals with the Phoney War in France, seen from the both sides of the front and waiting for the war in Moscow; the third part describes the Nazi assault on the Soviet Union, retreat of the Soviet troops, and the fight for Moscow; we also find in the

¹⁴⁹ S. Obratsov, « Postup’ Istorii, » *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, April 3rd, 1948.

¹⁵⁰ Galina Belaya, Commentary on *the Tempest* in the edition of the whole works of Ilya Ehrenburg, vol. 5, Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1965, p. 769.

¹⁵¹ Ilya Ehrenburg, *Novy Mir*, 1944 № 1-2, pp. 201-212.

¹⁵² Ilya Ehrenburg, « Glazami Vassilia Grossmana, » *Literaturnaya gazeta*, February 23rd, 1946.

¹⁵³ Galina Belaya, Commentary, *Ibid.* p. 770.

novel some pictures of France during German occupation. The fourth part is dedicated to the battle of Stalingrad and the expectation of the second front. Stalingrad becomes the symbol of victory over fascism. The fifth and sixth parts show the final defeat of fascism, the fall of Berlin and the liberation of European countries.

Because of the huge scale of the novel, the number of characters is very significant. Using the critic Y. Lukin's words, to understand the plot becomes harder “because of the kaleidoscopic flickering of faces, events, and countries.”¹⁵⁴ To Obraztsov, however, “the kaleidoscopic nature of the novel is not a problem;” he thinks that “Ehrenburg’s novel is not really written but written down (“ne napisannyi, a zapisannyi”) like a diary, like letters from the frontline. And this is not the defect in the novel but its strength.”¹⁵⁵ By and large, one can gather all the protagonists according to the same three groups we meet in *The Fall of Paris* perhaps with slight changes peculiar to the Soviet characters: the French and Russian antifascist resisters (Sergey Vlahov, “the intellectual and emotional center of the novel,”¹⁵⁶ and his siblings: brother Vasili, sister Olga, mother Nina Georgevna; Doctor Krylov; the French communists Mado Lancier, engineer Lejean, painter Roger Samba, professor Dumas, old wine grower Désiré, and the German communist Anna Rot); traitors including the French elites and some Soviet citizens (businessmen Lancier, Pinaud, and Berthy, Roy and the poet Nivelles, the school teacher Stechenko); the third group includes the Germans Hans Shirke, anthropologist Keller and architect Richter, Willy Weber. All of them serve in Hitler’s army.

In general, the reception of the book was very positive: “Ilya Ehrenburg wrote a work of great significance.”¹⁵⁷ Once again, V. Kaverin raises the question about the literary genre: “One can wonder whether Ehrenburg’s activities as a war correspondent <...> are a sort of bridge between his two novels, *The Fall of Paris* and *The Tempest*. Indeed, the first one

¹⁵⁴ Y. Lukin, « Roman I. Ehrenburga « Buria, » » *Pravda*, February 20th, 1948.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Galina Belaya, Commentary, Ibid. p. 771.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

foreshadows the coming of the tempest whereas the second one depicts the conclusions and shows the deep roots of victory.”¹⁵⁸ Belaya adds: “the talk started in *The Fall of Paris* is followed and widened in *The Tempest*.”¹⁵⁹ She underlines a “tragic dimension expressing the contradiction between the desire to live of the characters and their awareness that life is disrupted by the war.”¹⁶⁰ It appears through the death of the main protagonist Sergey Vlahov and the tune extracted from the resistant song repeated on several occasions in the book: “We would've liked to live but such is our destiny...” According to S. Obraztsov,¹⁶¹ “everything in the novel is settled in the movement of time <...> the enormous role of the Communists in the struggle against fascism and for democracy and happiness of the people is the central topic of the book <...> the most valuable thing in the novel, although all events are accomplished, is that the end is not deprived of a feeling of historicity.” Fadeev goes further saying that “the ideological implication of the novel is directed not only towards the past but also towards the future.”¹⁶² L. Skorino¹⁶³ sees *The Tempest* as a “philosophical novel based on the duel between two hostile ideas, two consciousnesses – the bourgeois individualistic and the Soviet socialist.” To him, the main feature of the book is its large scale: “Ehrenburg is the first who gives a picture of the whole World War II from its beginning until the fall of Berlin <...> Ehrenburg's epic novel is dedicated to the Soviet winner.” However, not all share this point of view: “the psychological aspect of the novel proved to be incoherent. The subject of the book required a clear epic plot <...> a monumental epos and pathos of heroic art.”¹⁶⁴

Debates on the epic character *The Tempest* take a new turn after M. Shkerin's critical remarks,¹⁶⁵ they go beyond the particularities of the novel and now concern the literary canon in general and the figure of the Soviet hero in particular. In his paper Shkerin blames

¹⁵⁸ V. Kaverin, *Ogoniok*, 1951 №5, p. 11.

¹⁵⁹ Galina Belaya, Commentary, Ibid. p. 770.

¹⁶⁰ Galina Belaya, Commentary, Ibid. p. 773.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Alexandre Fadeev, « Prazdnik sovetsoy literatury, » *Pravda*, April 2nd, 1948.

¹⁶³ L. Skorino « Roman o velikoi bure, » *Literaturnaya Gazeta* № 36, August 30th, 1947.

¹⁶⁴ S. Shtut, « Buria Erenburga, » *Oktiabr'* 1948 № 2, pp. 183-188, p. 188.

¹⁶⁵ M. Shkerin, « O romane Ilyi Erenburga “Buria”, » *Oktiabr'* 1948 №1, pp. 183-191.

Ehrenburg for “showing us the remnants of capitalism, showing us the monsters of our society and incapacity to show the definitely leading Soviet people:” the main character Sergey Vlahov behaves spinelessly during the ideological talk; journalists are depicted with irony and appear ignorant, amoral, and jealous; women are obsessed with material comfort; engineers never take the initiative and admire their superior’s wisdom... The author doesn’t show the “genuine creative forces of the Soviet people; <...> the character and spiritual posture of the protagonists are not ours” («. Shkerin speculates on the economist Ossip Alper: “Are [his] features typical?” (p. 188). Indeed, 'typicality' («ТИПИЧНОСТЬ») is the key criterion to define to what extent a text corresponds to the patterns of the Socialist Realist canon. As T. Trifonova will put it five years later: “The typical is the main sphere of expression of the loyalty to the Party in realist art. The problem of typicality is always a political problem.”¹⁶⁶ “Until 1952, the problem of the typical had been solved in a quite simple way: good is typical, no good is untypical.”¹⁶⁷ So when in 1948, when Shkerin criticizes the characters in Ehrenburg’s novel for not being enough ‘typical’, it means that the author doesn’t observe the canon.

Needless to say, such an accusation of the living Soviet classic could not remain unnoticed, so the choir of critics gathered their efforts to defend the writer. Nevertheless, the real motive of their disagreement is still unclear: Shkerin’s insolence or the content of his arguments? Y. Lukin, for example, complains that M. Shkerin “totally ignores many positive sides of the novel <...> his judgement is mostly unfair <...> and one cannot avoid to express reservations regarding the sharp tone of the paper.”¹⁶⁸ But in the same text, he underlines that *The Tempest* “does not illustrate clearly enough how the typical features of the genuine Soviet man reveal themselves in the struggle with [negative] characters;” further, he is outraged that

¹⁶⁶ T. Trifonova, « O nekotoryh voprosah sotsialisticheskogo realizma, » *Zvezda*, 1953 № 4, p. 162. Quoted in Evgeny Dobrenko and Galin Tikhanov, *History of Russian Literary Criticism* (Moscow: NLO, 2011), p. 413.

¹⁶⁷ *Idem*.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

Olga's marriage of convenience is "not typical." Similarly, Nikolay Zhdanov¹⁶⁹ roughly declares that "Shkerin's partisan critique has nothing to do with the sane ideological and aesthetic standards." At the same time he notices that in the novel "there is no hero corresponding to the scale of the book." He wonders: "maybe the abundance of characters, events, and situations <...> urged the fragmentation of the novel into tiny bits and episodes?" S. Shtut¹⁷⁰ dislikes the "loud bass voice" of Shkerin's paper. She assumes that the latter did not get the main idea of the author: "the characters are neither monsters, nor ideal good-lookers <...> by liberating his characters from their inherent defects <...> Ehrenburg wants to show the growth of the Soviet people during the war." Fadeev holds with the same thought¹⁷¹: "reading the first chapters, most of the characters cannot be qualified as heroic, but these people become brave and heroic during the war <...> showing the movement of their destinies is the ground task of literature." So, all the critics paradoxically argue that Ehrenburg follows the canon although the characters of the novel are untypical.

The most accurate interpretation of *The Tempest* can be found in B. Brainina's paper:¹⁷² "M. Shkerin's article broke the record of scholasticism and rationalism. He takes a position of the prosecutor or investigator who tries to catch the criminal. The criminal is the author himself and his characters because they do not fit to the crude and rough scheme to which M. Shkerin wants to reduce the diversity of [the book's] ideological conflicts and human destinies." Time and again, one may assume that the characters in *The Tempest* are not typical, rigorously speaking, and that the writer skews the canon. Perhaps the reason of such skewing lies in Ehrenburg's long war experience that finally transformed the stalwart Stalinist into a more sober observer of his contemporaries. During the war, he saw the heroes who felt anxiety, like the ordinary people, and the ordinary people who behave as the heroes. The

¹⁶⁹ Nikolay Zhdanov, « Buria, roman Ilyi Erenburga, » *Pravda*, January 30th, 1948.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Alexandre Fadeev, « Prazdnik sovetskoy literatury, » Ibid.

¹⁷² B. Brainina, « Skhema i Zhizn'. O chuvstvah, ideiah i postupkah, » *Novy Mir* 1948 № 8, pp. 205-214, p. 212.

writer is never a machine, but a human being. And after such an existential discovery, Ehrenburg may have wished to write not a “story of the true man,” told by Boris Polevoy, but a “story of the true people.” Unlike *The Fall of Paris*, whose simplistic narrative was later a matter of regret, the kaleidoscopic *Tempest* is less unequivocal. In a certain sense the novel is at a literary crossroads: it follows the Chekhov tradition of the “small man” and anticipates the Khrushchev Thaw literature.

Nikolay Shpanov

As for the conventional critics, some writers perfectly hold with the Socialist Realist canon. It was the case of Nikolay Shpanov (1896-1961).¹⁷³ Born in 1896 in Ussuriysk (near Vladivostok) to a railman family, Shpanov graduated from the Polytechnic Institute and the High School for Aeronautics. He took part in World War I. In 1918 he volunteered in the Red Army and served about twenty years in the Naval Air Forces. The author of thirty books, he started writing regularly from 1926 and became a professional writer in 1939 when he published his first novel *The First Blow*. During his service in the 1920s, Shpanov had also written many publications on air force, including a monograph on the aircraft engines and a handbook for flight schools; later in the 1930s he is involved in the 'conquest of Arctic' and takes part in several expeditions to the polar circle.

The First Blow. Story on the Upcoming War (Pervy Udar. Povest' o Budushchei Voine) made Shpanov famous; the novel appeared in the collection called “Soviet military fiction.” The plot is about a conflict between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Air force launches a successful raid into Germany. In 1938 the film *Deep Raid*

¹⁷³ For more details about Nikolay Shpanov see *Советские детские писатели: био-библиографический словарь*. М., 1961; Русские советские писатели прозаики. Т.6. Ч.2. М., 1969; КЛЭ. Т.8. (В.Н.Чуванов); Некролог // Литературная газета. 1961. №119. 5 окт. С.4. see also the leading article by M. Lepekhin on <http://www.az-libr.ru/index.htm?Persons&000/Src/0010/de0d5c70> consulted on March 24th, 2016.

(*Glubokiy Raid*) came out, directed by Piotr Malakhov with Shpanov as a screenwriter. The story of the film will be echoed in *The First Blow*. Vsevolod Vyshnevsky, a writer and a future laureate of the Stalin Prize, deemed the novel “successful”: “it captivatingly describes the future war of the Soviet people against the aggressors, the final war against the enemies of socialism”) As the ‘avant-garde’ of the Stalinist war doctrine, both the book and the movie were withdrawn after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. During World War II, Shpanov wrote a number of popular episodes of agitation literature entitled *The Secret of Professor Burago* overwhelmed with his favorite characters: cruel spies, witty counterintelligence agent, reckless superiors, and vigilant Soviet citizen. Later he went to political novels: the trilogy *Incendiaries* (1949), *Plotters* (1951), and *Hurricane* (1961). In 1952 he published the pamphlet *Cloak-and-Dagger Diplomats* whose “noble task [was] to tear off the masks of the war incendiaries, to reveal the criminal activity of the revenge-seekers, and to call on people of good will to join the struggle against the threat of war. He made a substantial contribution to adventure fiction, since he saw the latter not only as a leisure reading, but as one of the ways to educate the young generation.”¹⁷⁴ *Incendiaries* and *Plotters* gained wide popularity among the Soviet readers and were republished in several dozens of editions.¹⁷⁵ This success was not haphazard. The novelty of the subject, suspense and references to some secret reports along with the meticulous updating by the author at each new issue placed Shpanov's work at the front of the Stalinist literary propaganda. Besides, one can also consider *Incendiaries* and *Plotters* as an attempt to write political thrillers, like John Le Carré nowadays, that fed the feeling of a constant threat common to the Soviet people of the epoch. According to the

¹⁷⁴ Obituary, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, № 119 October 5th, 1961.

¹⁷⁵ M. Lepekhin mentions “several dozens of republications (*Ibid.*) He explains it as follows: “due to the lack of adventure novels, many readers were more inclined to see in such books an adventure story than its ideological content. In spite of the fact that Shpanov used to draft all the documents he was quoting <...>, he gained a reputation of being informed in the state secrets.” The website *laboratoria fantastiki* says about eleven editions of *Incendiaries* from 1949 until 1955 (five of which date back from after Stalin’s death) with the total number of 765 thousand copies: <https://fantlab.ru/blogarticle36451> (consulted on March 25th, 2016). Another source tells that “From 1952 to 1954 *Plotters* was reprinted seven times that reaches half a million copies.” See *Zapreshchennye knigi russkikh pisateley literaturovedov. 1917-1991. Index of the Soviet censorship with commentary*, A. Blum (ed.), (Saint-Petersburg: Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, 2003), p. 198.

journalist Sergey Slavgorodsky, Yulian Semyonov resorted to the same conspiratorial scheme when he was writing his book series on Schtirlitz¹⁷⁶ and encouraging his colleagues to “learn from Shpanov.”¹⁷⁷

In spite of his importance at the time, Shpanov preferred to keep his distance from the power and literary milieu. After 1955 he fell in disgrace: his books went out of print and two of them were withdrawn from libraries and bookshops. *Plotters* was banned because of its open anti-Titoist content and *Diplomats* because the book discussed the political processes in the Eastern Europe organized by the communist parties at the turn of the 1950s. After the XXth Congress, he was doomed to be a rotten writer whose works appeared in such marginal publishing houses as *Trudreservizdat* and *Voyenizdat*. Many of his writings came out of oblivion in the post-Soviet period. For example, the publishing house *Veche* republished *Incendiaries* (2013) and *Plotters* (2014) in the collection “War adventures.”

The plot of *Incendiaries* develops from December 1932 until the invasion of Prague by Hitler’s troops on March 15th, 1939. The novel is, perhaps, the first socialist political thriller in which the events are shown on international scale. It deals with the circumstances of the beginning of World War II. Quite in the same way as he has described the technical characteristics of the plane engines in his handbooks, in his two volumes of literary work Shpanov “shows the technology of how the imperialist predators with the help of socialist traitors unleash the World war.”¹⁷⁸ The novel combines both fiction and reality, historical figures and imagined characters. For example, we find an interview given in 1934 by Stalin to Herbert Wells (p. 212) and the name of the French political journalist Geneviève Tabouis (p.

¹⁷⁶ The main character of *Seventeen Moments of Spring* (1973), a Soviet twelve-part television series, directed by Tatyana Lioznova and based on the novel of the same title by Yulian Semyonov.

¹⁷⁷ Sergey Slavgorodsky, “Stalinskiyi fantazior rodom iz Ussuriyska” *Utro Vostoka* № 6, November 27th, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ M. Lepekhin, *Ibid*.

234, 264, 282).¹⁷⁹ The story falls into five parts: the first one introduces the main protagonists who can be gathered into three groups: economic elites, such as the American financial magnate John Vandengheim, chief “incendiary,” who funds German re-armament; Carl Bosch, the head of the German company *Farbenindustrie*, and Lord Creffield, an English speculator and one of Vandengheim’s relatives. The second group includes Western military and political elites: Franklin Roosevelt and Foster Dollas (for John Foster Dulles); Hitler, Himmler, Göring, high-ranking officers (general Schverer), and the head of the SA (Storm Battalion) Ernst Röhm; the French generals Legasnier and Gamelin, Prime Minister Daladier and Minister of Foreign Affairs Barthou. Along with these “rulers of the world”, who only care about their private interests, we meet the communists who struggle for peace: the leader of German Communist Party Ernst Thälmann and the Bulgarian communist leader Georgy Dimitrov who were arrested after the Reichstag fire in 1933. They are supported by members of the international brigades (painter Tsikhauer, singer Zinn, violinist Louis) in Spain and Czechoslovakia and by some humble party members like the driver Frantz Lemke and floor cleaner Yan Boyce. The first part of the novel shows the Leipzig process against the communist leaders and internal rivalries for power in Germany. A special stress has been laid on the fight between the SA members and soldiers from the German regular army. The second part of the novel deals with Hitler’s seizure of power and, particularly after Hindenburg’s death, with the rise of anti-Semitism and the creation of Hitler’s recruits army. The reader is given much information about geopolitics through the diplomatic intrigues between Yugoslavia, France, Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom: “Europe is sitting

¹⁷⁹ Geneviève Tabouis (1892-1985), the nephew of senior diplomat Jules Cambon who was the French ambassador in Berlin from 1907 to 1914. After the first World War she attended with him numerous sessions of the League of Nations. Threatened by Germany’s re-armament, she made several attempts to warn the public opinion against it. Hitler himself denounced her articles in 1939 in his May 1 speech when he tried to laugh off her warnings: “As for Madame Tabouis, the wisest of women, she knows what I am up to even before I know it myself. She is ridiculous.” Due to her support for anti-German front including France and the Soviet Union, she was accused of being a Soviet agent. She became a Foreign Editor of several newspapers including *l’Oeuvre*, *l’Information* and *La France Libre*. She published many books on international affairs, among them *Vingt Ans de Suspense Diplomatique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1958) translated in Russian *Twenty Years of Diplomatic Struggle* (Moscow: Inostrannaya Literatura, 1960). She was also a notorious Egyptologist.

on a powder keg” (p. 310). Meanwhile the Machiavellian Vandengheim gathers industrial and political leaders in his Swiss castle to prepare the awakening of the German war machine. The third part is focused on the Spanish war (1936-1937). The fourth part, unfolding in the spring 1938, describes Hitler’s East European politics with the “route march to the East,” and Austrian *Anschluss*. At last, the fifth part depicts the preparation of the German attack of Sudetenland and Prague: Vandengheim ensures that the French and English elites will remain passive during the Nazi campaign; moreover, an assassination attempt of two English officials and one German general during their Czech journey is to legitimize Chamberlain’s and Hitler’s hostility toward the defenseless country. German general staff draws the plans of the operation while German, American, and English businessmen speculate on Czechoslovak economic jewels.

Plotters covers the period from 1939 until 1949. The first half of the book, entitled “Crime,” describes the situation in America and Europe from March 1939 until the eve of Barbarossa: the White House, the Vatican, Germany, Spain, the invasions of Poland, and France, then the Franco-German armistice. The second part, "Before the Retribution", gives much room for the Far Eastern military theatre: the failed diversion against the pro-communist government in Mongolia, the air battle between the pilots of Chiang Kai-shek, supported by the US, and those of the People’s Liberation Army, supported by the Soviets (chapter four); the sixth chapter concerns the communist partisans’ attack on the catholic mission in Taiwan where American and pro-Chiang officials gathered and planned bacteriological attack against China and Siberia. But happily, thanks to the skilful Communist agents, the stock of weapons is destroyed and enemy leaders, killed or captured, crown the crushing victory of the Reds. Chapters five and seven deal with the end of Hitler’s Germany, the Nuremberg trial, and the first skirmishes of the Cold War: threatening John Vandengheim entertain his dark intentions to submit economically Europe and rebirth the Nazi German

military industry; the Vatican, backed by Washington, keeps up its 'crusade against the Soviet Union'. The reader also gets to know the struggle for influence in Berlin between the Soviet and the three other occupying forces. Naturally, American spies are eventually arrested by the Soviet commandant. The latter gives way to his hope for a peaceful Germany, whose future belongs to the German people establishing friendly relations with the Russian neighbour. The ultimate assassination of Ernst Schverer, a former SS soldier and member of the pro-Nazi militia in Western Berlin by his brother Egon, a pro-communist engineer living in Eastern Berlin, symbolises the emergence of a new antifascist generation.

A brief glance at the archives shows that the first publication of the novel was a tormenting process. On March 29, 1949 Nikolay Shpanov addressed Stalin with a "two issues" letter motivating this step as his last hope. The "first issue" concerns his novel *Incendiaries*: "In 1947 I submitted it to the publishing house *Molodaya Gvardiya*. Since then there has been a lot of fuss and trouble around it, numerous arguments were invented to keep the book unpublished. The genuine reason is cowardice and playing safe. Even comrade Voroshilov's intervention didn't bring the publishers round. Neither the actuality of the subject nor the current political climate didn't make them recall the great Lenin's words: "It is necessary to explain to the people the true circumstances, that big secret from which war comes into existence..." Reactions given by the journals worry me as well. In spite of the support of Simonov and Fadeev, both *Novy Mir* and *Znamya* declined publication. I wholeheartedly feel my righteousness as I felt it ten years ago when I was struggling for my *First blow*. I am convinced that people need such books, and that their publication must not be a matter of years but of weeks and even days. I request the Central Committee to help this project along."¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Memorandum of Agitprop by the Central Committee to M.A. Suslov concerning the publication of Nikolay Shpanov novel *Incendiaries*, April 20th, 1949. RGASPI 17/132/225/8.

Indeed, on February 28, 1949, the internal reviewer of *Znamya* B. Leontyev¹⁸¹ reported that “Shpanov's manuscript doesn't deserve publication <...> it is a fictionalized chronicle of the interwar period <...> the author illustrates a “historic note” of the Sovinformburo.” He found regrettable that the manuscript “provokes an unhealthy interest in Hitler's private life and in the spies' dangerous activities.” Besides, the critic G. Mdivani also expressed concerns about the fact that “Hitler's caricature humanizes him.”¹⁸² However the main peril of *Incendiaries* is to show the “giddy success of Hitlerism.” He resumed: “showing the negative influence of the Anglo-American reaction on peace, the author overestimates the role and might of this bloc.” In the same vein, in January 1950 M. Meyman, PhD in economics, wrote to Stalin:¹⁸³ “Instead of showing the vile treason of Czechoslovakia by Western countries, the author loses any common sense and presents the predatory Hitlerite Germany as an innocent Gretchen seduced by the Anglo-American Mephistopheles <...> such an approach diminishes the difficulty and importance of the Soviet victories <...> and such falsifications could be used by anti-Soviet propaganda.”

Finally, some other critics preferred using humour to castigate Shpanov's deformed imagination. So we have Abram Markovich *Intriguers (Intrigany)*,¹⁸⁴ a “historico-politico-international-documental epic with one thousand characters <...> the Martian United States ambassador's rapacious profile against the window was prominent <...> Pope Eugenio Papacelli exclaimed – “I bless the whole solar system in the name of the holy Church... may Andromeda sell weapons to Orion” <...> Secretary of State Dean Sobacheson was holding a grudge against Khruman, Khruman was intriguing against Perchill <...> the Americans were buying the English for dollars, the English were buying the French for pounds, the French

¹⁸¹ RGALI 618/13/173/6-8.

¹⁸² Discussion at the meeting of the Writers' Union Secretariat on September 12th, 1949 between G. Mdivani and Lev Arnshtam, director and scriptwriter of *A lesson of History (Urok Istorii, 1957)*, the film based on *Incendiaries*. Quoted in A. Fateev, *Ibid.* p. 77.

¹⁸³ RTsKhIDNI 17/132/399/16-33, quoted in A. Fateev. *Ibid.* p. 77.

¹⁸⁴ *Intriguers*, a parody on the works of Shpanov, second half of the 1950s RGALI 1784/1/47/26-28.

were selling themselves for a breadcrumb <...> to keep track on the events, to remember anything was absolutely impossible <...> the facts were checked, not fully checked and fully unchecked <...> with such abundance of facts the author's profile doesn't show up against the window.”

The critics were far from being unanimous. Contrary to Leontyev and Markovich, the internal reviewers from the editorial board of *Znamya* have shared their enthusiasm: “purposeful and diverting, the novel presents the prewar international events, wrote M. Tolchonov to Vsevolod Vyshnevsky¹⁸⁵ <...> it discloses major preparations behind the scenes of the Second World War <...> thanks to its enormous political significance, it allows to shed light not only upon the past (although that's important too!) but also upon the postwar international situation and on the two camps standing now in the international arena <...> it could be useful to launch an abridged version <...> I am convinced that the book is worthwhile and needed”. Vyshnevsky replied: "Pyotr Vershigora,¹⁸⁶ the chairman of the military commission at the Writers' Union, gave me Shpanov's manuscript and, you know, that's interesting <...> the text should be shortened one-third of its length. The author has worked much with the sources, it deserves your attention.” After the publication of the book on August 23, 1949, the same Tolchonov gave his feedback entitled “On the culprits of war”¹⁸⁷: after having reminded of the writer's goal (“when cannons keep silence and printing machines are shooting, each Soviet writer is a soldier”), he claimed that Shpanov's project was to give an “artistic interpretation” (*khudozhestvennaya interpretatsia*) of Lenin's statement about the capitalist union: imperialists from all over the world necessarily unite with each other to protect their capital. Among the qualities of the book Tolchonov names

¹⁸⁵ Letter from M. Tolchonov to Vsevolod Vyshnevsky, September 13th, 1948 and the reply dated from October 9th, 1948, RGALI 618/13/92/60.

¹⁸⁶ Pyotr Vershigora (1905-1963), one of the leaders of the Soviet partisan movement in Ukraine during the World War II and a Soviet writer. In 1947 he was awarded the Stalin Prize (second grade) for his novel *People with a Clear Conscience* (*Lyudi s chistoi sovestyu*, 1946).

¹⁸⁷ M. Tolchonov « On the responsible for the war. Criticism on the novel *Incendiaries* » 1949. RGALI 1702/4/1775/5-25.

ideological saturation, the descriptions of Spain and Blum's treason, and how the author shows the "machine of international intelligence;" the plot is clear and logic but, he regretted, "such print rates of the war literature are unacceptable." He has also pointed to the absence of an index with historical and political names and events. On the occasion of the Stalin Prize for 1951, the editorial board of *Molodaya Gvardiya* wrote an assessment to promote *Plotters*.¹⁸⁸ A. Rybin and A. Lipatov argued that the book very convincingly "unveils the dirty business of the Wall Street magnates directed against the democratic camp <...> it shows the greatness and power of the Soviet Union <...> as well as international brigades' cohesion." Sympathies between the author and the publishing house seem to be reciprocal: in a letter to his friend Beslaev, Shpanov shares his delight on seeing the success of the second edition of *Incendiaries* in *Molodaya Gvardiya* and the preparation of the third one.¹⁸⁹ B. Krylov joined the writer's supporters when he saw in *Incendiaries* a "useful and precious piece of work."¹⁹⁰ A. Fateev notes that *Literaturnaya Gazeta* from December 28, 1949 stressed its "partyiness" and that Grigory Malenkov gave orders to help Shpanov with the second volume.¹⁹¹ In his letter to the Commission of literary theory and criticism at the direction of the Writers' Union, the soldier Ivan Lemeshko wrote that *Incendiaries* was translated in Hungarian and German and expressed his interest in possible futures translations: "I think that this book teaches us vigilance and hatred against fascism; the Soviet Union must be interested in showing to the people who are their enemies."¹⁹²

Regardless of their opinion, many critics can't avoid the question of literary genre. B. Krylov marveled that Shpanov "created a work of a new genre: the political novel." Quite the contrary, B. Leontyev rued a "deleterious hybrid" (*вредный гибрид*) where

¹⁸⁸ Discussion of the editorial board of *Molodaya Gvardiya* on the occasion of the Stalin Prize for 1951. RGALI 1580/1/13/70-72.

¹⁸⁹ Letter from N. Shpanov to Beslaev May 8th, 1950. RGALI 3134/1/1021.

¹⁹⁰ B. Krylov. Criticism on *Incendiaries* published in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 1949. RGALI 634/3/260/260-267.

¹⁹¹ A. Fateev, *Ibid.* p. 77.

¹⁹² Ivan Lemeshko, "soldier of the Soviet armed forces stationed abroad." Letter to the direction of the Writers' Union, March 29th, 1951. RGALI 631/24/292/2.

“irresponsiveness of the author’s fantasy replaces historical and scientific researches, also the faithfulness of memoirs.” Tolchonov preferred to speak about an “international novel” (*международный роман*) whose «artistic merit is a strong mean to influence the reader and to get him on our board <...> an artistic generalization intermingled with a journalistic digressions are not only tolerable but authorized and rational since they allow the reader to familiarize with the complex questions of international politics.” As for the author himself, in his letter to Beslaev he was not afraid of naming his book a “monster-novel” (*роман-монстр*). One can assume that he had in mind its size or its topic: the titles of the books speak for themselves: both the volumes are focused on the enemies giving their detailed description. After this overview of our case-studies and their reception, let’s have a look at the frightening figures of these four “monster-novels.”

2- Faces of the Enemy

In the novels of Ehrenburg and Shpanov we see four types of enemies haunting the 1930s and 1940s. All of them can be related to the “capitalist camp.” To be specific, we have the Machiavellian enemy (the Anglo-Americans), the enemy on the battlefield (the Nazis, the Japanese, and the Guomindang warriors), and two kinds of Anglo-Americans’ allies (the Vatican, the Trotskyites on the one hand, and European elites on the other hand). To underline the main difference between the two writers, one can emphasize that Ehrenburg limits himself to “official characters” (ministers, military men, economic leaders), whereas Shpanov plunges into the underground world of spies and other agents operating behind the scenes. In this sense, it seems that Ehrenburg is much closer than Shpanov to such movies as *Meeting on the Elbe* (1949, on the relationships between the Soviet and the three other general staff) or *The Russian Question* (1948, on Western Press). The atmosphere Shpanov creates makes us rather

think of *The Secret Mission* (1950) where American and German plotters prepare together the German re-armament. Another difference between the authors is that “in Shpanov novels negative characters are described with more thoroughness than undifferentiated communist and partisans of peace.”¹⁹³ On the contrary, in Ehrenburg the “face time” of the positive protagonists exceeds that of the enemies, their psychology is also elaborated in a more detailed way. For this reason, we find more quotes on our topic in Shpanov novels than in Ehrenburg’s.

A- The Machiavellian Enemy: the Anglo-Americans

In his critical article devoted to *Incendiaries* Tolchonov notices that the book shows “activism of imperialist ideologues <...> it illustrates the defeat of cosmopolite ideas;”¹⁹⁴ this appraisal could seem a herald of the future turn to the *ideological enemy* marking all the Khrushchchev era. He also appreciates that Shpanov avoids the Manichean temptation of political literature, “not showing enemies as idiots.” In more concrete terms, from the whole gallery of capitalist enemies in four novels, the most prominent character is without doubt John Vandengheim III. As B. Krylov writes: “he rarely appears but his presence is perceptible throughout the whole novel <...> he embodies American imperialism.”¹⁹⁵ An American billionaire, his endless fortune allows him to buy politicians, to defend his private economic interests and conquer new markets. This character is introduced by Shpanov in the opening pages of his novel: Vandengheim is an allegory of greed whose physiognomy reminds us of that of an ogre: “He was a dense man of great stature, far from old, although his hair was silvery, with short, cropped hair above his forehead, as pink as fleshy round cheeks. He had a heavy chin and protruding, like large sea shells, cartilaginous ears.” (*Incendiaries*, further I.,

¹⁹³ M. Lepekhin, Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Tolchonov, Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ B. Krylov, Ibid.

14) But more often, the words used to describe him evoke the image of the robber. There are many allusions to the pirates: « He could not boast that his ancestors had landed from the "May Flower", and generally preferred not to delve into their pedigree beyond two generations. In his heart, he condemned his late father John Vandenheim II for having a habit of jokingly bragging about his descent from a certain Caribbean pirate.» (I., 14) ; further his luxurious yacht is called « the Pirate » (I., 619) ; he is also compared to a gangster : « He could not have been the only one who knew that in reality this "pirate" Ion van deneme was a runaway Dutch convict and a completely overland man. The field of his activity was not the Caribbean Sea, but the slums of Chicago. And a million of them were left not in the form of pearls and rubies, stolen from the holds of foreign ships, but banknotes, obtained by crimes, among which not the last place was occupied by ordinary murders » (I., 15) ; in the second volume, Vandengheim has a "wolf instinct of the hereditary gangster" (*Plotters*, further P., 48), « the pirate from Chicago » (P., 682). In all the four novels Anglo-Americans are systematically associated with gangsters: "It's not the first time that our guys hire themselves at the service of gangsters" (I., 261); they are also compared to Shakespeare's Shylock (P., 723). The American spy Krone has "hands like a trickster or a pickpocket" (I., 102). Predatory instinct of the Anglo-Americans is visible when the speculator Lord Creffield and spy Winfred Row plan to steal resources from the Czech factories after Hitler's invasion: "Do not we take our share??" (I., 606). It is strengthened by the common comparison of Churchill with a "bulldog whose strong jaws betrays his iron grip" (I., 718). At last, Anglo-Americans are associated with the traders: "Chamberlain, clever merchant" (*The Fall of Paris*, further FP, 260), "Merchants, not soldiers, that's all" (FP., 413) ; " Birmingham's businessman Chamberlain » (I., 633). A Nazi general tells an American spy: « We understand what it means to be defeated by such "business people" as you are. » (P., 716).

As a consequence of this mercantile mentality, they are accused of being deprived of any moral principle. Winfred Row, a journalist and a spy, acknowledges: “Neither Hitler nor Mussolini can be negotiated. None of them can not be trusted either in a half-word, as ourselves. » (I. 285). Further, there is an allusion to “the exquisite lie and perfidy of Brits” (P., 553). They are charged with cowardice: in a talk with Vandengheim, «Foster Dulles’ lips are mortified by fear <...> his eyes frozen open in fixed stare when he looked at John » (I., 624); general Barclay is also «paralyzed by fear» (P., 656); once caught by the Soviets, spy Krone tells them all he knows” (P., 702). When Admiral Leggy «was talking to the President on the great mission of English-speaking peoples” (P., 386), it echoes Churchill’s theory on English-speaking peoples articulated in the famous Fulton speech and later in his four-volume work.¹⁹⁶ Stalin himself considered this military association as a racial theory comparable to Nazism.¹⁹⁷ The allegation of racism concerns also general Barclay (general Mac Arthur’s delegate in China) who calls the Japanese people “monkeys”; he adds: “Life taught me not to trust any yellow man <...> they are worth to be thrown into mayhem under the command of our guys» (P., 484); he totally despises his Asiatic allies and doesn’t care about their lives: «The evacuation of the Gomindang troops will be impossible in any case. So there is no need to protect them from infection. Let them die better than join the ranks of the Reds.» (P., 642)

¹⁹⁶ *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples* in four volumes (London: Cassel & Company LTD, 1956-1958).

¹⁹⁷ In his Fulton Speech, British Prime Minister called to the geopolitical union of English-speaking peoples: “We must not let [war] happen again. This can only be achieved by reaching now, in 1946, a good understanding on all points with Russia under the general authority of the United Nations Organization and by the maintenance of that good understanding through many peaceful years, by the whole strength of the English-speaking world and all its connections. If the population of the English-speaking Commonwealth be added to that of the United States, with all that such cooperation implies in the air, on the sea, all over the globe, and in science and in industry, and in moral force, there will be no quivering, precarious balance of power to offer its temptation to ambition or adventure. On the contrary there will be an overwhelming assurance of security.” Stalin answered him in the *Pravda* dated from March 14th, 1946:

“Indeed, Mr. Churchill is now on the side of the warmongers. <...> It is necessary to note that Mr. Churchill and his friends amazingly remind us of Hitler and his friends. Hitler began his unleashing of war by a racial theory saying that only German speaking peoples are a true nation. Mr. Churchill also begins his unleashing of war by the idea that only English speaking peoples are the nations chosen to rule the destinies of the whole world. <...> In fact, Mr. Churchill and his friends in England and in the United States issue a kind of ultimatum to the non English speaking nations: acknowledge our rule of your own volition and everything will be in order, otherwise the war is inevitable.”

On this issue, see also A. Fateev, *Obraz Vraga v Sovetskoy Propagande. 1945-1954*, M: IRI RAN, 1999, p. 24.

As Sam Keen argues in his book,¹⁹⁸ the enemy is often shown as “an enemy of God.” So, profanation is a leitmotiv of the novels. As an example, one can mention the receiving of money by the Americano-nazi spy Krone: « The presence in his life of the forces of Vandenheim gold and Gover's power became something as organic as for the believer the divine will. » (I., 643) Further, “Fra” Foster Dollas and “Jesuit monk” George Warner, while sitting in cassock in the Vatican and smoking a cigar, recalls their bandit past: the first is accused of forging a check and the second of being a “former gangster” (P., 747). The windows of the building remind him of the Sing Sing prison which he seems to know quite well (P., 751).

If the English are shown in the novels as the heirs of the world empire, then after the war, as Shpanov suggests, the leadership belongs to the Americans. This change in the world leadership is reflected in physiognomy: “those few teeth that were still sticking out in the slobbery mouth of a bulldog were now false. In their power, even his own allies did not believe. » (P., 753) Quite unexpectedly, Shpanov is benevolent to Roosevelt; his advisor Howe says: “He's too gullible, our FDR » (I., 455). Roosevelt is upset when he learns that some American businessmen finance the German re-armament: “What came up! The most outspoken way to arm the Germans. (I., 460);” American President considers Hitler as “greedy and stupid” (P., 28). On the contrary, the descriptions of other American officials are merciless. Truman looks like a «petty shopkeeper» (in Stalin’s terms): « While the upper lip was very thin, the bottom grumbled sagging. And together they made an impression of the mouth of the vicious old maid. <...> The bright suit in a large Christmas tree was carefully ironed - as if straight from the shop window. All this gave the newcomer the resemblance to the traveling salesman of the middle hand. » (P., 101) Allen Dollas is compared with a wild animal: “ Dollas laughed. He laughed with a raspy, interrupted laugh, like the howling of a

¹⁹⁸ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*, Ibid.

dying jackal» (P., 772) and Shpanov mentions Mc Arthur's «ironic smile» (P., 66). Diplomat William Bullitt is also one of the targets: «I was told something about the intrigues of Bullitt in Moscow - a completely unfair game ... (I., 455) <...> Bullitt's features, which seemed a few minutes ago so open, even good-natured, did not now reflect anything but stubbornness and cruelty... (I., 486). He also appears in the *Fall of Paris* as a cynic politician: "Agnes ran to school - there's a radio. Moleben was given; Ambassador Bullitt raised the statue of Jeanne d'Arc red roses, with a sharp Anglo-Saxon accent he exclaimed: "Save them, Jeanne !"" (FP., 472)

The Anglo-American elites are Hitler's allies: in June 1940, "the ambassador of the "great transatlantic democracy" did not give himself the trouble of following the French government in the Tour William Bullitt stayed in Paris to meet his German friends" (P., 377); « Chamberlain decided to negotiate with Hitler. I'm telling you: it's a cunning old man. » (FP., 261) ; Mayor Davis : « German offensive for us plus. » (T., 368) ; Hitler ponders: « If <...> loans promised by the Americans are practically unlimited, then the thought of mastering the whole of Europe is not at all such a utopia! (I., 106) ; transatlantic Goebbels (P. 726).

The Anglo-Saxons are depicted as warmongers: «His Majesty's government always wants to avoid a small war, in order to give the opportunity to flare up ... » (I., 604) ; « Ben considered war a very useful and effective tool in the hands of His Majesty's Government. <...> Yes, then Ben considered the war a positive phenomenon in the life of nations. Just like hunger and some epidemics » (I., 659). Businessman Vandengheim exclaims: «"And the war!" With the present means of extermination, we can grind millions, tens of millions of useless people. "(P., 75) <...>" Where are the billions that we invested in Hitler? .. Crash! .. Where is the money invested in Mussolini? .. Collapse! Where are the six billion thrown into the jaws of Chiang Kai-shek? .. Collapse! We, the business people of America, will never

forgive Mac for this heinous stupidity with China.» (P., 687). Further, a German communist explains: «After all, the Anglo-Americans, like the once German imperialists, view the war of aggression as the main way to achieve their political goals. After all, they have set as their goal the assertion of the domination of monopoly capital throughout the world and for all eternity. » (P., 739) As Nikolay Zhdanov observes, “in the *Tempest*, representatives of American imperialism depicted in the novel with great publicistic acuity. These are people who do not pay attention to the fact that human blood can not be paid with pig's stew. All of them are extremely fond of climbing, where they are not asked.»¹⁹⁹ Hence, in the novels, the Anglo-Americans are the culprits of the Second War, alike mad tamers who has released wild beasts on the world.

B- The enemies on the battlefield: the Nazi, the Japanese, and Guomindang warriors

First of all, both writers clearly distinguish between the Nazi government and the German people what echoes Stalin's own position: “It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people, the German State. The experience tells us that Hitlers come and go whereas the German people and the German rule remain.”²⁰⁰ (P., 569) Ehrenburg also argues that the German people is not an enemy showing the friendly talk between artist André Michaux and the German ichthyologist Erich Nieburg from Lubeck. The latter appears as a polite and sensitive person: “bright naive eyes, short-cropped mustache, starched collar” (FP, 78). When the war begins, André remembers him and feels sad about seeing him as an enemy (FP., 346). At the very end of the book, Erich appears anew, but this time in the military outfit: then André does not welcome him as a friend any more (FP., 540). Ehrenburg insists on the degradation of the German people by Nazism: a former anthropologist Keller and a

¹⁹⁹ N. Zhdanov, *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ Yossif Stalin *O Velikoi otechestvennoy Voine Sovetskogo Soyuza* (Moscow: 5th edition, 1950), p. 46.

former architect Richter, two members of the German intelligentsia, radically changed when they became soldiers of the Nazi army: they show cowardice, fear for their career and are concerned only about their personal advantage. They happen to kill a peaceful Soviet citizen. As Belaya insists, “these characters play an extraordinarily important role in the philosophical conception of the novel.”²⁰¹

The main enemy, in the eyes of both Soviet writers, is naturally the Hitlerite Germany. For the *Fall of Paris*, critic B. Pesis underlines “ the significance of the novel in the struggle of all freedom-loving peoples with a common enemy-Hitler's barbarism ». ²⁰² There seem to be two main puppeteers behind Hitler: “ The title of Reich Chancellor did not save him from the position of a lackey in the true masters of Germany. At the same time, he fell into the difficult position of lackey of two gentlemen - the Junker-General's Camarilla and industrial banking capital. » (I., 106)

The Leipzig trial set by the Nazis to accuse the communists of the Reichstag fire is compared by Dimitrov to the Inquisition condemning Galileo (I., 73). Unlike the communists like Thälmann or Dimitrov, with their unbreakable devotion, enemies often experience a renouncement, showing the lack of braveness and spuriousness. Krone feels that he is losing his faith in the Nazi regime: “you need to pull yourself together, otherwise he will stop believing himself » (I., 769). They are also materialist like Göring who admires Vandengheim's swimming pool (I., 263) or general Schverer's admission (“because of our interest in the trophies », P., 720). Nazi officers are obnoxious: « Germans marched along the street. The smart lieutenant looked condescendingly at the rare passers-by » (FP., 496); they consider the refugees' lives as a «detail» (FP. 524).

²⁰¹ G. Belaya, Commentaries to Burya, Ibid. p. 771.

²⁰² B. Pesis, Ibid.

The main feature of the Nazis, the Japanese, and the American militaries is their cruelty: the SA commander Ernst Röhm proudly says that his barracks “smell blood” (I., 78), the author stresses “Hitler’s cruelty” (I., 137); during the process against German communists, we find “the investigator torturer Focht” (I., 63) and the cruel treatment of Thälmann make of him a Christian martyr: “he will be forced to fully understand what it means to be buried alive! I’ll break it! <...> The Telman trial lasted forty-seven days. Forty-seven days - in a stone hole, where there was nothing but a cot and a sink where it was impossible to stand up, as the arch hung overhead at a height of one and a half meters; In the hole, inaccessible to the slightest sound, since even the jailers in the corridor walked on felt soles; In a hole devoid of all light, even artificial. » (I., 36, 127) This cruelty is also applied during the interrogatory of Lemke, a communist who prevented the terrorist attack aimed to legitimize the German invasion of Czechoslovakia (I., 766). The reader also discovers the sadistic execution of the plotters against Hitler on April, 20th, 1944 (P., 530). Along with cruelty, the Nazis are characterized by their bloodthirstiness: « In the blood spilled by these people <...>, it would be possible to sink Berlin” (I., 43); «tanks moved again. Fabre cried out: the tanks crushed the wounded: "Bastards!" Animals!! » (FP., 442); the French refugees evoke German soldiers as «wild animals (FP., 460) <...> entering in a Paris restaurant, painter André is struck by the German soldiers’ voracity: “Behind all tables sat the Germans. They ate greedily, quickly absorbed huge dishes » (FP., 478). German soldiers in Paris are described like ogres (FP., 508), deprived of humanity (“Michaud, are they people?” FP., 535 <...> The Germans are the rats, FP., 523).

Moreover, the Nazi have in common with the Japanese army that both of them invest much into germ warfare: « Schweber was angry at all and all. He was angry with Goering, who was bothered with bacteriology. This, of course, is an extremely interesting and useful matter, but Schweerer was afraid that it would just as well remain as war gases. After all, they

were never fully used in the past war. <...> Schwerer's dislike also spread to General Nakamura, who dragged him into a detailed study of the issue of the bacteriological weapons of the Japanese. Schwerer seemed inadequate to what he had seen at the test site, where the porcelain bombs invented by Dr. Ishii had recently been flown from aircraft, in people tied to iron pillars. Bombs were filled with plague-infected fleas. » (P., 199).

In *Plotters*, the reader gets to know about the surgeon General Shirō Ishii (1892 -1959), a Japanese army medical officer, microbiologist specialized in biological warfare (P., 53, 583). He was invited by the Americans to purchase his research at Fort Detrick (P., 504, 583), the center of the US biological weapons program from 1943 to 1969. The presentation of the Americans as the sorcerer's apprentice, working on the weapons of mass destruction, reminds one of *Silver Dust* (1953), a film directed by Abram Room based on August Jakobson's play *Jackals* (1951). In the movie the Americans are also charged with racism; they conduct experiments on Afro-American people. Apart from germ warfare, the Japanese soldiers blindly commit destructions: « the Japanese destroyed the peaceful villages with such bitterness, as if they were fortified forts of the enemy » (P., 179). The character of the merciless spy Harada is threatening enough with his "big yellow teeth" (P., 399); he holds the bacteriologic vials meant to poison Mongol rivers (P., 418). He perpetrates an act of profanation when he uses the holy image of Buddha to hide an American radio device (P., 499). In China, Guomintang spies cut a 14-year-old-girl's hands and hang her by her feet (P., 590, 616); the torture of a 12-year-old girl, a communist messenger, by a Japanese doctor and an American spy is particularly unbearable (P., 654).

This cruelty is rooted in hatred: the Nazi educator teaches his pupils hatred for France: — You understand me: we are not afraid! We despise and hate. He looked at the guys. "Do we despise him?" - We despise! - the students answered in chorus. - Hating! Hate! Hate! (I., 100). The Nazi perform sadist games, like Josef Belz, a Luftwaffe officer, who invites Egon

Schverer to shoot a lieutenant in the dark: "At the disposal of the captain three minutes and three shots. During this time, the lieutenant is obliged three times to give the light of his flashlight. » (I., 577). All this takes part in a morbid atmosphere, where the Nazis appear as ghosts: "Otto would have sworn that he was in front of him a corpse." A corpse or a ghost. The Gestapo's face was deadly pale ... The Gestapo hung up and stared at Otto with pale, expressionless, and, it seemed, not even seeing eyes. (I., 123) Some of them even have scars which looking as the "devil's marks." Josef Belz, " A fat man with a red and swollen face like a copper pot, cut by a deep scar on his right cheekbone (I., 74) < ... > New Gestapo, - again two, - appeared in the waiting room and sat in armchairs on the other side of the table. One of them had a scar on his left cheek in the form of two crescents, converging ends. Otto determined the mark of the bite of a man <...> Brigadenfuhrer smiled, and the scar on his cheek formed into an ugly hieroglyph (I., 176, 182).

Naturally, Hitler epitomizes Nazi insanity and monstrosity: often shown as a hysteric (screamer <...> a man with a crumpled face pop crocheted » (I., 249)), he also appears as a creature deprived of all the human. Shpanov portrays his unexpressive eyes, traditionally deemed as "the mirror of the soul": "blank view (I., 484) <...> Gauss began to seem that the Fuhrer did not see either Ribbentrop or the others "(I., 560) <...> Hitler, with bloodshot eyes, looked around at those present (I., 627). In contrast with Hitler, the American-Nazi Krone is afraid of « the mysterious depth of Czech eyes » (I., 646). The author also dwells on Thälmann's eyes: « This is his eyes - the old, intelligent, burning with unquenchable fire courage eyes Ernst Thalmann. » (I., 770) Hitler looks like an inanimate dummy: « ragged rag doll » (P., 542) His smile betrays his cruelty: "A smile appeared on Hitler's face." (I., 136). The Nazis are the most dangerous enemies of peace and civilization: — "I will lead the war!" <...> The war is me! (I., 140) <...> "Well, yes, we are barbarians! We want to be barbarians ... This is an honor! "(I., 138) - Hitler. Humanism, culture,

international law - all empty words <...> - Himmler. Humanity can be managed only by applying fear "(P. 246)

The novels insist on the threat of German militarism: Розенберг: " The German nation cannot abandon national imperialism. He is her life law. " (P., 247); General Schverer shows the benefits of a "profitable war" (P., 716). In addition to the Nazi generals, the reader is introduced to the German economic elites who have much in common with the characters of *Secret Mission*: banker Henry Schreiber, director of the Reichsbank Dr. Yalmar Schaht (I., 21); "A magnate from the Ruhr came to Paris, Baron von Thiessen <...> Joliot coquettishly bent his head, smiled, began to talk about freedom, about the brotherhood of nations. Von Thiessen said: Excuse me, I'm busy." (FP., 398).

C- The Anglo-Americans' Allies: the Vatican and the Trotskyites

The Vatican is presented by Shpanov as an American agent: « The course of the ark of the Roman church is run by radio from Washington. » (P., 742) <...> Americans enter into intimate relations with the holy throne » (I., 472) The Pope's escort consists of American military policemen (P., 744). When French minister Barthou is murdered, the explanation necessarily comes from a world plot: "the turn of the German machine gun, directed by the hand of the Ustash mercenary, the Italian Italian bought for the American dollars, who came through the box office of the papal bank of the holy spirit" (I., 284).

As a genuine enemy, the Vatican's goal is to destroy the Soviet Union: « the turn of the German machine gun, directed by the hand of the Ustash mercenary, the Italian Italian bought for the American dollars, who came through the box office of the papal bank of the holy spirit." (P., 109) Further, Cardinal Pacelli argues : The papal "fullness of power" and infallibility were invented for presenting the entire aggressive policy of the Vatican as a saint.

We command to fight against the Communists with the same ruthlessness with which the Holy Inquisition conducted it against heretics in the Middle Ages (P., 118) <...> Pius XII, preparing nails to crucify two hundred million Soviet people. "(P., 243) (P., 243) <...> "Again, like ten, twenty and thirty years ago, the obsession of the capitalists about a" crusade "against the Soviet Union arose ... Just like thirty, as twenty and as ten years ago, the" holy father "from Rome," the viceroy Christ on earth, "sent down his apostolic blessing to the initiators of this delirious "campaign". » (P., 742) » The prelates are characterized by their disdain for human lives ; Andrey Sheptytsky, the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from 1901 until 1944, suggests: « Ukrainian nationalism must prepare for the fight against communism by all means, not excluding mass physical destruction, even if millions of people must fall victim to it » (P., 163).

Apart from the Americans, Shpanov novels relate an alliance between Hitler and the Pope: « both sides fulfilled the treaty: the pope expelled the German Catholics from the Hitlerite Reichstag, and Hitler signed a concordat with him (I., 318)... And soon they will see a new combination: the dollar and the cross" (I., 472) Cardinal Pacelli, the future Pius XII, declares: « Germany should be a sword of the Catholic Church (P., 120) <...> It was necessary to finish building the building of the fascist-Catholic empire of the world, the foundation of which [I] himself laid under Pius XI. » (P., 162)

For churchmen, the taste for materialism and profanation is much more unexpected and inappropriate than for the Nazis. Looking at the wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, pro-Nazi priest August Gauss happily exclaims: "Two hundred thousand worshipers a year." At least twenty million francs in income. Augustus gave a crooked grin. "And you doubted the power of the church!" » (P., 107). The Pope himself is said to like comfort and wealth "Pius used an electric razor. Dad loved this device. He carefully monitored that the new models of

electric razors appearing on the market did not escape him. "(P., 161)" Dads need money, a lot of money. Everything is good - dollars and lira, francs, stamps and pesetas." (P.,114)

Along with the Vatican, the Trotskyites are considered as anti-Soviet agents at the service of foreign interests. Nazi general Alexander clarifies their role: « The Trotskyists are disintegrating the ranks of the French revolutionaries; The Trotskyists are excellent in Spain, where so many of our interests are concentrated. "You have the right to consider every Trotskyite as your man." <...> Look at the activities of the Trotskyists everywhere they are: in politics they perform only the functions assigned to them by foreign intelligence services. (I., 348) <...> We need to make some theoretical intervention in the affairs of the Trotskyists. It is necessary to revive the Bukharin thesis about the peaceful growth of capitalism into socialism. If this can not be done in the Soviet press, we use the foreign language - in all languages.» (I., 351). Later General Alexander's thesis is confirmed : The French Trotskyists have already rendered invaluable services to intelligence services to various countries, and especially to the USSR (I., 360) » Undoubtedly, the Trotskyites' ultimate goal is to weaken and eventually to destroy the Soviet Union : « Seeger, expelled from the Communist Party for Trotskyism and returned to the Social Democrats, was now making efforts to establish contact with the Trotskyites who were engaged in underground subversive work in the Soviet Union. <...> Renegades, who were paid secret agents of German military intelligence, received from their owners a new set-up: to try to brake the rapid movement of the Soviet country along the path of economic development (I., 241). »

D- The Anglo-Americans' Allies: European elites, the opportunistic enemy

From the Soviet point of view, European elites have betrayed their people and collaborate with the Nazi and the Anglo-Americans so they could preserve their private interests: wealth, electoral mandate, social status, and so on. The novels show the French, German, and some of the East-European elites. Most of them relate to the social-democrat camp. The communist see them as the traitors: ““Every German must be clear the mean role of traitors to the working class of Germany, the traitors of the whole German people, who sold his freedom and prosperity first to the bourgeoisie, and then to fascism." I speak about all sorts of shademannas, swords, socks, zveringas and other filth that for masking continues to be covered by the name of Social Democracy "(I., 49) <...> Social-democratic bonzes will once again, like many times before, betray the interests of the worker class and the German people as a whole; it is necessary to reckon with the fact that these corrupt souls will again change <...> the hereditary and consistent renegades <...> detachment of scoundrels "(I., 252) <...> The life of the German people, which the Anglo-Americans and the sellers they are the soul and body of the social democratic leaders from the gang of Schumacher and the company. "(P., 726) <...> We here understand quite well where Schumacher-Thyssen-Schmitz's triumvirate leads Germany. "The Germans for the Elbe" do not want to be slaves neither the Yankees nor their domestic servants. » (P., 728) Clara Zetkin compares the German government with the evil: «...To raise charges against the government before the Supreme Court is tantamount to complaining to the devil for the devil. » (I., 203)

Viner, a fabricant of weapons and an art collector, belongs to this opportunistic elites. He supports Nazism and takes advantage of the pogroms to despoil the Jewish Germans. Gain's physical shape speaks for itself: « The loose yellow face of the manufacturer presented himself to him with such a vivid expression of the idea of profit, which in every fold of a greasy face, in every hair of his beard, in every movement of his yellow fingers and greedily squinting eyes » (I., 225) On the other side of the ocean, Allen Dulles mentions Vandengheim

in a list of «Balkan people» who collaborate with the US : "They were not Hungarian, or Yugoslav, or Bulgarian ministers, industrialists, or any political intriguers" (P., 692).

French elites are not more virtuous than the German ones: "In fact, the Third Republic was ruled by adventurers and embezzlers. (I., 265), political sharers (I., 266), "Munich sellers."(I., 749); "France was ruled by insignificant people" (FP., 71). On President Lebrun : « is the most whiny president of the Third Republic. But in general, he keeps decently ... - That is? .. - I say that Lebrun does what he needs - he does absolutely nothing, except that he cries. » (FP., 455). According to Lezhnev, Ehrenburg points with accuracy to the cause of the French defeat: «By joint efforts of the fascists, bourgeois radicals, socialists, the elite prepared the defeat of France. They are all moved by the fear of the revolution <...> The combination in one image of the features taken from several characters is not a deviation from the historical truth, but the approach to it.»²⁰³ For example, the character of Paul Tessa can be associated with several historical figures: Paul Marchandea (1882-1968), or many other ministers of the 1930s. A typical careerist, he is obsessed with his reputation and neglects his relatives losing them one after another: his wife falls ill then passes away; his daughter Denise becomes a communist, his son Lucien joins the fascists before he fell at war.

It is interesting to compare the treasons of Lucien Tessa against his father (he steals working documents for the fascists) in the *Fall of Paris* and the one of Otto Schverer, who is ready to put a bomb in the hotel where the delegation lives including his own father, general Konrad Von Schverer (I., 669); then the youngest brother Ernst is ready to abduct his elder brother Egon for the Americans who want to learn his technical discovery (P., 702). So the enemy behaves as a traitor, and even the closest kin relations cannot change his determination. When he loses his wife, Tessa's main worry is, again, about his political future: "Amalie

²⁰³ I. Lezhnev, Ibid.

communicated before death, but Tessa ordered that the funeral be civil - why irritate the left? » (FP., 312). When German army invades France, his only thought is to organize the government's escape from Paris (FP., p.463).

The journalists are strongly criticized by Ehrenburg through the character of Joliot, the head of the newspapers *La Voix Nouvelle*. Like a courtier “which does not understand what [he] writes (FP., 338), the latter is sold to the politicians of France and abroad; “Joliot settled: "La Voix Nouvelle" began to leave in Paris. From Vichy came the Franks, from the Germans Joliot received Marks..”(FP., 522) This description of European press reminds of Ehrenburg's article “High heels and low souls. Against one big sold newspapers,”²⁰⁴ where he criticizes the anti-Soviet tendencies in Western press.

As literary critic Lukin remarks,²⁰⁵ enemies in Ehrenburg's novels are “the ones who betrayed France, the people of Petain and De Gaulle <...> who denounce the Red threat to hide their hatred of the workers »: “You are now afraid not of the Germans, but of the workers.” (T., 633), says the communist Josette to the notary officer Legland. But this blame is also directed toward the Pétainist and factory owner Maurice Lancier, poet Nivelles, and manufacturers Berthy, Pinault, Roy who serve as German agents; « Страна The country was given to the mercy of the enemy » (FP., 440). In the *Fall of Paris*, the manufacturer Montigny's wife who is concerned about her domestic comfort much more than about the war: “It's Tuesday, an awful day!" No meat, no confectionery, no liqueurs.” (FP. 404)

The military elites (generals Breitel, Grandel, Lerideau in the *Fall of Paris*, generals Gamelin, Legasnier, and Major Henri in *Incendiaries*) are all pro-fascist (FP., « Hitler's spies in power” 454, see also 127, 154, 272, 357; I., 716). They are cowards (FP., 429) and despise their soldiers (FP., 377, 401). Belaya stresses this as follows: “betrayal, like rust, roused the

²⁰⁴ « High heels and low souls” (Vysokie kabluki i nizkie dushi), *Pravda*, June 25th, 1947.

²⁰⁵ Y. Lukin, *Ibid.*

soul of the people <...> they are all victims of the policy that, under the mask of appeasement, led France to war.”²⁰⁶

For sure, after the war the Peace movement was triumphing all over the world. Stalin could not ignore the tremendous sufferings of the Soviet people caused by the conflict. So putting as usual official literature at the service of the state myth (Clark), he has promoted the narrative of the Soviet Union as the leader of the pacifist camp. Hence, the main herald of Socialist Realism Ehrenburg was also a fighter for peace in the international arena. For this reason, it is not surprising that one can find in his novels – as in Shpanov’s ones – the enemies as the responsible for the war. Active or passive culprits, warmongers (like the capitalist magnates, the Nazis and the Japanese) or opportunist accomplices (like the European elites and the Vatican), the faces of the enemy mirror Stalin’s fears of the alleged Western conspiracy²⁰⁷ against the fatherland of Communism and justify Soviet expansionism in Eastern – but also Western – Europe. The next chapter deals precisely with the manoeuvres of the Soviet Union to “roll out” and to expand its influence in Italy and Yugoslavia.

²⁰⁶ Galina Belaya, “Ilya Ehrenburg (70th anniversary),” Ibid.

²⁰⁷ A typical example of this Soviet myth is the film *Conspiracy of the Doomed* (1950), director Mikhail Kalatozov. This movie will be mentioned in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Case studies: The Enemy inside the Communist Movement: Storm over Rome (Dmitri Eriomin) and The Yugoslav Tragedy (Orest Maltsev)

1- Presentation

In 1948, Italy and Yugoslavia were on the front line of the Cold War. The Italian elections (eventually won by the Christian Democratic party over the left-wing coalition) and the Stalin-Tito split were two setbacks for the Communist camp. It was an unacceptable challenge to Moscow, since Rome and Belgrade were the main centers of communist movement across Europe. In order to safeguard the consistency of Soviet narrative concerning the superiority of communist model and the infallibility of Stalin, it was necessary to show that the enemy won those battles by unfair means. Time and again, Socialist Realist writers have been performing a mythical function (Clark) and supplying new characters, tropes and clichés to strengthen the Stalinist ideology.

Storm over Rome

The story of *Storm over Rome* cannot be understood without having an idea of the Italian gamble and its huge symbolic importance in the early Cold War. Owing to the decisive contribution of the Soviet Union to the victory over Nazism, the Communist parties have gained a significant popularity in the post-war Western Europe. In autumn 1947, all the attention of the Cold Warriors is drawn by the upcoming parliamentary elections in Italy in the next April. Nothing less than the fate of the whole Europe, and therefore of the Cold War, is at stake. In September 1947 President Truman declares: “Should anything happen that Italy would go and the Yugoslavs [sic] should move in, France would go, and we have the Iron

Curtain at the Atlantic Ocean. There would be nothing for us to do then but move out completely and prepare for war. That we don't want to do."²⁰⁸ Kennan, the director of the Policy Planning Staff (the State Department's internal think tank) goes as far as to propose to outlaw the Italian Communist Party and to support the direct military intervention in Italy in case of ensuing civil war: "this would admittedly result in much violence and probably a military division of Italy <...> but it might well be preferable to a bloodless election victory, unopposed by ourselves, which would give the Communists the entire peninsula at one coup and send waves of panic to all surrounding areas."²⁰⁹ Truman does not follow Kennan's plan but summons James Forrestal, the first secretary of Defence, to conduct "covert psychological operations designed to counteract Soviet and Soviet inspired activities <...> which are designed to discredit the United States in its endeavours to world peace and security". These measures eventually lead to the victory of the Christian Democrats over the Communists.²¹⁰

Such is the real political background of *Storm over Rome* (1951) by Eriomin (1904-1993), a former teacher of literature who became an active member of the Soviet Writers' Union (1935), then the secretary of its Moscow section (1962). In 1966, his inflammatory article triggers the campaign against the writers Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel. Eriomin is also a script writer. The story of *Storm over Rome* begins in the Vatican: "His Holiness was old, sick, and immensely rich. Another time he would neglect the present and the ceremonies that follow <...> But this present was a sign of President of the United States' special attention

²⁰⁸ "The President's Special Conference with Editors of Business and Trade Papers," September 30, 1947, in Truman, *Public Papers*, vol. 3, 450, quoted in Elizabeth E. Spalding, *The First Cold Warrior. Harry Truman, Containment and the Remaking of Liberal Internationalism* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006), p. 94.

²⁰⁹ Kennan, "Presentation to Selected Leaders of Industry," Jan. 14, 1948, lecture, Box 17, Kennan Papers, Mudd Library; FRUS 1948, 3:848-49. Quoted in Walter L. Hixson, *George Kennan...* Ibid. p.75.

²¹⁰ State Department Memorandum, "Coordination of Foreign information Measures (NSC4), Psychological Operations (NSC4-A), both dated December 17, 1947, in *FRUS: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, pp. 646-651. Quoted in John L. Gaddis, *George F. Kennan, an American Life* (London: The Penguin Press, 2011), p. 183. See also Frances S. Saunders *Who paid the piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 2000), p. 38.

after the recent trip of the American archbishop Spelman to Rome where he discussed the questions of the common struggle of the White House and Vatican against ‘the growing threat of communism’.”²¹¹ So is the setting.

Storm over Rome is a book about the alliance between Washington and the Vatican, together with the Italian politicians and economic leaders, who push the country towards the capitalist hell. Except Rome, the reader discovers San Carmelino (near Milan) and Mirando (in the Southern region of Naples) and can see the epic struggle for survival of the workers and the peasants. Needless to say, the local communist politicians protect the oppressed; their leader, Serafino Visconti, is even sacrificed for the Cause when his life is taken by a shooter. In the end, the rebellion of workers and peasants spreads over the whole country: “Gendarmes were shooting on poor people not only in San Carmelino or Mirando but also in Modena, San Salvatore, Rome, and everywhere where hunger and grief took on the great wrath. Therefore the storm was not calming down <...> The voices of Matteo Chiketti, Luigi Visconti [Serafino’s son] <...> and thousands of other people wafting from the roar of this storm stronger and stronger <...> But everyone who took this path knew that victory awaits him. Like dawn, it can’t be cancelled nor suffocated.” (p. 330-331)

In 1952 Eriomin is awarded the Stalin Prize for literature (third grade). One participant of the Prize Committee recalls that Stalin, who has usually read himself the competing works, said about *Storm over Rome* to his literary board: “Everybody chooses the same topic. Here we have a new topic. I learnt that this man stayed in Italy for a while as a script-writer, he writes about the revolutionary climate there. This book is not flawless however it will be read with interest by our citizens. It will play a positive role.”²¹² Still the question of the genuine

²¹¹ *Storm over Rome* (Moscow: Soviet Writer Publishing, 1953), p. 3. Next quotes will be mentioned in the brackets.

²¹² Konstantin Simonov, *From the Eyes of my Generation. Thoughts about J.V. Stalin*. (Moscow: News Press Agency Publishing – APN, 1988), March 23, 1979.

reason of this decision can be raised. More than the originality of the topic, it seems that its very narrative corresponds to the actual political pattern: in 1949, the play *The Conspiracy of the Doomed* written by Nicolay Virta is awarded the Stalin Prize (first grade). Although the action takes place in “one of the East European countries liberated by the Soviets”, the plot is exactly the same as in Eriomin’s book. In 1951, the film by Mikhail Kalatozov, based on the play, is also awarded the Stalin Prize. We have to bear in mind that from 1948 this “Italian conspiracy climate” hangs over the Kremlin. It may be linked with the struggle for influence carried out by the superpowers behind the scenes of the elections in Europe and with the American programs of covert actions that Stalin must have been informed of. Concerning the “positive role,” it is not obvious but if the function of the novel is to enhance the reader’s political consciousness in Schmitt’s sense, there is no doubt that the importance of the enemy in Eriomin’s story, his polymorphic and precise features do their job.

However, not all literary critics shared the enthusiasm expressed in high offices. In January 1951, *Zvezda* asks the members of its editorial board about their opinion on the book.²¹³ A scriptwriter Boris Chirskov stresses that the Italian issue is “topical” and “politically significant,” he is pleased to find the description of the Italian social struggles in the novel; he also praises “everyday specificity (*bytovaia konkretnost*)” of human fates, especially the characters of peasants or workers.” To him, the key role of American imperialism is well shown at the beginning, but he regrets that this theme is not elaborated afterwards. Although he considers that some descriptions evoke verbatim reports and that “the author should resort to an expert in international relations,” Chirskov concludes that the topic is “necessary to the highest degree to Soviet literature.” His colleague, a poet Alexander Prokofiev shares Chirskov’s views on the “seriousness” and “importance” of the book in spite of the facts that “some positive heroes present physical defects.” However, he assures,

²¹³Reviews of Boris.F. Chirskov and Alexander.A. Prokofiev, January, 21 and 28, 1951. RGALI 3149/ 1/ 571/ 2-4.

“*Zvezda* cannot miss out this novel. Work with the author must begin as soon as possible.”

Ten months later, the journal publishes *Storm over Rome*.

The opinions of the critic V. Potapova and the translator Nikolai Liubimov are much colder.²¹⁴ Not denying that Italy is in the news, Potapova sees the book as the illustration of “how one must not treat this topic.” She puts forward three accusatory points: first, the book presents the Italian communists as “chaotic mass” (*stikhiinaia massa*) denying the organisational role of the Party and Palmiro Togliatti in particular whose strategy was to create a wide coalition and come to power on a constitutional basis; “Eriomin suggests that the Bolsheviks finance the war <...> he presents the communists in the same way than Americans do, like anarchists preparing putsches <...> the author should have assumed that his production might be read by the enemy.” Second, the book shows the joint actions of communists and socialists, whereas socialists are deemed by Moscow as traitors bankrolled by the US. Finally, the author “does not establish the link between the workers’ struggle and the movement for peace.” In sum, “the book shows the evident ignorance of the situation in Europe and can provoke very damaging consequences.” Liubimov keeps in mind the permanent threat, noticing that “our enemies would be glad to find here inconsistencies.” He points to a number of geographical and cultural mistakes such as Venice is not crowded in August or in Italy “it is impossible to drink red wine with fish. It is the same as drinking vodka with the marshmallows.” In the RGALI folder, containing criticism on the novel, there is a short note added to Liubimov’s letter (dated of July 1952) to *Zvezda*: “Following this declaration, Eriomin’s novel – which had already been sent to print – was removed; neither a single translation came out.”

The lightning success of such books – before they fall into oblivion – shows once again the importance of the agenda in their publishing policy: as any “propaganda bullet,” their

²¹⁴ RGALI: respectively 634/3/165/275-285 (February 19th, 1952) and 1447/1/5 (July 27th, 1952).

function is to target the public with a brief and powerful signal at the right moment. It allows to focus its attention on a particular question and to drive society in accordance with the politics of the regime. The possible debates on historical accuracy or the omission/ excess of certain ideological arguments do not matter so much. In the *Storm*'s case, one can assume that Liubimov's letter played a minor role in the removal of the book comparing to the following circumstances. First, in August 1952, after the Treaty instituting the European Defence Community (May 27th) including Italy, it is clear that the European integration is an effective process, so Rome is lost for the communist camp; second, the D tente is close and the Soviet regime prefers to avoid provocations. Besides, as soon as in January 1953, the propaganda apparatus is reorganized in such a way as to curb anti-American criticism. It is interesting to note that both of these 'shooting star novels' fall within the same ideological sequence: they appear at the end of 1951, receive the 1952 Stalin Prize, and vanish from libraries and bookshops within a six-month interval.

The Yugoslav Tragedy

During the early Cold War period the Soviet writers often resort to the perception of the enemy in order to create the image of a common communist house. After the Stalin-Tito split in 1948, Yugoslav President Joseph Tito turned out to be an excellent choice.

After the war, the Red Army takes Eastern Europe and the Soviet Empire acquires the new borders and new critical mass. The foundation of the *Cominform*, the economic and ideological tightening the screws are welcomed by the majority of the communists in the Eastern Europe. Tito's Yugoslavia, however, a "national communist" state, is a black sheep. When the Yugoslav peasants joined the Communist Party during the war, they were rather urged by the defence of their motherhood than by the Marxist-Leninist ideology. At this time there were frequent conflicts between Tito, asking for help to struggle not only with the

Germans but also with his domestic rivals, and Stalin who has not considered the Yugoslav front as a major one since the Red army was called on other fronts. Thus the role of the Yugoslav communists in their own national liberation deprives Moscow of the legitimacy to impose on them its undivided authority after the war. The conflict takes its dramatic turn especially after three incidents.

First, despite the fact that Yugoslavia follows the economic Soviet model, Tito's regime is not willing to make the reforms on behalf of the Soviet Union and rejects Stalin's attempts to transform the country into the Soviet satellite as well as he refused the Marshall Plan aid. Second, Tito begins to claim to be the leader of the Communist countries in the Eastern Europe. During the liberation of Trieste by his army, he affirms his regional leadership by demanding Istria, Zara, and Fiume to be "given back" to Yugoslavia. Stalin, unwilling to hurt the Italian communists, does not support Tito. Later, Tito goes as far as to propose a Balkan federation. Third, Tito's active support of the Greek rebels against the British influence irritates Stalin wishing to avoid at any cost a conflict with his Western allies. In February 1948, Stalin calls Tito in Moscow but the latter declines the invitation, alleging illness. Consequently, Stalin displays the economic sanctions against Yugoslavia and the leaders start exchanging letters in which Stalin blames Tito for violation of the Communist dogma, for being a Trotskyite, and for his lack of democracy. As to Tito, he defends his vision of a "national communism."

Since the summer of 1948 until Stalin's death, a pitiless anti-Yugoslav campaign is launched across Soviet political authorities and media. To understand all its intensity one has to keep in mind that, like Berlin, Yugoslavia is a frontline of the cultural war. Tito's separate road to socialism challenges dramatically the communist dogma and Stalin's project to integrate Eastern Europe in one monolithic bloc. For the Soviet leaders moving backward would mean a bandwagon effect and could eventually lead to the collapse of the Soviet bloc

as a whole. In June 1948 Stalin expels Yugoslavia from the *Cominform* and urges the “loyal Yugoslav” to get rid of the “Tito clique,” however acting that way he only strengthens the Yugoslav unity against its adversary. During the year of the economic blockade (1949-1952) Tito turns to America for help and lets his country enjoy a certain degree of decentralization as well as free market economy. Later, in November 1951, President Truman asks Congress to provide military and economic aid to communist Yugoslavia. Under the accusations of “homeless cosmopolitanism” and “national nihilism”, Titoism is declared treason. From the autumn of 1949, a big purge is launched in the communist parties throughout the Eastern Europe and even in the Soviet society itself: certain politicians and writers are accused of subversive actions and of collaboration with Marshal Tito and the Western intelligence services. In November 1949, the *Cominform* enforces the resolution “The Yugoslav Communist Party in the hands of murderers and spies.” Even sport becomes a part of the game: at 1952 Helsinki Olympics the Soviet football team is defeated by the Yugoslav. What follows is that the inglorious team is broken up, the coach and some players are taken back their previous awards for having “undermined the prestige of Soviet sport and Soviet state.” Records of the Ministry of State Security testify to Stalin’s plan to murder Tito (spraying bacteria of pneumonic plague!)²¹⁵, but his death in 1953 left this plan unrealized.

The author of our case study, Orest Maltsev (1906-1972), was born in the region of Kursk. In 1920 he is a volunteer in the Red army. After he earned diploma in literature, Maltsev works for the newspapers *Krasnaya Zvezda* and *Na strazhe*. As a war correspondent he accompanies the Soviet troops moving from the North Caucasus until Belgrade, Budapest, and Vienna and takes part in the liberation of Western Ukraine.

²¹⁵ Mikhail Dubiniansky “Iosif vs. Iosip. 60 let nazad v SSSR startovala the anti-Yugoslav Campania” in *Gazeta ZN,UA*. 2008. September 5. http://gazeta.zn.ua/SOCIETY/iosif_vs_iosip__60_let_nazad_v_sssr_startovala_antiyugoslavskaya_kampaniya.html

An opportunistic mind, as early as 1948, Maltsev seizes the Stalin-Tito split to begin a new novel following the Party line tenets. Three years later *The Yugoslav Tragedy* comes out. The plot is Socialist Realistically simplistic: the struggle of the Yugoslav resistance fighters against Hitler from the point of view of the lieutenant of the Red Army Zagorianov, a war prisoner who joined them. Due to the confrontation between Stalin and Tito, Moscow urgently needed to denigrate the importance of the action of the Yugoslav communists in their own liberation in order to establish its own authority. No wonder that the description of the fighters is unkind and even grotesque.

The Yugoslavs, Tito in particular, are reproached for their nationalism which indirectly follows "the old plan of Hitler and Mussolini for the Balkans: to gather them as a colonial possession and turn into a huge military bastion to launch attacks on the European countries. The Balkan Slavs, as well as the Greeks, the Romanians and Hungarians would be employed as cannon fodder at the disposal of the "Aryan race." Being under the Fascist boot, precisely in these conditions of tension and humiliation, local and even tribal, chauvinism was blooming as never before" (p. 280). In spite of their positive struggle against Hitler, they appear to be his strategic accomplices. Moreover they are described as primitive ("Thank you comrade Stalin for this rifle!") and materialist, hypocrite and opportunistic: "Tito is a secret friend of the members of the Labor Party, but shouts from the rooftops his loyalty to the Soviet Union", p. 222. Naturally, the book is full of American and British spies aimed to make profits of the war.

Due to the acerbic condemnation of the "traitor" in the novel, along with several articles appearing in newspapers, the stalwart of Socialist Realism Maltsev is awarded the Stalin Prize (second grade) in 1952. Half a million copies are sold, the book undergoes more

than ten re-editions, and the author signs a contract for film adaptation.²¹⁶ He becomes rich and enjoys a luxurious dacha in Peredelkino.

A general reception of the book by the critics is positive. The playwright Georgii Mdivani (1905-1981), in his article “History of treason,”²¹⁷ praises the veracity of the novel: “Using historically faithful and documentary means, the book explains that during the World War II Tito was an agent of the Gestapo <...> his action has contributed to remove a big part of the Nazi army from the Balkan and to direct it toward the Soviet Union <...> also the author gives an account on the true love of the Yugoslav resistance fighters for Comrade Stalin. He shows that the former were trapped in a network of treason. The tragedy of the Yugoslav people relies in the fact that at that time they kept believing in Tito’s clique, whereas he had destroyed national heroes and wanted to transform Yugoslavia into a bridgehead of American imperialism.” Besides his ideological approval, Mdivani points to some negligence in the style and regrets that the quantity of pages on the enemy camp prevails on the national theme. Ironically, five years before this criticism, Mdivani has been the scriptwriter of a film by Abram Room entitled *In the Yugoslav Mountains* (1946). The plot deals with... the common struggle of the Red Army with Yugoslav peasants and Tito’s fighters against the Nazi invader. Needless to say, the film was forbidden in the Soviet Union after the Stalin-Tito split. In an interesting manner, it was prohibited in Yugoslavia too during several decades, even after the settlement of the conflict by Khrushchev. A writer Yuri Libedinskii (1898-1959) shares Mdivani’s endorsement, stressing that the novel “answers to the readers’ demand for international events <...> and present the Trotskyite-spy Tito crew and their machinations to seize power.” To put it briefly, the book brings to light “truth, so to speak, from inside” (*pravda, tak skazat, iznutri*).²¹⁸

²¹⁶ The script of the film “Double face” written in 1954-1955 can be found at the RGALI 2453/ op. 3/ 2074-2076.

²¹⁷ Georgii Mdivani, *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 1951. RGALI 631/ 3/ 266/ 306-315.

²¹⁸ Yuri Libedinskii. RGALI 1099/ 2/ 116/ 77-85.

But critics are not unanimous. In their “Remarks on the manuscript of the Yugoslav Tragedy,”²¹⁹ two members of the *Znamia* editorial board I. Medvedev and N. Bondar’ reproach Maltsev for repeating Tito’s arguments when he overestimates the extent of the liberation struggle in Yugoslavia (with a ratio of power of 6 against 1 in favour of the foe); the author fails to mention properly Stalingrad heroes, whose role is limited to create a diversion to draw the Nazis to themselves. The critics underline that, unlike the British policy in Yugoslavia, Maltsev characterizes the American one as “unclear” whereas “it was totally clear.” They also deplore many factual mistakes in the role of the Soviet mission, in translations of Serbian words, names of some villages and dates when certain regions were liberated, in the duties, actions or travels of personalities of that time. Andrich Ratomir adds to the list of grievance many other geographical and tactical mistakes.²²⁰ At the time of his criticism, he is the editor of the newspapers *For a socialist Yugoslavia!* In 1943 he was Major-General Commandant of regiment resistant fighters in South Serbia and recommends the Writers’ Union to organize a meeting between himself and Maltsev to correct certain mistakes that diminish the weight and sharpness of the novel to the Yugoslav reader. To him, the author would be wise to remove the whole first part since it takes place in Eastern Serbia, although resistance fighters’ movements were active in the South of the country. By the way, it is noticeable that Ratomir’s paper dates from July 18, 1952, i.e. four months after the book was awarded the Stalin Prize. Such drastic critic of a work that has just been declared as the benchmark of the Party line testifies that relative amplitude exists in the postwar literary debates. At least, there *is* a debate.

So, in spite of the prestige brought about by the supreme award, the book is roughly criticized by a part of his peers and some of them even “stopped greeting him when they meet

²¹⁹ RGASPI 17/ 137/ 629/ 96-100.

²²⁰ Andrich Ratomir 18/6/1952. RGALI 631/ 20/ 110/ 33-36.

in the street.”²²¹ Logically, some people suspect that with this book Maltsev is a Kremlin’s representative and the rumor even spreads that he resorted to a ghostwriter. The latter would be the war veteran Vladimir Gurvich, the son of Nicholas I. Hourwich (Americanized version), one of the founders of the American Communist Party. On the pretext of parasitism, MVD organized Gurvich’s removal from his job and from his Moscow flat. Then he may have written *The Yugoslav Tragedy* to earn his living.²²² In 1955, when Khrushchev restores diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, the book is withdrawn from all the libraries, the film project is dropped and the courtier Maltsev falls into disgrace and poverty. He becomes a casualty of the versatile Party line.

2- Faces of the Enemy Inside the Communist Movement

It takes a certain time for the propagandists from both sides to shape the faces of “their” Cold War enemy. On the Soviet side, they do not emerge before mid-1948;

Although the antagonism with the US is entrenched since the Zhdanov doctrine, the situation in the post-war world is still unsettled and the Soviet rulers of *agitprop* prefer to focus on *objects and places of discord* rather than targeting directly enemies. Schmitt would probably see here the incapacity to determine the national interests, hence a sign of political immaturity of the Cold War Soviet doctrine. But instead of the deficient strategy and ramshackle propaganda apparatus, there might be another reason behind this approach: cannot we read into the delay in defining the enemy an attempt to find a compromise on these issues before waging a total war?

²²¹ Interview of Evgeny Evtushenko, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, 28/04/1999.

²²² Grigory Svirsky, *Na Lobnom Meste. Literatura npravstvennogo soprotivlenia 1946-1986* (London: Overseas, 1979) (Moscow: KRUK, 1998).

After 1945, attention of the public is driven on the atomic question and on local disputes: Greece, Turkey, and Iran until 1946 (all of these crisis end by the bitter failure for the Soviet side), Germany, and Eastern Europe. From mid-1948, from the Soviet point of view, we have four stable appearances of the enemy. The tightening of the screws on the ideological level creates the character of the cosmopolite (first appearance, mentioned above), but after the end of the Zhdanov purge (started in 1943) and the creation of NATO the cosmopolite tends to slide to the East European satellites to trigger in its turn a purge in the *Kominform*. At the same time the disappearing of the domestic enemy is meant to safeguard the homogeneity of the Soviet structure. The Stalin-Tito split is the very reason of this purge. Tito (second appearance) is considered as a traitor to the communist movement, “a Trotskyite who uses fascist terror against its people.” But the main enemy is without doubt the United States (third appearance, occasionally associated with the English), tainted with neofascism (fourth appearance) during the episode of the Nazi-Soviet Relations (1948), the Korean War and the European Defence Community process (after 1950).

In our study, we will focus upon this sworn enemy of the Soviet Union and its “neofascist metamorphosis.” Then we look into its numerous auxiliaries, through the gallery of “traitors,” “robbers,” and other “sycophants” thronging the high floors of power. Finally, we will try to examine how Soviet power uses the enemy as a bogeyman to build a literary diplomacy. Beyond that, there are also different physical, moral, and psychological features such as fatness, devilish smile, greed, cowardice, dissimulation, hypocrisy, and cynicism as well as deceiving humanism, hatred of the people and bloodthirstiness that are common to all types of foes.

A) The Sworn Enemy

From 1946 to 1950, “it is important to remember that most Soviet films [do] not deal with the conflict directly.” However, with the making of so called Soviet ‘Cold War films,’ “45,6 percent of screen villains [are] American and British, compared with just 13 percent British from 1923 to 1945.”²²³

Needless to say, for a social-realist novel the United States is the “natural enemy.”²²⁴ In 1947-1948 the question of American expansionism in Europe is the first thing the Kremlin is concerned about. On 20 September 1947 the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* publishes a pamphlet by B. Gorbatova entitled “Harry Truman” in which President is compared to the “little Munchen Gefreitor” and his activities radically oppose Roosevelt’s ones.²²⁵ The parallel is an explicit hint to the Nazi Germany’s annexation of the Sudetenland in 1938 meaning of course the American hegemonic appetite. If to put side by side this article and the same fear of the “imperialistic” enemy, articulated by President Truman ten days later, then Sam Keen’s expressions “paranoia à deux” and “prison of mirrors”²²⁶ seem to reflect precisely the relationship between the Cold super-enemies. The Americans are reproached for their diktat to Italy and to its European allies in general: “the monopolists hold the country by its neck” (140). They are compared to an insect (“they caught our poor country as spider the fly”, 28). Considering the Soviet ‘Peace Offensive’ (see above), there is no surprise to find the issue of American imperialism at the core of both novels: Vuchetin, one of the Yugoslav resistance fighters, declares to the hero: “The Balkans is a powder keg.... For sure, it must be so... but no matter! Yours (the Red Army) and we will throw away the powder from the keg” (169)

In Eriomin’s novel, the American ambassador is the very incarnation of the enemy: “squat, cumbersome like an old man, grey-haired with a rich farmer’s fleshy and coarse face,

²²³ Tony Shaw and Denise J. Youngblood, *Cinematic Cold War*, p. 41.

²²⁴ Robert C. Cronin, *Natural Enemies*.

²²⁵ Alexander Fateev, *Representation of the Enemy*, p. 65.

²²⁶ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*, p. 22.

he was on ease in the Vatican palaces like in his own Department of State” (4). His fatness is a sign of inextinguishable greed. Alliance with the Church is especially stressed when the author portrays the ambassador’s secretary: “Before he appeared in a Ministry, Coymans used to make the deal with his Vatican friends.” (19) So, a kind of “hierarchy of evil” is set up here, denouncing the Americans as the super-enemies and using an ineffable chain of command: from the spiritual power, to the political power and media. Eriomin plays with the name of the American President: he changes “Truman” to “Spellman” showing that the man’s power is not in the truth, as he pretends to be, but only in his political spell. The ambassador’s counterparts in Yugoslavia are the American colonel McCarver and the British colonel Maclean. Fitzroy Maclean (1911-1996) was a real soldier, writer, and politician who has abundantly recounted his memories about Marshal Tito.²²⁷

Eriomin compares the United States to criminals (“American gangsters, 28 <...> the American businessmen behave like bandits,” 140), to war incendiaries (28, “the little boats on the military bases begin to give off steam,” 315), and to barbarian mercenaries (“boozes, brawls, robbery, violence, death came with the Anglo-American troops in this unlucky country already torn by fascism,” 53). The capitalists are accused of cynicism (“Truth does not reside in facts but in their interpretation”, says an American expert to the Prime minister, 144). Tellingly, the Communists appear as brave, generous, sympathizing, fair, and pacifist. In order to survive in prison the workers’ thoughts drift towards Moscow and Stalin: “I know,” says one of them, “they fight for us there in freedom.” (249)

B) The Neofascist Ghost

²²⁷ Fitzroy Maclean published (among other books on Tito) *Disputed Barricade: the life and times of Josip Broz-Tito, Marshal of Yugoslavia* (London: Cape, 1957); *The Heretic: the life and times of Josip Broz-Tito* (New York: Harper, 1957); *Tito* (London: MacMillan, 1980). According to the legend, Maclean inspired Ian Fleming for James Bond.

At the time of terrifying “balance of terror,” after the shock of Hiroshima and the new nuclear status of the Soviet Union, one will not be surprised to note that pacifism is the main topic of the literary production, in prose as well in essays and newspapers (see the Soviet ‘Peace offensive’ above). Among other examples, we can mention the creation of the International Stalin Prize for Strengthening Peace Among Peoples on December 21, 1949 by executive order of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In their works the authors try to understand the causes of the previous war and to avoid a new one, perhaps the last one capable to end humanity as such. One temptation is to look for the responsible of the conflict and to turn the yesterday's guilty into today's enemies. The document of the US State Department *The Nazi-Soviet Relations* released in January 1948 and Stalin’s “reply” one month later, *Falsifiers of History*, are attempts to reconsider the war narrative: who made an alliance with Hitler and bears responsibility for the outbreak of the conflict?

This phenomenon, not specific to this time nor to the Soviet Union, may be called the ‘persistence of the enemy’; thus, like strategy is always “a war late,” according to Edward Luttwack,²²⁸ collective memory is always “an enemy late”. It appears nowadays, when at the least tension between the United States and Russia the press runs “a Cold War climate” as the headlines although the Cold War is finished since more than twenty years. It exists already at the turn of the 1950s, when Western diplomats are said to suffer from the “Munich syndrome”²²⁹ being afraid of making disastrous concessions to Stalin. Concerning the Soviet writers of that time, one could say that they suffer from the ‘SS syndrome,’ suspecting that any anticommunist agent has necessarily been trained in Western Germany by former SS officers. But since they can’t deny the reality of the Cold War, their enemies look like hybrids or transitional creatures between the SS soldier and the Cold War spy. After the summer of 1950, the Schumann plan to remilitarize West-Germany and the outbreak of the Korean war

²²⁸ *Strategy. The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987).

²²⁹ John C. Donovan, *The Cold Warriors. A Policy-Making Elite* (Lexington, D.C.: Heath and Company, 1974), p. 2.

contribute to revive the leitmotiv of “American neofascism” among the headlines of Soviet press.

Both novels appear in October 1951, at the climax of the first round of the Cold War: negotiations on the Korean conflict were broken in August; on October 10th American Congress passes the Mutual Security Act and on October 27th the famous issue of journal *Collier's* offers the scaring scenario of a nuclear attack on Moscow. One month later, the article “Boots thirst for revenge”²³⁰ (*Lackstiefel zhazhdut revansha*) elaborates the thesis on the convergence of Nazi and American projects: anticipating German defeat, Himmler would have worked out a plan to safeguard a bulk of officers to conduct the revenge during the Third World War. The US have allegedly supported this plan by rehabilitating Nazi criminals in order to use them against the Soviet Union. *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* and *Pravda* take part in the campaign. From March to May 1952, Soviet diplomats transmit three concerned notes on the rearmament of the *Wehrmacht*.²³¹

In *Storm over Rome*, *carabinieri* sent to crush workers' revolt are systematically associated with SS soldiers: “Enrico Fecci was called to Milan as the main witness of the “rebellion.” Now standing in front of the policemen, he was nervously swinging from one foot to another. The unter-officer was keeping up smoking and nibbling his lips.” (119) Earlier, the reader has learnt that lieutenant Enrico Fecci just arrived from a special mission to Western Germany in the Anglo-American headquarter. “He remember[s] the teachings of his brave Major Master game” (78), a former Gestapo agent, full of nostalgia for “Fuhrer's genius” (79) and vociferating that “emotions are the enemies of order” and urging to “an animal abidance” (79). The “willing minded pupil of the Nazi in an English form” (80) is eager to apply his new skills against the strikers and shoots on one of those who refuse to

²³⁰ Daniil Mel'nikov and Ludmila Chernaia, *Ogoniok* № 47, 18/11/1951, p.23.

²³¹ *Pravda* 1952. 11/3, 11/4, 25/5.

open the door of the factory. In other places of the novel, some public figures are declared to be fascists, such as the landlord Gaudio Cassino, the minister's brother (90). Under the rule of Christian Democrats, former fascist elites do well to the detriment of the peasants (99). Unveiling the ideological nature of the regime, one peasant reveals that a hunter Ruffo Graniani, who was a resistance fighter during the war, now has to hide himself from the police for hiding strikers (122). On the contrary, the communists are always on the side of resistance to the Fascists and the Nazis (96). The Pope himself is said to have befriended Duche, Franco and Hitler (165); Vicar Giovanni sends his pray to the advent of a new Mussolini: "Oh, Lord! Please send to our poor Italy a strong leader again!" (228).

Since Maltsev's novel takes place during the war, Nazis can be barely characterized as "ghosts." However, all the cases of collaboration between Nazis and Tito representatives transform into an embarrassing shade on Tito's regime in 1951. The American representative, Colonel McCarver, gets on with Colonel Von Holtz, the Gestapo head of intelligence service: "The sooner I will get from Von Holtz the list of Gestapo agents in the Army and the Communist Party, the better it will be" (p. 59), he reflects, letting the Throughout the novel, one discovers the legend shrouding Tito's henchman and Minister of Interior Rankovitch. A good but naïve caretaker, Uncle Vuk, tells his nephew Iovan the "official story:" – "That's Rankovitch. A kiddo! Escaped from the Gestapo! They shut down everyone who was with him. And he pretended to be ill, was placed in the hospital by the Germans and bugged out of there. What an artful dodger! Vuk's finger started twisting before his nose again. - That's a heluva dodger!... he would hack the fly !" (95) Later Rankovich's golden legend is dissipated by Colonel McCarver: "from my conversation with Von Holtz I got to know precisely: Rankovich escape from the Belgrade prison hospital in the summer 1941, where he was transferred for medical reasons, was organized by the Gestapo." (221)

The narrator Nikolai Ustrialov himself is amazed at hearing Iovann's words: "How is it possible for a high Party official like Tito, at the peak of the struggle with the occupier, to live overtly in Belgrade in the house of Ribnikar, just near to the German Major-General Commandant Schreder and next to the German barracks? How can the leading members of the Party – Rankovich, who escaped from prison, Djilas and Padije – walk freely across the streets of Belgrade? All this happens at the same time when Gestapo throws in jail communists and hundreds of innocent people just on suspicion of being resistance fighters?" (96). For sure, in the writer's mind, the answer concerning the relationships between Tito and the Nazis is already contained in this rhetorical question.

Looking through the coveted list of Nazi agents in the Yugoslav Communist Party, the Congressman assistant Colonel Huntington and Colonel McCarver comment on the names: - " Oh, here it's small fry! Dapchevich, Goshniak, Nadzh, Lekich and so on. The so called Spanish heroes. It seems that the Gestapo recruited them in France, in the camps for internees. Almost all of them occupy key posts. Each of them separately is not significant. But a hundred of these ones is already an important orchestra." (222) To summarize: the novel presents the picture of Yugoslavia where the high leaders and most of the executives come under the influence of the Nazis.

C) The Accomplices of the Devil

No matter how strong the enemy over the Atlantic is, his actions would not present any harm to the Soviets if he had no found supporters in Europe. Since *The Russian Question* (Romm, 1946), the Soviet public is already aware of the "sold western press." In January 1948, an article in *Pravda* "On 'democratic socialism' of Clement Atlee" ushers the

beginning of the attack against the Western social democrats. Soviet propagandists consider them as “the most faithful servants of American imperialism.” On March 1st, it is Leon Blum's turn, the “patriarch of international *Menshevism*,” to become the target of *Pravda*. In his article “On Friends and Foes” Ehrenburg notes that “In Italy, the Americans have found shoe-shine boys – I am not talking about the hungry kids, but about the ministers, prelates, and litterateurs.”²³²

In *Storm over Rome*, the complicity as servility of the Italian politicians is highlighted when Minister Cassino “meets the ambassador as a good friend” (19) as well as “Mr. Coymans’ wish to talk to him as a great honour” (19). Later the author mentions the “overseas friends” (24, later “friends from over the Atlantic,” 150) and their Marshall Plan where they play the role of the monopolists’ carpet knights. The economic elites are also compromised. Contrary to the skinny workers and peasants, Pinchelli, director of San Carmelino factory, is “loaded” (35): “the director was afraid of the workers, he hated them; in return the workers despised and hated the director.” Out of his cowardice, he avoids any conflict with the workers, and when the strike begins, he thinks: “The hatred has to be witty. And if one puts the workers through the wringer, he should do it with a smile on his face.” (35).

Smile, the devil’s notorious feature, is a recurring motive in all the descriptions of the enemy: the ambassador’s secretary gives the smile offering the car to the Pope, he says to him that the Italians don’t need to produce their own cars anymore (4); the American expert and adviser to the Prime Minister has a “thin smile” (144) praising his efficiency against the strikes. The two big landlords of the South or the Northern factory directors don’t hesitate to appeal to the bloodthirsty mafia (*zgerri*) to crush peasants’ or workers’ strikes. The chief of the mafia, Gulelmo Luzzati, offers a slow and sadistic smile before killing one man; “he taught such a smile everyone in his gang. The bandits from the lovely American movies smile

²³² Ilya Ehrenburg “On Friends and Foes” Ibid. p. 4.

that way. He was just back from Chicago, nicknamed “Gully the American.” (181). The Yugoslav « colleagues » of the *zgerri* are the *chetniki*: bands of mercenaries implementing the orders from above and oppressing the population: “The Englishman Hudson ruled the *chetniki* who have slaughtered communists and other patriots in Serbia and Montenegro.” (100)

The Italian elites are accused of supporting the slavery; the minister’s son with his friends wrote the treatise *Philosophy of Constraint* in which the authors abhor the poor showing their cynicism and arrogance: “Our first mission on this earth is to hate the pitiable people and pour their black blood <...> We are the people of sin. Standing on the peak of this sinful and catastrophic world, we proudly brave stars.” As genuine allies of the warmongering capitalists, their “philosophy” also praises war, “the only hygiene of the world.” (90)

But the reaction appears soon. In the end of the novel the gathered crowd wishes to chase Prime minister. He is feminised; the crowd sings to him a famous ballade: “Don’t cry, my Ninetta, bye bye, bye bye!” (304). His cowardice is stressed time and again: “the minister wanted to take the French leave,” (303). As the only saviour, Stalin is opposed to the “patricians” (294), an obvious allusion to the Roman Empire. This allusion meets the “revolutionary-imperial paradigm”²³³ of the Soviet Union, drawing a clear parallel between the “red Czar” and Cesar.

In Yugoslavia, the ‘Nazi-American-British coalition’ can rely on its vassal Tito, with the aggravating circumstance that he is a traitor inside the Communist movement. His lack of any moral virtue is stressed by a member of Ustrialov group of resistance fighters: - By the way, have you read Machiavelli’s work *The Prince*? Katnych nodded in approval. – This is Tito’s bedside book. (118)

²³³ Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov Ibid. p. 4.

I have already mentioned quotes on Tito's alleged collaboration with the Nazis. Concerning his ties with the Anglo-Saxons, the responsible of the mine of Bor asks: "Can the idea to damage the interests of the Americans come to Tito's mind?" (p. 25)

Later Tito's close adviser Popovitch mentions "the recent Tito's order, where he states about the necessity to "study the name list of American and English people in order to give them any aid when necessary." (p. 46)

Already in November 1949, Ehrenburg puts forward that the Italian "ruling class has forgotten what national independence is." He is outraged by the way American press calls the Italians "lazy;" to the Soviet polemist, "they are workaholic (*trudoliubiveishii*) people."²³⁴ In the *Storm*, we find: "Their special leaflets are full of lies. These provocateurs distort the fact. They pile up clumsiness on stupidity and stupidity on nastiness," thunders the communist leader Serafino Visconti at the Parliament, "crumpling and throwing down the last edition of a Roman newspaper which condemns the "worker-murderers of San Carmelino" (153). The figure of the journalist is embodied by Emilio Marinucci, a famous reporter who serves the politicians. His servile and greedy behaviour is contrasted with his elder brother Pietro, a poor street artist always choosing "controversial subjects" (159). Sometimes Emilio sends him a client, who wishes to have his portrait, "never forgetting to deduce his thirty percent commission from the brother's earnings" (158). Once upon a time they meet near a luxurious restaurant, the Lucul, while Pietro is finishing a copy of Leonardo Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*. "It was like a challenge: the Last Supper and the drunken rich men at the tables of the Lucul" (159). So, to illustrate the moral corruption of the journalist, the author resorts to a visual profanation (see below).

²³⁴ Ilya Ehrenburg "The Italian Tragedy" Ibid. p. 34, 33.

Concerning the Pope, he was “a cautious friend of the Duce, Franco and the Führer. Now he became the overseas President’s friend.”(165) The author refers to Pius XII (1939 - 1958) who is known for his sharp anti-communist views (on July 1st 1949 he excommunicated all the communist Catholics); his role during the World War II provoked many controversies.²³⁵ One may also notice that the character of Pius XII in Eriomin is opposed to the churchman in Roberto Rossellini’s movie *Rome, Open City* (1945) where the priest Don Pietro becomes a martyr of the anti-Nazi Resistance. The first reprint of foreign press criticizing the Vatican in the Soviet media dates back from September 1945. Attacks against the Pope intensify with the Communist defeat at the 1948 elections. Eriomin’s book is certainly the last and the sharpest one.

D) The Enemy as a Tool of Literary Diplomacy

ERIOMIN CODE

Like Dan Brown in nowadays, *Storm over Rome* looks like an attempt to challenge the myth of the Vatican. Indeed, the stakes are high: the countries with the strongest communist parties in Europe (Italy and France) are at the same time the most important Catholic centres. But “in real life the Vatican proved its enmity time and again. Even though Roman Catholic priests were almost certainly not smuggling arms (*The Conspiracy of the Doomed*), they were openly opposed to communist regimes.”²³⁶ So the risk for the Kremlin is to lose its two key-allies in Western Europe. Hence the goal of Eriomin’s book is to show the Vatican in a rather unflattering light in order to belittle its credibility in the eyes of the Italian and the French

²³⁵ See John Cornwell, *Hitler’s Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York, Penguin Book), 1999.

²³⁶ Tony Shaw and Denise J. Youngblood Ibid. p. 45. See also Franck J. Coppa “Pope Pius XII and the Cold War: the Post-War Confrontation between Catholicism,” 60-66, and Peter C. Kent “The Lonely Cold War of Pius XII,” 67-76, both in *Religion and the Cold War*, ed. Diane Kirby (Houndsmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

comrades; besides, translations in both these languages were planned if Détente had not arose in the late 1952. The main charges retained by the author are the greed of the Pope causing his submission to the Americans, and his contempt for his flock badly dissimulated by a cold hypocrisy.

For this reason, profanation is a leitmotiv of the novel. The premiere of the movie “Ave Maria,” praising mercy and empathy of the Church for the poor, takes place in the Vatican. The Pope exclaims: “bless the release! (15) <...> and in apostolic manner raises his white hands” (17), demonstrating his devotion to the benefits from the movie rather than any interest in its topic. The Pope despises “downtrodden hillbillies” (15) and shows indifference to the workers during the strikes: - “There is no quietness in this world <...> in the times of Inquisition, one could burn these strikers as heretics!” (162) There is also the film *Holy* whose title seems inappropriate for the character of the Pope. The film is also an apparent allusion to Romolo Marcellini’s *Pastor Angelicus* (1942) portraying Pius XII. As a sign of the corrupted city, Ambroggio, the saint of Milan to whom many appeal in the novel, is the name of a nasty student (co-author of *Philosophy of Constraint*) who spends his spare time accompanying the *zgerri* in their criminal actions, “sitting and observing” (260). One of them, Evo Serrao, is surprised before the house of Romeo and Juliette in Verona: he can’t understand why this place is left empty. He would willingly set himself instead of Juliette’s grave (192), showing his lack of respect for any symbol of European literature. Later, minister Cassino commits perjury and shows his total amorality when, after the murder of a little factory owner who decided to support his workers, he swears “upon his mother’s memory” that the assassin will be found whereas he already knows his name (207).

The theme of profanation reveals enemy as the “enemy of God”²³⁷ in Sam Keen’s categorization; then the “war becomes a crusade, a Holy war against evil. Killing the enemy becomes a sacramental art.” To be sure, such descriptions shatter the basic values of the Soviet reader strengthening his stand against what he feels as a threat to civilization itself. In the ideological and ethical contest of the Cold war, “absolute weapons demand absolute enemies <...> in a warfare state, the warriors became the new priestly class. The holy man who reads the signs, passes on the esoteric language of the sacred, advises the tribe <...> the right side of God has been usurped by the intelligence agency (CIA, KGB).”²³⁸ This statement needs one clarification: in the Soviet Union the priestly class is the class of the writers. In this sense, the “priest” Eriomin leads the eighth crusade against the decadent Rome. And the reader is invited on board.

THE TARPEIAN BOOK

Let me now put forward my thesis and argue that Maltsev’s work is a ‘Tarpeian book’: like the cliff in the Roman Republic fiction is a place to punish traitors. First, again, we do not deal here with any kind of high literature but with a pure political text. It can be compared with the article by the same author entitled *Tito’s Chronicler* (1949),²³⁹ where he points to several inaccuracies in Tito’s war diaries written by Vlado Dedijer, challenging, just like in the novel, his prestige as a resistance fighter. He charges Tito with intentional sacrifice of resistance leaders in order to get rid of potential rivals. Yet, he is a fervent Serbian nationalist who despises the Serb people. Maltsev considers Dedijer as an agent of the United States adding that the latter looked like an American gangster in his studentship. Furthermore, the

²³⁷ Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*, p. 31 and following.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²³⁹ Orest Maltsev (Rovinsky), “Tito’s Chronicler. Vladimir Dedijer and his Revelations” in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 25/04/1949. RGALI 634/ 3/ 168/ 54-59.

same *cliché* on the American influence in Eastern Europe and on “the Tito clique” can be found in the novel *Plotters* (1951) by Nikolai Shpanov. One can cite many other examples.²⁴⁰

This political fiction fulfills the function of storytelling as defined by Brian Boyd (mentioned above). Following Michel Foucault’s bi-functional nature of power,²⁴¹ we can argue that in Maltsev description of the Yugoslav enemy, not only the Soviet regime punishes the guilty behavior, but it also legitimizes itself by enhancing the Soviet prestige at war (the indisputable winner vs. the shameful resistant fighters) and so reinforcing the Soviet values. We can find an example in exchange between the Russian hero and Katnych, a resistance leader (p. 340-341). Katnych reads one of his texts exposing his political views and boasting about the situation of Yugoslavia, “at the heart of the heart of the world” (Europe), and pretending to be the best of the Balkan nations combining Western culture with communism. Then the narrator “sets the record straight” and mentions the Yugoslav debt to the Russian army in the 19th and 20th centuries to gain its independence, mocks at his cultural pretensions (“this half-feudal culture here where people still dig the earth with the wooden plough and maintain relations with each other by arbitrary rules and slavery”, p. 341). This symbolic punishment reminds one of the “Tarpeian rock” in the Ancient Rome. Initially, the legend says that: “Tarpeia, one of the maidens of honorable estate, was the daughter of the guardian of the Capitol when the Romans were warring against the Sabines. She promised Tatius, the Sabine king, that she will give him access to the Tarpeian Rock if she received as a pay the necklaces that the Sabines wore for adornment. The Sabines understood the import and buried her alive [for treason in the rock that now bears her name].”²⁴² Since then the traitors were executed by being thrown from the cliff, a shameful death. As we have already seen, this situation

²⁴⁰ B. Gribanov, *Banda Tito – Orudie Amerikano-Angliiskih Podzhigatelei Voiny* (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1951).

²⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et Punir : Naissance de la prison* (Paris : Gallimard, 1975).

²⁴² Pseudo-Plutarch. *Parallela Graeca et Romana*. (Authorship disputed) (Loeb ed.)

corresponds to the Yugoslav case justifying the qualification of Maltsev text as a ‘Tarpeian book.’

It is interesting to note that the aim of such a literary diplomacy is to have a specific impact on perception of the reader at the centre as well as at the periphery of the bloc. On the one hand, we have a strong effect on the people’s republics which can be measured through criticism and readers’ letters. For example, the novel spurred intense reaction in the Bulgarian press:²⁴³ “We read your novel with a keen interest, it galvanizes our patriotic youth in the struggle against the fascist Tito crew,” enthusiastically writes the journal *Mladezh* to the author. In the name of the Bulgarian frontier guards, a certain Nikolai Tsopev expresses his “satisfaction reading Maltsev book.” As the witnesses of the “tragedy of the Yugoslavs and of provocations at the boarder by Tito’s supporters, the novel strengthened [their] hatred toward the latter and urged [them] to defend [their] country and to fight against the war incendiaries in the Balkans.” A writer and radio advisor Bogomil Nonev thinks alike: Maltsev “is successful in showing the political motivations of the Yugoslav tragedy <...> the book sparks off love to the Yugoslav people and the inextinguishable hatred towards the traitors and the sold agents of imperialism.”²⁴⁴

The same effect can be observed in the RSFSR, at the centre of the empire, where the perception of a periphery arouses in the Soviet readers shaping of an imperial consciousness. This process is carefully sustained by discussion groups on the local level. Thus the municipality library of Kokchetavo (Kokshetau since 1993), a city in a province of the Northern Kazakhstan, regularly organizes conferences and literary evenings dedicated to the Stalin Prize winners, including Orest Maltsev's *Yugoslav Tragedy*.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ *Literaturnyi Front* № 3, 15/01/1953. Foreign Communist Parties. Report on the periodicals. Survey on literay life in Bulgaria. RGALI 631/ 26/ 538/ 34-35.

²⁴⁴ *Otechestven Front*, April 24, 1953. RGALI. 631/ 26/ 538/ 62-63.

²⁴⁵ V. Tchernova, *Stalinskoie Znamia*, 16/12/1952. RGALI 2175/ 2/ 361.

Abroad, the propaganda machine resorts to its wide international networks; such is the case with *Parallèle 50*,²⁴⁶ a Franco-Czech journal which conveys Moscow's message about Maltsev novel: "the novelist didn't produce a fiction but a documentary... on Tito's conspiracy to seize power... after reading this book, we hope that the Yugoslav people will free from its today oppressors."²⁴⁷ In doing so Soviet power leads a literary offensive targeting readers of the Western bloc. The Soviet empire by fiction crosses over the ideological borders to challenge the European narrative on its own territory.

The study of Maltsev's novel gives us some insight into the imperial policy of the late Stalinist Soviet Union stressing out the specific way to avoid any "ideological dissonance."²⁴⁸ We call it "Tarpeian book" for it reminds of the punishment of the traitors in Ancient Rome playing the role of ostracism in the communist bloc. In this sense the Soviet 'Empire by fiction' demonstrates an undeniable symbolic component within its materialistic dimension. To put it differently, in Nye's terminology, the Soviet Union is not less a soft power than a hard one. Indeed, the Party line is more decisive than any military goal *per se*. In the evolution of Soviet doctrinal debates, Tito's official return to favour in 1955 is the prologue to the inversion of values that takes place at the XX Congress of the Party.

As to the consequences for American policy, the Yugoslav crisis fed the diplomat George Kennan's hope that other communist leaders "might already be infected by the Tito virus." Hitherto, he recommends "fostering a heretical process" in Eastern Europe.²⁴⁹ Thus, maybe because he was reassured by the first cracks in the Eastern bloc, the inflexible author

²⁴⁶ *Parallèle 50* is a communist journal financed by Prague. It comes out in Paris from 1947 to 1952. The title reflects its European as well as geopolitical ambitions: the 50th Parallel joins Paris to Moscow through Prague. For more details, « *Parallèle 50* : un périodique tchécoslovaque, communiste et parisien contre la division de l'Europe » in Antoine Fleury and Lubor Jílek (eds.) *Une Europe malgré tout. 1945-1990. Cultural, Intellectual and Scientific Contacts and Networks among Europeans during the Cold War* (Bruxelles, Berne, Berlin: PIE Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 383-398.

²⁴⁷ *Parallèle 50*, 29/05/1952. RGALI, 631/ 26/ 2625/ 10.

²⁴⁸ Sergey Krushinsky « The Danger of Yugoslav Vanguardism », July 8, 1955 report to Shepilov, TsKhSD 5/ 30/ 121/ pp. 50-60, quoted in Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Politics, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* (Ithaca and London: Cornell UP, 2002), p. 112.

²⁴⁹ Hixson W.L. *George F. Kennan*, p. 85.

of containment shows unusual appeasement and favours negotiations with Moscow. Unfortunately, at the turn of the 1950s he loses his influence within the Department of State and becomes powerless to stop McCarthyist purges. The cultural war will gather steam within the next decade.

The Yugoslav Tragedy (1951), the Stalin Prize novel at the crest of the Cold War, offers an extraordinary example of how literature can be applied to geopolitics. Denying the role of the Yugoslavs in the liberation of their country, the book's main goal is to legitimize Soviet hegemony over Yugoslavia as well as to comminate its integration with the West. This example shows the Soviet regime's literary diplomacy at the time when "the 'operational weapon' [is] culture".²⁵⁰ Our case study is focused on the Soviet attempt to "roll back" Western influence as well as to strengthen the socialist camp. Analyzing the use of novels by the regime, one can consider the Soviet Union as 'Empire by fiction,' to rephrase Geir Lundestad's apt title.²⁵¹

Unlike the limpid and seducing also paradoxical meaning of "Empire by invitation," we assume an ambiguity of our own expression: on the one hand, 'empire by fiction' points to fiction, i.e. to literature as a vehicle transmitting the socialist values. As Hannibal had used elephants to lead his army, the Soviet system resorts to the narrative as an "empire-builder," as the cement to maintain symbolically what was gained by the economical or military means. On the other hand, one can consider this concept not from the point of view of the ruler (Hannibal, Cesar or Stalin) but "from below," as the perception of the new empire's subjects. If Lundestad says that the American empire is built on the democratic choice and consent, our expression suggests that holding sway over the satellites, especially after the occupation of

²⁵⁰ Frances S. Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?*, p. 17.

²⁵¹ Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952" in *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 23, № 3, 1986, pp. 263-277.

Eastern Europe by the Red Army at the end of the war, was to a certain degree successful owing to the communist narrative, to the political fiction, to the illusion whittled away in 1991. Thus, the Yugoslav battle allows keeping both meanings to shed light on the Soviet imperial strategy as opposing to European integration.

Following the Yugoslav and Italian defeats, Soviet political fiction was aimed to put the blame on the enemy's illegitimate goals and immoral means: capitalists' greed and will to exploit workers, the Neo-fascists' will of revenge, and their respective allies' materialistic and petty motivations (members of the mafia and Tito's followers). In this sense, the two books have played the role of defence of the communist cause in the eyes of the Soviet and Eastern European readership. By showing the traitors and the enemy's deceits, the Soviet novels have been warning and disciplining people inside the communist camp. The mythical function of literature (Clark) was pursuing the goal of edification of the masses. But only a few years later, the 'super-ideology' of Stalinism crumbled after the revelations of Khrushchev's Secret Speech. Then, observing Schmitt's theory linking the political to enmity, the trope of enemy began to weaken. This process would be completed only during Perestroika, with the end of Soviet ideology itself.

Second Part. The Khrushchev Era

The Ideological Enemy.

Chapter 4. The making of the Thaw Enemy on the Cold War stage

During the Thaw, the outside enemy vanished and the United States became a (too) seducing rival. ‘Peaceful coexistence’ was the time of intense cultural exchanges and diplomatic dialogue between East and West. However, such neo-Stalinist writers as Vsevolod Kochetov demonstrate that the conservative fringe of the Party was fearing the contamination by Western ideas, revealing cracks in Soviet ideology.

4.1. ‘Peaceful coexistence’ or the Vanishing of the Outside Enemy

From the beginning of the Thaw period, the outside enemy begins to disappear due to the two converging phenomena: the declared friendship between the Soviet Union and the US, and the negation of the (political) enemy by post-war institutions. To be sure, relations between the two blocs were deprived of neither covert actions (including spying and cultural war²⁵²) nor of proxy wars (the Suez Crisis, the Korean War). But until the end of the decade, the US were no more seen by the Soviets as the enemy; they were rather perceived as a rival which must be “caught up and overtaken” according to Khrushchev’s promise.

There are several explanations of the new ‘era of friendship’. First, the change of leaders of the two super-powers gave hope that a compromise could nevertheless be found

²⁵² See Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-61*. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Frances S. Saunders, *Who paid the piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 2000); David Cauter, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

easier than between ‘Uncle Joe’ and the ‘petty shopkeeper’ (as Stalin and Truman scornfully called each other in private). Khrushchev and Eisenhower had never felt such personal hostility toward each other; besides, Eisenhower came into office as former commanding general of the forces in Europe during World War II and it revived the time when the US and the Soviet Union were victorious allies. Secondly, both the American and the Soviet people were exhausted after the first round of the Cold War.²⁵³ The Peace Movement had millions of supporters around the world, and the risk of propaganda saturation urged the governments to tune down their warlike rhetoric. Thirdly, politicians were limited by the costs of war. In order to avoid “an unbearable security burden leading to economic disaster,”²⁵⁴ President Eisenhower put forward in 1953 the ‘New Look policy’ based on the concept of massive retaliation so reducing military expenses to minimum. In his ‘New Course’ speech, given before the Supreme Soviet on August 8, 1953,²⁵⁵ Malenkov seemed to share the same idea. He cited light and food industries as a top priority of the Soviet economy; indeed, the July Plenum of the Party had underlined shortage of food and a structural housing problem.²⁵⁶

This ‘compelled friendship’ was simultaneous to the negation of the enemy as a concept. Actually, according to Julien Freund’s theory,²⁵⁷ the post-war world and the United Nations were characterized by pacifist legalism which means that any conflict may be solved by a court. The political enemy, whose legitimacy comes from his power, was left aside; at the same time, nuclear deterrence dismissed strength as “the continuation of politics by other means.” Therefore, says Freund, superiority relied on legal and moral principles. The enemy fell into the realm of ideology. Last but not least, the very nature of the Cold War erased all

²⁵³ On Soviet mentalities in the mid 1950s, see Yuri Aksutin, *Khrushchevskaya Ottepel’i obshchestvennye nastroyeniya v SSSR v 1953-1964 gg.* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2010), 179-188.

²⁵⁴ Quoted in Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 66.

²⁵⁵ See Aksutin, 67 and Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev. New Cold War History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), p. 96.

²⁵⁶ Economist Jacques Sapir calculated an index based on the food consumption and the production of food per inhabitant; according to him, the level of 1928 was brought back only in 1954. See Jacques Sapir, *Les fluctuations économiques en URSS* (Paris: EHESS, 1989), 80.

²⁵⁷ Julien Freund, *L’Essence du Politique*.

traces of the enemy. Originally, the expression “Cold War” was employed to describe the struggle between Christians and Muslims: “Cold war neither brings peace nor gives honor to the one who makes it.”²⁵⁸ For the Soviets, this new kind of war, this “war without war” must have been very deceptive. Even merciless former KGB vice-chairman Philip Bobkov recalls: “Neither the state nor the Party have attached much significance to the Cold War <...> we used to talk about it all the time <...> but no serious response, no serious counterpropaganda was implemented.”²⁵⁹

Undoubtedly, Stalin’s death allowed the diplomatic Thaw. In 1953, the Soviets had already detonated the nuclear bomb and almost reached a military parity with the Americans. On March 15, Malenkov – considered at the time as Kremlin heir – delivered a speech before the Supreme Soviet, where he argued that conflicts between Moscow and Washington should “be decided by peaceful means, on the basis of mutual understanding.” At the same time, Washington seized the opportunity of brief power vacuum to engage in the path of Détente. On April 16, 1953 – only three months after his inauguration day – President Eisenhower delivered the ‘Chance for Peace Speech’ where he clearly expressed his will to reduce defense spending and warned against the dangers of starting the arms race; in December of the same year it was followed by the ‘Atoms for Peace Speech,’ pronounced at the United Nations General Assembly. In July 1955, Khrushchev and Eisenhower first met at the Geneva Summit, dedicated to disarmament and international security where the American President unveiled his ‘Open Skies’ plan, an aerial monitoring agreement. The summit enhanced communication and trust between the two states arousing the so called ‘Spirit of Geneva.’ Later, the XXth Congress of the Party made a decision that Soviet foreign policy should be based on the principle of ‘peaceful coexistence,’ articulated for the first time by Georgy Chicherin in 1922.

²⁵⁸The author is the Spanish writer Don Juan Manuel (fourteenth century) see Paul Dukes, *Superpowers* (London: Routledge, 2000), 107.

²⁵⁹ Philipp Bobkov, *Kak gotovili predatlei* (Moscow: Algoritm, 2011), p. 227.

This principle was reaffirmed in the Third program of the Communist Party appeared in 1961. In September 1959, Khrushchev flew to the US, subsequently his visit was favorably highlighted in the books *Living in Peace and Friendship*,²⁶⁰ and *Face to face with America*.²⁶¹ Needless to say, the diplomatic progress during this trip was negligible for both sides (related to the temporary lifting of the Soviet ultimatum on Berlin), but the real result was that it showed the *perception* of the American people by the Soviet delegation summarized in Khrushchev's address to Americans on television. After saying he was convinced that their president "sincerely desires an improvement of relations between [their] countries," Khrushchev said: "Good bye! Good luck! Friends!"²⁶²

As a token of this warming in US-Soviet relations, cultural exchanges have been hugely fostered during the Thaw covering almost all aspects of cultural and social life: theater, music, books, newspapers, broadcasts like "Music USA", museum, and exhibitions.²⁶³ In January 1956 the Soviets proposed a twenty-year treaty of friendship putting much stress on broader artistic contacts; later they advanced the idea of new film cooperation. On October 9, 1956, an agreement was signed for renewed circulation of slick magazines in the two countries, such as *Amerika* and *USSR*. In return the United States Information Agency raised

²⁶⁰ *Zhit' v Mire i Druzhe* (eng. transl. *Khrushchev in America*), (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1959). It gathered speeches, accounts on press conferences, and meetings of the Soviet leader during his trip in America.

²⁶¹ Adzhubey (eds.), *Litsom k litsu s Amerikoi* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1960). It is an enthusiastic account on the American people and achievements met during Khrushchev's trip. It includes such chapters as "The heart of American industry", "The word of the ordinary American," etc. Yuri Aksiutin considers that this book, alike the whole Soviet propaganda, reflected "illusory expectations" concerning peace and improvement of international relations, see *Ibid.*, 328.

²⁶² See William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (Norton: New York, 2003), p. 439.

²⁶³ Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015); Hans Krabbendam and Giles Scott-Smith, *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); "Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in Cold War Era by Lisa E. Davenport (review)," *American Music* 31, no. 1, (Spring 2013), 117-118; Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2004), 205-209; Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Harvard University Press, 2004), 10, 13, 34, 225; Alexander Bratersky, "Back in the USSR: the Beatles shaped a generation in Soviet Russia," *Russia: beyond the headlines*, November 8, 2012.

the budget on cultural and information programs up to \$325 million.²⁶⁴ This policy of open doors culminated in the cultural agreement signed on January 27, 1958 which implied the exchange of films, scholars, sportsmen, artists, and writers.

To be sure, such a non-zero sum game was not just initiated “from above,” the American citizens met it with eagerness too: there was an “outpouring enthusiasm for the American appearances of Soviet musicians Emil Gilels, David Oistrakh, and Mstislav Rostropovich in winter 1955 and spring 1956.”²⁶⁵ At the same time, about 2,500 American musicians, intellectuals and politicians visited the USSR.²⁶⁶ Reciprocally, far from being seen as an enemy, America was very popular among the Soviet population: “Embassy personnel, tourists, and other Westerners in Moscow received daily evidence, based on their contacts with Soviet citizens, of the growing appeal of Western ideas and information in the USSR.”²⁶⁷ The proof that the American way of life was very attractive for the Thaw generation was, among other things, the American National Exhibition set up in Moscow in the summer 1959. Harold McClellan, one of its chief organizers, suspected that its actual attendance exceeded the official figure of 2.7 million: “They came in under the fence and over the fence. On one crowded day I checked what seemed to me as high as 20 percent pushing their way in with no tickets at all, simply because the guards and ticket takers at the gate were unable to restrain them.”²⁶⁸ Very early in the Thaw, and despite Kremlin’s official position, “embassy personnel monitored evidence in the Soviet press of increased sensitivity to the danger of ideological

²⁶⁴ Theodore Streitbert, « Memorandum for the President, » Sept. 4, 1955, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, Box 3, John Foster Dulles Papers, DDEL; FRUS 1955-1957, IX: 556-558, quoted in Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, 104.

²⁶⁵ Hixson, 107.

²⁶⁶ J. D. Parks, *Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence: American-Soviet Cultural Relations. 1917-1958* (Jefferson, NC: Mc Farland and Co Inc., 1983), 153-171.

²⁶⁷ Hixson, 114.

²⁶⁸ Hixson, 201; see also Susan Reid « *Who Will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959* », in David Crowley and Jane Pavitt, eds, *Cold War Modern* (London: V&A Publications, 2008).

contamination.”²⁶⁹ Another example is the World Festival for Youth and Students, held in Moscow in the summer 1957; “to reduce [the contacts between foreigners and ordinary people], the regime was successfully striving to occupy the foreign guests, so that they had no time left.”²⁷⁰

Depicted in the lexicon of virology, this “ideological contamination” was the core of the Soviet doctrine toward the US during the Thaw. The enemy was no more a spy aimed to cause material or physical damage to the country (like the saboteurs in the 1930s or the Nazi invaders); this new enemy was feared out of his subversive actions and possible impact on the imaginary world and moral consciousness of the Soviet people. Like the snake in the Garden of Eden, the threat coming from the US was no more destructive but seductive.

In spite of the regain of tensions at the beginning of the 1960s (like the U2 incident or the Cuban missiles), it has not changed much in the perception of the American world. Unexpected and paroxysmal, these crises left nothing more than a purely political, superficial, impact on the overwhelming majority of the Soviet people which then gradually has gone, and the US continued to hold the Soviet imaginary under their spell. Despite the official media's attempts to diminish the importance of the Western appeal to Soviet youth,²⁷¹ these events did not alter its greed for American material goods neither dampened their enthusiasm for jazz music. As Pyotr Vail’ and Alexander Genis rightly put it, “the sixties did not know America,

²⁶⁹ John C. Guthrie, « Soviet Sensibility to Possible Contamination Effects of East-West Cultural Ties,” Jan. 8, 1957, Box 42, Dwight D. Eisenhower Diary Series, DDEL quoted in Walter Hixson, 114.

²⁷⁰ Aksiutin, 302.

²⁷¹ In his conclusions on a monitoring of the values Soviet youth conducted in 1961 by the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, author Boris Grushin argues that “the second place of this negative feature [sycophancy of the youth toward the West] after drunkenness was very unexpected by the specialists; they related that to one of the massive misperceptions of public opinion <...> that belief has proved to be deeply exaggerated <...> copying of the western fashion is viewed as a thorn in the flesh, as a provocative, unacceptable, unfamiliar and thus dangerous thing” see *Chetyre zhizni Rossii v zerkale oprosov obshchestvennogo mnenia. Ocherki massovogo soznania rossiyan vremion Khrushcheva, Brezhneva, Gorbacheva i Eltsina v 4-h knigah. Zhizn’ 1-ia. Epoha Khrushcheva* (Moscow: Progress – Traditsia, 2001), 208-209, 216, 418.

but they believed in it <...> 1963 – Kennedy’s murdered is perceived in Russia like a national tragedy <...> a cult book are the travel notes by Ilf and Petrov *Little Golden America*.²⁷²

The Soviet leader was not an exception here; he too was hypnotized by his American counterpart. Without sometimes changing a Stalinist rhetoric, saying to his lieutenants that they won’t be able to stand against the imperialists,²⁷³ Khrushchev developed towards Eisenhower and his people a complex of inferiority,²⁷⁴ a mixed feeling of fear and fascination. However, after the Soviet leader’s triumphal trip to the United States in 1959, he decided to befriend with the Americans.²⁷⁵ He happily welcomed Kennedy’s election in 1961. Victor Sukhodrev, a Soviet interpreter, who used to accompany Khrushchev to summit meetings, recalls that “Kennedy was the most impressive of all. No doubt he was an outstanding person, intellectual, handsome and charismatic <...> After his murder, Khrushchev was genuinely disappointed and sent his closest mate among the Soviet executives – Anastas Mikoyan <...> Shortly before his death, [Kennedy] delivered his ‘Peace Speech’ at the American University, where he pleaded for a turning point in the Soviet-American relations and for a kind of ‘reset’. This endeavor was positively met by Khrushchev <...> the ‘red phone’ was a result of the Caribbean crisis where each hour was crucial.”²⁷⁶ Paradoxically, the Caribbean crisis has drawn the enemies together making communication between the countries easier and still more necessary.

Thus, during the Thaw the rules of the game have been changed: the enemy outside ceased to exist, the inside enemy appeared instead. But unlike in the Stalinist 1930s, the latter had no political dimension, he was no longer doomed to be exterminated or, as they used to say then, ‘uprooted.’ The new, inside enemy was ideological; he has not shared the moral

²⁷² Pyotr Vail’ and Alexander Genis, *60-ye: Mir sovetskogo cheloveka* (Moscow: ACT, CORPUS, 2013), 39.

²⁷³ Fiodor M. Burlatskyi, *Nikita Khrushchev* (Moscow: Ripol Classic, 2003), 191.

²⁷⁴ Aksiutin, 328; Hixson, 177.

²⁷⁵ Leonid Mlechin, *Khrushchev* (St-Petersburg: Amfora, 2015), 406.

²⁷⁶ According to Victor Sukhodrev, Khrushchev’s and then Brezhnev’s translator in Vitaly Dymarski, *Vremena Khrushcheva. V liudiah, faktah I mifah* (Moscow: ACT, Astrel’, Poligrafizdat), 312-313.

values established after the Twentieth Party Congress and so remained aloof from the radical turn towards the destalinization process.

4.2. Case Study: The Enemy Within: V. Kochetov

The intrigue of the novel is simple: the capitalists decided to undermine the Soviet Union from within. To achieve this goal, they resort to the services of various people who have personal reasons to settle accounts with the communist system: the CIA agent Portsia Brown, former SS Uwe Klauberg, who wants to take revenge after the lost war. His colleague - Peter Saburov, the son of a white emigrant, who is promised to return to former Russia, where he fled with his parents while still a small child. Implementing a UNESCO treaty in the field of cultural relations between the US and the Soviet Union, this uncommon team hides a Machiavellian plan. Under the pretext of the publishing order by the London based publishing house "New World", which wants to show the world pictures of the best icons that were created by the ancient masters of Russia (Kochetov, 190), to conduct a sabotage action.

The story of the novel causes the reader to associate with the "Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks"²⁷⁷ (hereinafter: "Adventures"), whose hero, chairman of the Young Christians Society, is busy spreading Western values. However, in both cases, under the influence of what they saw in Russia, the enemy recognizes the superiority of communism and turns to communist faith: "Burn New York magazines [depicting Russia as a barbaric country] and hang a portrait of Lenin in my office !," West cries to his wife on the phone, Admiring the parade of "real Bolsheviks" on Red Square.

Kochetov has a team of "Apostles of Evil" going to the "cold" crusade. They plan not a violent aggression, but a soft conquest: They will go to Russia not with axes, not with gallows, but with banners of ideas of good, friendship of peoples (30). The London headquarters of the

²⁷⁷ Directed by Kuleshov, 1924.

"publishing house" reminds Saburov of the central leadership of the NDP in Hanover, which someone even considered a successor to the Nazi Party, hinting at a Nazi-capitalist plot. The brigade of "saboteurs" includes two comrades: Eugene Ross and Miss Brown. Eugene is a fine car driver and has many more excellent qualities to be an indispensable and pleasant companion for an expedition to such a difficult country as the Soviet Union (200). This character refers to the cowboy Jeddy at Kuleshov, who assures Vesta that he will be able to guard him in this barbarous country (the difference between them is that Jeddy is not driving a car, but a troika!). In a certain sense, Kochetov is the Soviet John Le Carré, which almost at the same time (six years earlier) published the novel "The Spy that Came from the Cold." American Portia Brown, with her angelic right oval clean face (200) - an inverted "countess" from Kuleshov: the latter tried to tempt Vesta, while Miss Brown is the West tempting Russia. . Closing her skirt, on the platform, the most recent American dance was chopped off - who? Miss Brown! (399).

Laughing at the spy-saboteur, Kochetov criticizes the anti-Stalinist artists: She knew some Soviet writers, artists, directors, artists. All those separate, on which the authors of the appeal hinted, were, in her words, precisely from this circle. Miss Brown spoke about them with great sympathy. (230) Among them are "modernist-abstractionists"; A scene where two heroes are invited to the office of the vice-director of the "publishing house": on the walls - abstract bright spots and gloomy chaos in frames and without frames. (196) The latter, perhaps, is the real enemy in the novel. The rest of the characters are just - consciously or not, as in the case of Saburov - the agents of Evil. The enemy's goal is the same: The best minds of the West are working today on the problems of the preliminary dismantling of communism, and, first and foremost, of modern Soviet society (206). Like an echo of the debate ten years ago on the secret report of Khrushchev, the enemy repeats, reminding the devil Archimedes: "Dethroned Stalin is the fulcrum for us to turn the communist world" (207).

Piotr Stokov, a literary critic and longtime Kochetov's collaborator at the editorial board of the journal *Oktiabr'*, interestingly enough notices the resemblance between Kochetov's novel and the Gogol's *Dead Souls*: "Chichikov visits the landlords in order to buy them the dead souls of their peasants. Here Portia Brown and co travel in order to deprave living souls."²⁷⁸ However, initially the novel was meant to be modeled on Dostoevsky's *Demons*. For both Kochetov and Dostoevsky, the issue of the usurpation of the sacred voice of the people (here epitomized by the traditional art of the icons) is central, as well as the concern of the worshipping of false gods. The desire of the enemy to debunk and profane the Soviet saint is emphasized in the novel repeatedly. Cynicism is one of the forms of profane attitude to the world, to its values. Kochetov shows cynicism with a smiling face. So, preparing for sabotage, Portia Brown smiles, cute and charming (341); Deputy director of the publishing house - also moderately smiling (196). Prof. Kondratiev (Golubkov), a former policeman, who is involved in an artel of defiant businessmen who sold icons to foreigners (284), and the liberal artist Sveshnikov. When the wife of one of the American diplomats who ordered a portrait of him saw herself on his canvas, almost mirrored in the manner that she used to see in the mirror every day, and at the same time subtly resembling the image of the Russian Virgin, she was delighted. She arranged a large cocktail party, to which her friends from dozens of Western and Eastern embassies accredited in Moscow gathered, and all of them amused with standing in front of the portrait, effectively placed in the living room, everyone wanted to meet an extraordinary artist (119).

The enemy of Kochetov is a blasphemer. Selling icons, he trades the image of a saint, that is, eternity. In the Soviet perspective, time is a condition for the implementation of

²⁷⁸ Stokov, 341.

communism, the promise of a long-awaited meeting between myth and the world. Any mythical struggle (and that was the case during the Cold War) is not so much about the victor as about the enemy. When the enemy disappears (is defeated), then the mythological language disappears, thanks to which we are only able to distinguish between the sacred and profane, eternal and temporary. That is why the enemy-profaner is always endowed with a dual nature: he is simultaneously menacingly dangerous and necessary.

Chapter 5. Khrushchev's Apocrypha

As Jones established, Khrushchev's revelations during the 20th Congress brought about reassessment of the Stalinist past and the breakdown of communist ideology. The newly liberated speech began to condemn Stalin in a much more radical way than expected by the authorities: "in 1963, terror narratives continued to flood publishing houses."²⁷⁹ Leaning on Jones' findings, I identified the carnival as the main anthropological scheme the Thaw, characterized by the reversal of the former (Stalinist) values. It seems that the realm of carnival has also been serving as a release to overcome the delusions caused by the denunciation of Stalin's cult. Following the thread of my thesis and Schmitt's theory, one can notice that the ideological crisis was accompanied in parallel by the degradation of the enemy: the outside enemy vanished and the inside enemy turned into subversive ideas and values, sometimes hard to grasp, and carried essentially by 'social parasites' and the intelligentsia.

The Thaw was the first long period of peace in Soviet history. It was the first time, as Vail and Genis notice, that the regime displayed relatively 'vegetarian mores,' which allowed realizing the potential of Soviet society, evoking a kind of Red 'Victorian era.'²⁸⁰

Let me stress: the earthquake of the Twentieth Party Congress totally transformed the temporal and spatial bearings of the society.²⁸¹ By Khrushchev's historical speech in 1956 one can date a paradigmatic shift in the perception of history. Unlike the Stalinist model, which was in many ways performative, oriented toward the future, i.e. the enemy has remained

²⁷⁹ Jones, *Memory, Myth and Trauma*, p. 152.

²⁸⁰ Vayl' and Genis, *1960s*, p. 4.

²⁸¹ On the 20th Congress, see Polly Jones, From the Secret Speech to the Burial of Stalin: Real and Ideal Responses to De-Stalinization, in *Dilemmas of De-Stalinization: Negotiating Cultural and Social Change in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Jones (London: Routledge, 2006), pp.41-63; Karl E. Loewenstein, Re-Emergence of Public Opinion in the Soviet Union: Khrushchev and Responses to the Secret Speech, *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, 8 (2006); Martin McCauley, *Nikita Khrushchev* (London: Cardinal, 1991).

bounded to the present (he retards the “coming future,” he is a disturbing element of the progress, coming communism, etc.), the Thaw model is reflexive. Khrushchev’s political upheaval brought about an origin of historical consciousness as well as profound reflections on the previous history where Stalin himself became the enemy #1. In other words, Khrushchev began to create a history in order to announce its end. To think historically means to be an insider (ours) seeing the end of history; just to mention Khrushchev’s later promise (the Twenty Second Party Congress in 1961): “the present generation of the Soviet people will live in communism.” It is nothing else than a countdown that could be named “twenty years b.c.e.” (before *communist* era).²⁸² Moreover, the very program of that Congress, the slogans “to catch up and overtake the US,” “we will bury you” are by themselves some kind of prophecies reminding of the ‘A Song About Five Minutes’, sung by Ludmila Gurchenko, (before the beginning of the New Year) from the *The Carnival Night* (1956, E. Ryazanov). In this film, the show performed by the “pensionaries’ band” anticipates the advent of communism (the members of the public see “themselves in twenty years”). No wonder that H. Schelsky, a leading German sociologist at the time, wrote that USA and USSR lived within our time but out of history.²⁸³ As a result, if the Stalinist enemy rejects the future, the Thaw one doesn’t accept such a revisited history where he is embedded: “Promise, it’s water under the bridge!” (*Obeshanie, eto zvuk pustoi!*) sings one anti-hero in *Spring on Narechnaya Street*.

To be sure, the reconsideration of history is the supreme power’s prerogative only. Boris Pasternak, who in his novel put into doubt the revolution (the Genesis), was flagellated in the press (1958) as nearly enemy of the people. To publish his novel abroad is also the enemy’s gesture since no right criticism can be given from outside.

It seems natural that these processes provoke a (youth)-subculture which rejected “to think historically.” The best example of it is, perhaps, *stilyagi* who existed already in the

²⁸² Vayl’ and Genis, 11, 13.

²⁸³ Helmut Schelsky, *Die skeptische Generation (The Skeptical Generation)* (Düsseldorf: Diederichs, 1957).

1940s but reached their apogee in the late 1950s-1960s (echoing in time the movement of hippies, beatniks, hipsters in the US and Western Europe). This “skeptical generation,” having looked disparagingly at history as the product of politics and vice versa, also disdained the Soviet regime as an unfinished project. Their idea was to live in their *own* (parallel) present free from any history and reflections on it. The *stilyagi* were certainly considered as the enemy even not because they criticized the regime (in a way the political dissidents do) but because they rejected (aesthetically, first of all) the regime’s legitimizing power. Ironically, among the reasons why the *stilyagi* have prospered in the 1960s is the increasing number of contacts between the Soviet Union and the US. The *stilyagi*’s America was a fantasy, as well as the American hippies’ Orient, however it was enough for being stigmatized as “non-ours.” Jazz, boogie-woogie, such films as *Sun Valley Serenade* (1941), *Die Frau Meiner Träume* (1944), *The Roaring Twenties* (1939) became cult references. In the mid 1950s many *stilyagi* were arrested for making recordings on “bones” (developed X-ray films). Those who were found guilty of manufacturing and distributing such recordings received from three to five years of imprisonment in labor camps for profiteering. The ideological hunting for the *stilyagi* was supported by L. Panteleev, A. Kozlov, D. Belyaev (the latter is of special interest, in his article he calls them “an outmoded type drowning into the history” <sic!>²⁸⁴). Along with the *stilyagi*, the hammer fell on formalism (“abstractionism,” the stigmata for any non-Soviet artistic activity like, for example, the Lianozovo group appeared in the late 1950s).

The Thaw enemy was presented both in literature and cinema. As Khurshchev did in 1962 during his Manege meeting with the painters, one year later he lambasted the film *I Am Twenty*, directed by M. Khutsiev and showing the problems of “the skeptical generation.” Then the movie was expurgated due to the display of this skepticism and only a censored version eventually came out in 1965.

²⁸⁴ Krokodil (№ 7), 1949.

The first era of lasting peace since forty years, the Thaw was the time of stabilization of the Soviet State and society, and it changed the perception of space too. The shift from the revolutionary dynamic of the 1930s to a more static model was mirrored in the immediate environment of Soviet heroes. As Katerina Clark noticed, already in the prose of the 1940s, “the use of a special affinity for wild horses as a sign of the hero [had] been largely supplanted by a closeness to the birch tree or to the forest as a whole. The forest and the birch are both Russian symbols for the native land, and this change reflects the growing nationalism.”²⁸⁵ Indeed, during the Thaw, this ‘rooting’ of consciousness has strengthened and expressed itself in the rising of “country prose” (like V. Shukshin or V. Rasputin) in literature and in the nationalist political movement.

Unlike the Stalinist world that was a 'masculine territory', a battlefield or the stage for Stakhanovite achievements, the Thaw is in many ways a feminine space. It was the time when the large-scale space of Stalinism reduced to a smaller and more secure, family space materialized, among other, by the massive construction of *khrushchyovki*, a low-cost, concrete-paneled apartment buildings, which followed the new housing policy launched by Khrushchev in 1957. In his attempt to modernize the country, the Soviet leader wanted to raise the living standard of his citizens, so he gave priority to food and consumer goods: « Food is big politics », declared Nikolay Ignatov, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of SFSR, at the Twenty First Congress in 1959.²⁸⁶ No wonder that the Thaw was also a blossom of publications on how to organize your “home sweet home” covering such fields as fashion, cooking or interior design. In the foreword to these books, the authors insist on the necessity for the Soviet man to acquire the goods “not only of spiritual culture but of

²⁸⁵ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as a Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 140, 192. On horse symbolism in Soviet cinema, see also R. Auclert “Tabor uhodit v ekran: Simvolika loshchadi v russko-sovetskom kino” in: L. Heller (eds.), *Annals of the conference The Presentation of the Animals in Russian Culture*, (St-Petersburg: University of Lausanne, Baltiiskie Sezony, 2010), 285-301.

²⁸⁶ “Summary of XXI (Extraordinary) Party Congress,” *Soviet Studies*, 11, 1 (1959): 100.

everyday life culture as well.”²⁸⁷ Even politicians end up in the kitchen during the famous debate between Khrushchev and Nixon.

If, according to the film director Dovzhenko, “today space defines a new, coming into being psyche”²⁸⁸ then the comparison between the Stalinist and the Thaw spaces can help to understand better the main features of the Thaw mentality. Dovzhenko’s films illustrate and create at the same time the Stalinist space, a space of “total collectivization,”²⁸⁹ an infinite space of the kolkhoz fields (*Earth*, 1935) or of a stretch of water without shores (*Poem of the Sea*, 1959). Like in Mandelstam's poem where "space is squeezed to a point,"²⁹⁰ within the Soviet space such a point was, undoubtedly, Stalin; a black hole around which the empire has been moving. Along with the denunciation of the cult of personality at the Twentieth Congress, the Stalinist galaxy has blown out into myriads of small localities of human size. This change of scale turned out to be crucially important, it allowed the emergence of private sphere. In cinema, for example, such a private space was visualized in the scenes of kiss or dance.²⁹¹

During the Thaw, quite unexpectedly, cosmos plays its role in this reduction of space; contrary to Dovzhenko’s vision of an unfathomable universe in his film project “Depths of the cosmos” where the heroes were travelling during eight years. First, the flight of space of the dog Laika in 1957 contributed to ‘domestication’ of cosmos (whereas the Americans sent a

²⁸⁷ On Soviet design, see E. and M. Nikolskoe, *Kniga o kul'ture byta* (Moscow: Profizdat, 1963), 3 ; on recipes, see A. Kaganova, *Kulinariya* (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1959 and 1960) and A.Oparin, *Kniga o vkusnoi i zdorovoi pishche* (Moscow: Pishchevaya Promyshlennost', 1965) Indeed, the first edition of the latter dated back from 1939 but, in 1965, “grant to the request of many readers,” the publishing house re-edited it with significant corrections and supplements. New articles were included, such as “Organization of the family food”, “Kitchen and dishes,” “Festive table,” “Health food”. Such an editorial supply testimonies of the new centers of interest of the Soviet public. For a systematic analysis, see S. Reid ‘Khrushchev Modern: Agency and Modernization in the Soviet Home’, *Cahiers du Monde Russe*, Vol. 47, No. 1/2, Repenser le Dégel: Versions du socialisme, influences internationales et société soviétique (Jan. – Jun. 2006), 227-268.

²⁸⁸ ‘Za bol'shoe kinoiskusstvo. Vystuplenye na Vsesoyuznom tvorcheskom soveshchanií rabotnikov sovetsoy kinematografii v yanvare 1935 g.’ // Dovzhenko A. “*Ia prinaslezhú k lageryu politicheskomu...*”: *Stat'i, vystupleniya, zametki* (Moscow: Sovetskiy pisatel', 1967), 17.

²⁸⁹ Evgeny Dobrenko, *Politekonomia sotsrealizma* (Moscow: NLO, 2007), Chapter 10, 583.

²⁹⁰ Dobrenko, 565. The title of the chapter is: « the language of space, compressed to a point. » (*Yazyk prostranstva, szhatogo do tochki* » : « *Tvorimoe prostranstvo* » Alexandra Dovzhenko).

²⁹¹ *The Carnival Night* (Ryazanov, 1956), *Spring on Zarechnaya Street* (Khutsiev, 1956), *I Am Twenty* (Khutsiev, 1964).

monkey, an exotic animal)²⁹²; second, the fact that Yuri Gagarin orbited the Earth within one hour and a half in 1961 made it humanly apprehensible;” third, any Soviet citizen identified himself with Gagarin supposedly feeling as if he were on the board of his narrow capsule (maybe a metaphor for the matrix of the Soviet New Man?): “A Soviet man is in the cosmos,” claimed the newspapers.²⁹³ In fact, the Soviet feat is less a space conquest (in the sense of an expansion) than an integration of cosmos into the familiar realm of the Soviet people: “the sky has become closer.”²⁹⁴

In the film *Men and Beasts* (1962), directed by S. Gerasimov, the feeling of the close space is reached by a haphazard meeting of the two main characters seventeen years later. Aleksei Ivanovitch Pavlov was a commanding officer of the Red Army when he saved the life of Anna Andreevna, a doctor, during the Leningrad blockade. A couple of days later, he was caught by the Germans. After the war, Pavlov could not set out to go back to the Soviet Union but he eventually decided to visit his brother living in Sebastopol. It is on the road from Moscow that he meets for the second time Anna Andreevna, also heading by car to the South with her daughter. He joins them and they travel together and talk about their lives. The Soviet space appears anew with finite and reduced limits when Anna Andreevna tells him that, following five years of searches among the country, she has found her daughter after they had been separated during the war. Since the Thaw split the large-scale Stalinist into numerous small spaces or localities, the latter took on different and often intimate shape such as a car or taxicab,²⁹⁵ kitchen or classroom where the new “productive relations” take place. The latter, based on “participation,” as defined in the Third Program of the Party, contribute to the “formation of the new man happening during the process of his active participation to the building of communism.” Included to this program, the *Moral Code of the Builder of*

²⁹² Vayl’ and Genis, 18.

²⁹³ *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, April 13, 1964.

²⁹⁴ Vayl’ and Genis, 20.

²⁹⁵ *Spring on Zarechnaya Street* (Khutsiev, 1956), *Men and Beasts* (Guerassimov, 1962), *Three Poplars in Plyushchikha* (Lyoznova, 1968).

Communism was more precise on the modalities of this participation. Indeed, such an inclusive space was necessary for showing thought (point 3 of the *Moral Code*), loyalty (point 1), compassion (point 6), and mutual help (point 5). In cinema, this shrinking of space was depicted by the shift from the predominance of outdoor scenes to indoor scenes. The *Spring on Zarechnaya Street* is very revealing of this evolution: when the teacher of the evening class Tatyana Sergeevna comes to the factory in order to convince her pupil Savchenko to come back to her classroom, the viewer is sized by the contrast between two worlds: the gigantic territory of the factory, belonging to men and machines, on the one hand, and the little resolute woman moving forward on the rails, on the other hand. Besides, the fact that she stands on a moving locomotive alludes in a quite direct way to the previous (Stalinist) epoch of industrialization without which the victory over the Nazis was barely possible. Yet, the scene is an illustration of Marx's well-know saying about revolutions as “the locomotive of history” underlining the revolutionary continuity of the Soviet history. But, in the end of the film, Savchenko comes back to the classroom out of love for her teacher Tatyana Sergeevna, handing victory to the microcosm of the classroom and its set of values. Those include spirituality, culture, sincerity, peace, morality, and family.

It is not a coincidence that the classroom has become the heart of the Thaw topology. The safe and feminine territory of the Thaw refers to the maternal sphere, which has necessarily educational and moral implications. The Third Program has precisely put as one of the main goals of the Party “the education of the new man, who combines harmoniously spiritual wealth, *moral purity* and physical perfection.” In order to reach this “moral purity,” the Thaw generation was given a ‘moral education’ in the spirit of Gustave Flaubert. A herald of the realist school with his thorough description of the social codes of his contemporaries, Flaubert is also a moralist whose cutting irony was displayed in his *Dictionary of Received Ideas* (1911). Like the Soviet Union in the 1960s, the Second French Empire had known

major political upheavals – from constitutional monarchy to Republic. So Flaubert has written *Sentimental Education*, a *bildungsroman* where the main character, Frédéric Moreau, is a young provincial who has come to Paris for his studies. In 1864, the French novelist said of his book: “I want to write the moral history of the men of my generation – or, more accurately, the history of their feelings.”²⁹⁶ For sure, those words may have been pronounced by the “poet-mouthpiece of the Thaw,”²⁹⁷ the author of “Here is what is happening to me” (1957). The ‘Thaw generation’²⁹⁸ stepped on the stage of history scattered with the ruins of Stalinism and the war losses; all the previous benchmarks were put into question and Soviet youth had to give meaning to their lives keeping faith with the communist ideals. For that reason, “the Soviet culture entered a period of extreme morality <...> the thought about the choice between good and evil has penetrated the whole decade of the 1960s.”²⁹⁹ That is why many films of this period show heroes who are teachers or educators.³⁰⁰ Like Lenin on his pulpit, the teacher disseminates the new moral standards of the post-Twentieth Congress era. Then space became the place for the reversal of values, giving way to the beginning of the Thaw carnival.

Whereas Stalinism was a culture of the plot, the Thaw culture has practiced the ritual of carnival. Actually, the political narrative of the 1930s was relying on the silent threat of dangerous minority acting against the whole Soviet people, like the accused of the 1937 process. The public space was a hunting ground where “those who concealed their past were

²⁹⁶ For the analogy between the 1860s and 1960s, see Vayl’ and Genis, 171; Martin Malia, *Russia Under Western Eyes: From the Bronze Horseman to the Lenin Mausoleum* (Harvard UP, 2000), 373.

²⁹⁷ Vayl’ and Genis, 26.

²⁹⁸ Ludmilla Alexeyeva and Paul Goldberg, *The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in the Post-Stalin Era* (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1990).

²⁹⁹ Vayl’ and Genis, 53. See also Denis Kozlov: “The publication and intense discussion of literary texts [of the Thaw] led readers to reassess the ethical foundations of their existence” in *The Readers of Novy Mir: Coming to Terms with the Stalinist Past* (Harvard University Press, 2013), 7.

³⁰⁰ *Road to Life* (according to the Makarenko’s novel *The Pedagogical Poem*, Maslyukov-Mayevskaya, 1955), *Unfinished Story* (Ermler, 1955), *Spring on Zarechnaya Street* (Khutsiev, 1956), *Going inside a Storm* (Mikaelyan, 1966), *Welcome, or No Trespassing* (Klimov, 1964).

‘masked,’ in Soviet parlance. And once they were masked, it was necessary to ‘unmask’ them.”³⁰¹ Lenin himself was praised for that he had “torn off the mask from doubleface Trotsky.” During the Thaw, on the opposite, the mask was a part of the social game; a masked majority was openly struggling against [also masked] isolated enemies – or at least opponents to the new values – “Look at this mask! says one character of the *Carnival Night* – “It’s the true copy of Ogurtsov! answers another – But I *am* Ogurtsov!” retorts the director. Khrushchev himself, with his famous mimicking and mood swings, was wearing a mask, cumulating at the same time the roles of the king and of the buffoon of the king.

In the Venetian tradition, the anonymity of the mask was giving social immunity to the citizens. By allowing people to escape from the strains of public morality without transgressing respectability, the mask was building a “private space in the public space.”³⁰² Hence, the wearer of the mask was located in an “inviolable space.”³⁰³ However, anonymity here must not be confused with permissiveness; on the contrary, the mask has introduced moral codes into social life. First, in order to safeguard this inviolability insult was prohibited; second, it ensured the republican equality by limiting ostentatious wealth; third, since aristocracy and foreign public figures had to wear a mask, it has limited contacts with the foreigners and the transmission of secrets that could be damaging for the Republic. Analogously, Khrushchev who had condemned the terror and thus had given to the Soviet people political freedom has tried to codify public life with a set of moral values. During the Thaw, anonymity has existed due to the phenomenal homogeneity of the social body.³⁰⁴ Indeed, if one referred to the readers’ letters or surveys of that time, he would discover an indistinctive polyphony made of the voices from the whole Soviet empire. As Yuri Aksiutin

³⁰¹ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford UP, 1999), 132.

³⁰² Gilles Bertrand, *Histoire du Carnaval de Venise* (Paris : Pygmalion, 2013), 142, 124-151.

³⁰³ Bertrand, 125.

³⁰⁴ See the reference to the “monolithic character” of the Soviet consciousness, “product of the educational system that was active in society” under the Thaw in Grushin, 430.

has shown in his monograph on public opinion under the Thaw,³⁰⁵ worker A. S. Avilova from Mytishch, fireman in the brick factory M. I. Vozniuk from the Amur district or the school teacher P. I. Kondrat'eva from Novgorod disclose common concerns and resort to the same judgment criterions. To this extent, the *very names* of the respondents were seals of anonymity. As to the role of social mask, it was devoted to literature, sparking off an ambivalent situation; on the one hand, the debates around the books (criticism in the newspapers, readers' letters, or just informal exchanges between the readers of official prose) have created a free space of thought; on the other hand, political and literary institutions have broadcasted a rigid official discourse on this books and a State discipline that have "oriented" the readers' opinions and have restrained their freedom. So in the Thaw carnival, the 'Bauta of literature' was leaving the mouth of the Soviet people uncovered, allowing the expression of a made-up, but new subjectivity.

Apart from the mask, there are other allusions to the ritual of carnival. As Vayl and Gennis note, during the Thaw took place "the profanation of the king - up to the removal of his corpse from the Mausoleum, the triumph of the bottom above the top, the replacement of the solemn style with vulgar vernacular. Best of all, the situation developed according to the formula of the theorist of the carnival M. Bakhtin (his rehabilitated book was published in 1965): "A world outlook that frees one from fear, bringing the world as close as possible to man and man to man."³⁰⁶ That 'carnival intimacy' between people was fitting into the human scale of Thaw localities. In addition, the climax of the carnival (be it the burning of a mannequin in the pagan tradition, or the advent of the New Year, the inauguration of a furnace in Soviet society) corresponds to the Thaw anthropological posture of expectation. With their exuberance, provocative "disguises" and make up, and 'dirty dances' from the

³⁰⁵ See Aksiutin: each chapter ends on quotes from surveys that were carried out during the Thaw.

³⁰⁶ Vayl' and Genis, 42.

American 1940s, the *stilyagi* can be seen as participants of the Thaw carnival.³⁰⁷ Besides, scenes of collective festivity conclude or take place in several Thaw films.³⁰⁸

The reversal of values, a typical feature of carnival, can also be observed in many of them. For example, the person in authority was laughed at and excluded from the group because he represents the old order of values.³⁰⁹ In parallel, yesterday's pariah could become today's hero, like Kostya Inochkin in *Welcome*; his name, with the prefix *-in*, is already a clue of otherness. After he was expelled from the camp for having transgressed the rules by swimming out of the authorized zone, he fears that his grandmother could be disappointed and have a heart attack at his return. He decides to come back at night and begins to live clandestinely in the basement of the stage on the gathering place of the camp. At the end of the film, the situation is reversed: instead of hiding himself in the dark, he replaces the child of a Party notable in the role of the "prince of the fields." Also, once he is alone in his shelter, Kostya imagines that the director has been insulted and suffers from bleeding; Inochkin is the only person whose blood matches with the director's, so he agrees to be a donor. During the transfusion of blood, the director tells him: "You were my bloody enemy, now you became my bloody brother" ("*Ty dlia menya byl krovnym vragom, a seichas stal krovnym bratom*"^{41'45}); in this sequence, blood symbolizes the transfer of moral essence. The final scene of carnival, where the little boy becomes the hero of the feast, permits the fulfillment of Inochkin's daydream.

So, who are the Thaw enemies? Unity of time and space of the carnival presumes a closed society; for this reason, the Thaw enemy can be only the "inner adversary." In this preserved and morally sane environment, the enemy is an agent of corruption, either by

³⁰⁷ Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, pp. 40-44.

³⁰⁸ *Height* (Zarkhi, 1957), *The Carnival Night* (Riazanov, 1956), *Road to Life* (Masliukov-Mayevskaya, 1955), *Welcome, or No Trespassing* (Klimov, 1964), *Walking in the Streets of Moscow* (Daneliya, 1964).

³⁰⁹ Director of the palace of Culture Ogurtsov in *The Carnival Night*, Comrade Dynin, director of the summer camp in *Welcome, or No Trespassing*.

transgressing the moral rules of the society (parasites), or by disseminating subversive ideas and trying to change these rules (the intelligentsia).

But first of all, Khrushchev's secret speech and the denunciation of Stalin's crimes was the paramount carnival gesture. Indeed, the cherished leader in the name of whom soldiers were launching deadly attacks on tanks during the war has become the enemy #1; the victorious generalissimos, savior of the nation, was henceforth the culprit for countless and innocent victims among his citizens. In other words, the carnival reversal of values has transformed the worshiped semi-God into the state criminal. For sure, we are not arguing here that Stalin was innocent, but at least he was not the only one guilty for all the crimes committed during the 1930s. To this respect, he has performed the role of a carnival scapegoat. As René Girard elaborates in his book, after the collective violence of the 1930s, the role of the scapegoat is "to limit violence as much as possible but to turn to it, if necessary, as a last resort to avoid an even greater violence."³¹⁰ Moreover, "the effect of the scapegoat is to reverse the relationships between persecutors and their victims, thereby producing the sacred, the founding ancestors and the divinities. The victim - in reality passive, becomes the only effective and omnipotent cause in the face of a group that believes itself to be entirely passive."³¹¹ When Khrushchev has pronounced his secret speech, Stalin had died three years earlier, so at this moment he was, in a way, "passive." The prosecution of the previous leader was the essential prerequisite for the national reconciliation after almost forty years of bloody internal divides. However, after the 20th Congress which inaugurated the era of a political carnival, the figure of Stalin disappeared of the stage. Like Godot in Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot*, he has remained an "unseen character" of the Thaw, whose absence has implicitly influenced all the debates until his official return under Brezhnev.

³¹⁰ René Girard, *The Scapegoat* (John Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1986), 113.

³¹¹ Girard, 44.

On the opposite of the invisible Stalin, the most visible enemies of the Thaw were the transgressors of the social order. The first of its rules, *participation*, appears in the Moral Code under the motto: “He who does not work, neither shall he eat.”³¹² As a consequence, all the people who were shielding themselves from the socio-economical system were deemed as parasites. As Miriam Dobson put it, “the vitriolic invective elaborated as part of the rituals of the Stalinist performance was now shifted from those once imagined as spies or saboteurs, modified and redirected towards those regarded as threats to social order and respectable conformity.”³¹³ Among them, one can find the *Stilyagi*, the alcoholic, the speculators, and profiteers of all sorts. On May 4, 1961, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet RSFSR passed the anti-parasite law³¹⁴ “For Intensification of the Struggle Against Persons Avoiding Socially Useful Work and Leading an Anti-social Parasitic Way of Life.” It has concerned the citizens that are reluctant to work according to their ability, avoiding socially useful work, undermine the work discipline, have their own private business, or live on unearned incomes. The law allowed exiling the undesirables for periods up to five years. Soon, the press has echoed this ‘parasites hunt’ in such articles as ‘Parasite, get out of Leningrad!’ or ‘The people convict a parasite.’³¹⁵

With the intelligentsia, the risk was the *contamination* of Soviet society by western values. To begin with, the in-between status of the intelligentsia was problematic for the close space of the Thaw. Indeed, the intelligentsia belongs to the society and is cut off from it. Its very meta-position, where the writer looks at the society like a kind of entomologist does, puts

³¹² Inspiration of this motto may have been taken from the Bible (2 Thessalonians 3:10); it also appears in the Constitution of 1936 (Article 12).

³¹³ Miriam Dobson, “Refashioning the Enemy: Popular Beliefs and the Rhetoric of Destalinization, 1953–1964” (Ph.D. diss., University College London, 2003), 281.

³¹⁴ On the anti-parasite law, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, ‘Social Parasites: How Tramps, Idle Youth, and Busy Entrepreneurs Impeded the Soviet March to Communism’ in *Cahiers du Monde russe* Vol. 47, No. 1/2, Repenser le Dégel: Versions du socialisme, influences internationales et société soviétique (Jan. - Jun., 2006), 377-408.

³¹⁵ ‘Narod sudit tuneiadtsa’, *Leningradskaia pravda*, 7 June 1961; ‘Tuneiadets von iz Leningrada!’, *Leningradskaia pravda*, 17 July 1961, Quoted in Miriam J. Dobson, “Re-fashioning the Enemy: Popular Beliefs and the Rhetoric of De-Stalinization, 1953-64,” PhD dissertation (University College London, 2003), 219.

him apart from its object of study. Second, since the nineteenth century, the appeal of the intelligentsia for the liberal values of Enlightenment has encouraged its members to behave in a way, typical for the outcast (*izgoi*),³¹⁶ or at least in a “sacrilegious way, contradictory to the main norms of society.”³¹⁷ However, despite the mimicry of certain European habits (such as fashion, social rituals and intellectual positions), this borrowing of foreign mores has nothing in common with the cargo cult.³¹⁸ The latter means the magic belief in the colonized people that reproduction of the exterior forms of the industrial colonizers’ civilization will arouse its material products. In the case of the Russian intelligentsia, the goal was totally different: it was to fertilize the national culture with the seeds of the universalistic principles of the Enlightenment, particularly the development of individual autonomy.

Traditionally, the Russian intelligentsia has always claimed to be politically proficient and has pretended to be a teacher for the ruling power. There has always been a sort of concurrence for the political truth between the two. More precisely, the split between the liberal intelligentsia and power can be dated back to 1814. At the creation of the Holy Alliance, “the tsar ceased to be the symbol of progress and Europeanization <...> and the tacit union between the intelligentsia and the tsar broke-off.”³¹⁹ In the 1830s and 1840s, the political sensibility of distinct intellectuals has turned into a collective antagonism between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers. The latter, including among others Pyotr Chadaev (1794-1856), Nikolay Chernyshevsky (1828-1889) or Alexander Herzen (1812-1870) have supported the abolition of slavery and the development of Russia following the European liberal principles. On the opposite, the Slavophiles have underlined the uniqueness

³¹⁶ Yuri M. Lotman, B. A. Uspenski, “‘Izgoi’ i ‘Izgoinitchestvo’ kak sotsial’no-psichologicheskaja positsia v russkoi kul’ture preimushchestvenno dopetrovskogo perioda (‘svoio’ i ‘chuzhoe’ v istorii russkoi kul’tury) // Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gos. Universiteta, 1982. Vyp. 576 (Trudy po znakovym sistemam. 15 : Typologia kul’tury. Vzaimnoe vozdeistvie kul’tur), 110-121.

³¹⁷ Sander Brouwer (1999). *Paradoksy rannej russkoj intelligencii (1830-1850 gg.): natsional’naia kul’tura versus orientatsia na Zapad . Rossia*, 2(10), 49 – 66, 55.

³¹⁸ Brouwer, 60-64. See also Igor Smirnov . *Poslednie – Pervye i drugie raboty o russkoy kul’ture* (St-Petersburg: Petropolis, 2013), 27.

³¹⁹ V. G. Shchukin, “Ot Ivana Khvorostinina do Petra Chaadaeva (k problem genezisa russkogo zapadnichestva)” in *Studia Slavica Acad. Scient. Hung.* T. XXXIII (1987), 131-148, 144.

(*samobytnost'*) of Russia based on the spiritual legacy of orthodoxy. According to them, Russia must have its own set of values and its own fate, separated from Western Europe.

Incidentally, the Westernizers have fathered the expression “the inner adversary” (*vnutrennyi vrag*). For them, it has referred to the “philistinism” of the Russian petty bourgeoisie they deemed an impediment to the propagation of liberal values.³²⁰ For example, this feature can be observed in the way of life of the family Negrov, a wealthy landlord, in the first part of Herzen’s *Who is to Blame?* (1846). For the Bolsheviks, the term was a political instrument used to homogenize the Party and, in the 1930s, a weapon aimed against the saboteurs.³²¹ Paradoxically, from the 1940s it has pointed to the liberal intelligentsia itself.

At that time, the main reproach addressed to the intelligentsia was its tendency to slavishly mimic the European trends and to convert to their values. This group has been considered as a potential traitor, vulnerable to ideological contamination. For this reason, the intelligentsia was the first target of the servility campaign, lasting from 1945 until 1949. However, let’s note that this campaign was led in a relatively discreet way. In the new contest of the Cold War, the Soviet Union could hardly criticize the European legacy since it has claimed to represent the very European traditional high culture: “Soviet cultural emissaries frequently reminded their French, German, British and Italian colleagues of shared European and cultural values which supposedly set them apart from the brash Americans (...) Soviet ideologists, critics and film-makers tended to depict America as uncultured.”³²² In Stalin’s speech on May 13, 1947, he argued that, since Peter the Great, the Soviet intelligentsia has considered itself an eternal student of their European counterparts, showing an “unjustified

³²⁰ See Timo Vihavainen, *The “Inner Adversary”: The Struggle Against Philistinism as the Moral Mission of the Russian Intelligentsia* (Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing, 2006).

³²¹ See V. M. Molotov, *Uroki vreditel'stva, diversii i shpionazha iapononemetsko-trotskitskikh agentov. Doklad Molotova na plenum TsK VKP(b) 28 fevr. 1937 g.* (Kursk: Kursk. Obl. Izd., tip. Im. Marxa, 1937).

³²² Caute, 8.

reverence toward foreign culture.”³²³ The idea of servility toward the West was also elaborated in several newspapers articles³²⁴ and in the play “The Great Strength” (*Velikaya Sila*, 1948):³²⁵ “B. Romashov, for the first time in Soviet dramaturgy, has paid attention to the unveiling of the bowing low o the West and angrily condemned it through his positive heroes.”³²⁶ The plot deals with a Soviet scientist, Prof. Lavrov, a supporter of Lysenko’s theories, who succeeds in creating a new breed of highly-productive chickens. He brings into disrepute the Western scientists’ idealist theories on heredity as well. At one moment, Milyagin, the director of Lavrov’s Institute, states: “I want our science to follow its revolutionary path, not to trail behind the American obscurantist.”

To be precise, this discourse of servility was borrowed from the Bolsheviks. They have opposed the revolutionaries to the ‘typical intelligentsia.’ who has let itself converted to foreign values. The epigone of such “iron revolutionaries” was Rakhmetov in Chernychevsky’s *What Is To Be Done?* (1863), the holy fool travelling and dedicating himself to the people. Not only he lives like an ascetic, practicing chastity and teetotal, but in order to strengthen his will he also imposes on himself self-flagellation, such as sleeping on a bed of nails. That metaphor of nails, which have contributed to the term of “iron revolutionaries,” was used anew by Nikolai Tikhonov to describe the communists: “One should make nails out of these people / There would not have been sturdier nails in the world”).³²⁷ Here the rigidity of the Bolsheviks’ faith is opposed to the flexibility of those ready to “bow low” (« *idti na poklon* »). Lenin himself has often resorted to this metaphor, for example with the “admirers of the bourgeois fashion among the intelligentsia” (“intelligentskie poklonniki burzhuaznoi

³²³ Konstantin Simonov, *Glazami cheloveka moego pokolenia: Razmyshlenia o I. V. Staline* (Moscow: Kniga, 190), 129.

³²⁴ See, among others, V. Ia. Kirpotin “O nizkopoklonstve pered kapitalisticheskim Zapadom, ob Alexandre Veselovskom I ego posledovateliakh I o samom glavnom” in *Oktiabr’* 1, 1948, 3 – 27.

³²⁵ In 1950, Fridrikh Ermler screened the play by Boris Romashov. Besides, the play was awarded the Stalin Prize (first rate) in 1948 and the movie was awarded four Stalin Prizes (third rate) in 1951. These awards show the ideological relevance of the topic.

³²⁶ Konstantin Simonov, “Prazdnik sovetsloi literatury,” *Pravda*, April 2, 1948.

³²⁷ “Гвозди б делать из этих людей / Не было бы в мире крепче гвоздей” from Nikolai Tikhonov’s “A Ballad about Nails” [Поэма о гвоздях] (1922).

modity”).³²⁸ The gesture of bowing low reminds of a caricature of orthodox zealotry, mocking the religious tradition and simultaneously representing the intelligentsia as demented bigots. The revolutionary antagonism has found an echo during the Thaw with Vsevolod Kochetov, who has opposed the “worker-intellectual” (“rabochii-intelligent”) to the “educated bourgeois individualist” (“obrazovannyi meshchanin-individualist”).³²⁹

There is another echo of the servility motive among the intelligentsia in the past. It concerns the blame of the Slavophiles to the Westerners. As an example, Dostoevsky evoked Russia’s desire to “slavishly copy the European arrangements (which will collapse in Europe tomorrow)” and criticizes those who “want to develop the country by mimicking Europe like a lackey would.”³³⁰ So Stalin’s servility campaign is deeply-rooted in the history of the Russian intelligentsia. Unlike the prewar ideal of unanimity between the people, the power and the intellectuals, the postwar doctrine has prepared the ground for the designation of the pro-Western intelligentsia as the nation’s enemy.

After the death of Stalin, who had full control over culture, the intelligentsia has recovered a part of its rights. Hence, under Khrushchev, in a typical carnival situation, the intelligentsia began to lecture to the political power (see the reassessment of the Bolshevik Revolution by Boris Pasternak and the criticism of the Gulag by Alexander Soljenitsyn). Reciprocally, the Soviet leader has improvised himself an art critic (for instance at the Manege Exhibition). Time and again, the members of the intelligentsia were considered as “unreliable elements.” In 1958, after Boris Pasternak was awarded the Nobel Prize, *Literaturnaia Gazeta* explained his expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers by “[his] political and moral demise, his *treason* with regard to the Soviet People, the cause of

³²⁸ « О значении воинствуйущего материализма » in V. I. Lenin, Pol’noe sobranie sochinenii, tom 45, mart 1922 – mart 1923 (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi Literatury, 1970), 31.

³²⁹ Piotr Stokov, Vsevolod Kochetov : Stranitsy Zhizni, Stranitsy Tvorchestva (Moscow : Sovremennik, 1985), 163.

³³⁰ «Неужели все-таки мы и тут должны рабски скопировать это европейское устройство (которое завтра же в Европе рухнет?) Неужели и тут не дадут и не позволят русскому организму развиваться национально, своей органической силой, а непременно обезличенно, лакейски подражая Европе?» Dostoevsky, *A Writer’s Diary*, transl. Kenneth Lant, vol. 2 (Evanston : Northwestern UP, 1994), 1269.

socialism, peace, and progress, which was paid for by the Nobel Prize for the sake of kindling the Cold War.”³³¹ That same year, the main target was the “revisionists.” By “revisionists,” one implies those members of the Party who had taken advantage of Khrushchev’s denunciation of Stalin’s crimes in 1956 to attack the conservatives and ask for a relaxing of Party censorship. In September, 1957, Khrushchev had published an article “For a Close Link of Literature and Art with the Life of the People.” Hitherto such attitudes were condemned as revisionists and suspicious. All the infringements on the official Party line must have deserved a social or at least a moral punishment by pillorying the guilty: “Each time, polemic has taken the shape of a campaign.”³³² During the Thaw, the function of ‘morality police’ was filled by literary criticism, namely the conservative journals *Oktiabr* and *Molodaya Gvardia*.

³³¹ *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, October 28, 1958. Italics are mine (RA).

³³² Evgeny Dobrenko and Galin Tikhanov, *Istoria Russkoi Literaturnoi Kritiki: Sovetskaia i Post-sovetskaia Epokha* (Moscow: NLO, 2011), 425.

Chapter 6. The Literary ‘Morality Police’

This chapter argues that literature was playing the role of the ‘morality police.’ Indeed, as Jones notices, “attempts to control the range of domestic interpretations of Stalinism and de-Stalinization began very soon after the Secret Speech started to be disseminated to the Soviet population”³³³ In my sense, during the Thaw the attempts to control the debates on Stalinism and the hunt for the enemy were conducted through campaigns of calumny in literary press, thus orienting the ideological debates.

As I said, the Thaw period was marked by white-and-black, rigid moral values through which the state held sway over public opinion. Modern history gives a number of examples when such rigid morality comes just after devastating terror and everyday fear. To explain why exactly it happened to the Khrushchev times, one can turn for a moment to eighteenth century France. It was known that Lenin liked to compare the French Revolution and the Bolshevik one. He considered it as one step of the working class toward maturation and final victory.³³⁴ Later in Soviet studies, a leading scholar Robert Conquest made the parallel between the “Great Terror” in revolutionary France and Stalin’s 1930s.³³⁵ So, in the same vein, one can be tempted to see similarities between the policing of public opinion by the French revolutionaries and during the Thaw; by the way, the executives under the Thaw (starting with Khrushchev and Mikoyan) were former revolutionaries too. Indeed, as shows Charles Walton’s book,³³⁶ the first years following 1789 were marked by two phenomena that

³³³ Jones, *Myth, Memory, Trauma*, p. 50

³³⁴ Ivan Tokin, *Lenin o Velikoi Frantsuzkoi Revolutsii* (Moscow: Partiinoe Izdatelstvo, 1932), 13.

³³⁵ Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin Purge of the Thirties* (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

³³⁶ Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution. The Culture of Calumny and the Problem of Free Speech* (Oxford UP: 2008).

were common to both periods: the governmental project of moral regeneration and, as a consequence, the emergence of a structure meant to ‘engineer civic consciousness.’³³⁷

Just a few words on the French historical context. After the fall of the monarchy and the Jacobins’ political victory, the newly elected National Convention still faced a strong antirevolutionary resistance jeopardizing its legitimacy. Fully aware of the situation, Minister of the Interior Jean-Marie Roland wrote: “Such is the kind of revolution still needed: that of mœurs.”³³⁸ Thus, he organized a propaganda bureau and a nationwide network of agents aimed at cultivating ‘public spirit,’ a concept he defined as “a natural tendency, imperious toward all that can contribute to the happiness of the country; it is a most profound and religious sentiment which places the interest of our common mother [the nation] above our [particular] interests”³³⁹ In short, Walton sums up, “public spirit was “purely moral,” involving civic values, patriotism, and social discipline (...) [it] served as a normative ideal to guide [the revolutionaries] in monitoring and disciplining opinion.”³⁴⁰ Such purposes can’t miss to evoke the words of the journalist Boris Agapov on Soviet literary press: “Our task is not at all to reflect the opinion that we receive via readers’ letters. . . . Our task is to influence this public opinion [*obshchestvennoe mnenie*], stressing what we consider correct and noting what we consider incorrect. Were we simply a mouthpiece [of readers’ attitudes], that would be wrong.”³⁴¹ In the Soviet context, the ‘moral regeneration’ was urged by the turning point of the 20th Congress of the Party and the equivalent of the public spirit would be the Party line; on the opposite, the crime of *lèse-nation* which justified the repression of calumny echoes the article 58 repressing counter-revolutionary activities. An offence against the State too, the article 58 of the penal code of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was in force

³³⁷ Walton, 6.

³³⁸ *Lettre du Ministre de l’Intérieur à la Convention Nationale*, September 30, 1792, quoted in Walton, 193.

³³⁹ Jean-Marie Roland, *Compte rendu à la Convention nationale par Jean-Marie Roland, ministre de l’Intérieur, de toutes les parties de son département, de ses vues d’amélioration et de prospérité publique; le 6 janvier de l’an II de la République française* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1793), 227 quoted in Walton, 194.

³⁴⁰ Walton, 194-195.

³⁴¹ RGALI, f. 634, op. 4, d. 676, l. 27 (2 February 1954), quoted in Kozlov, 17.

from 1927 until 1961. Moreover, Roland's propaganda bureau has resorted to cultural patronage rewarding newspapers and theaters spreading public spirit, alike the Soviet ritual of literary prizes.³⁴²

However, quite unexpectedly, this moralization campaign produced the opposite effect: "instead of securing civic moeurs, observes Walton, [the Jacobins] ended up exacerbating the revolutionary culture of calumny."³⁴³ A legislator also regretted: "Though their responsibilities are to improve public morality, [journalists today] know only how to calumniate, divide, and blacken reputations."³⁴⁴ But what is exactly the 'culture of calumny?' In his study, Walton argues that it "involves the contradictory habits of expressing contest through calumny and of treating calumny as a criminal offense."³⁴⁵ To Tom Paine, deputy to the National Convention, "calumny is a private vice productive of public evil." As to the poet André Chenier, wise readers discern the moral intentions behind the words on the page. He called upon such readers to "denounce writers as public enemies if their doctrines tend to mislead, reduce, or deteriorate public spirit."³⁴⁶ It is sufficient to have in mind the stormy press campaigns during the Khrushchev era to understand that the 'culture of calumny' was a crucial feature of the Thaw, notably during the Pasternak affair: "the principal question, debated by both the poet's accusers *and* his defenders, was whether Pasternak's writings were Soviet or anti-Soviet, whether they matched certain uniform criteria of loyalty to the pervasive image of the Revolution-as-blessing, widely understood as a synonym of Sovietness."³⁴⁷ As to the critic for the journal *Oktiabr'* Yuri Idashkin, he is said to have "unveiled the role of *Novy Mir*, which provides a platform for the anarchists and the

³⁴² Walton, 231.

³⁴³ Walton, 204.

³⁴⁴ Walton, 229.

³⁴⁵ Walton, 8.

³⁴⁶ Walton, 198.

³⁴⁷ Denis Kozlov, "I Have Not Read, but I Will Say": Soviet Literary Audiences and Changing Ideas of Social Membership, 1958-66" in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 7, Number 3, Summer 2006 (New Series), 557-597, 586.

slanderers.”³⁴⁸ This aversion for calumny and trouble was shared by the French revolutionaries, who inscribed in the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 the Article 10: “No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, even religious, *provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law.*” One circumstance retains our attention: in both cases, moral regeneration was undertaken as an antidote against terror, be it an escape from vengeance and revolutionary slaughters or in the wake of the denunciation of Stalin’s crimes.³⁴⁹ Another similarity between these systems is the emphasis they placed on education to convey the new set of moral values; in 1792 François-Xavier Lanthenas from the propaganda bureau wrote, “it is necessary to find a mode of education appropriate for the teaching of morality — the most important science — and politics, which is simply a branch of the former.”³⁵⁰ Analogously, the Soviet Union has known a “postwar educational boom”³⁵¹ that shaped the new generation of city youth. Like in Makarenko’s novel *The Pedagogical Poem* (1931) adapted for cinema in 1955, the so called *shestidesiatniki* were taught not only technical skills or academic knowledge, but first of all moral tenets to guide their lives.

A specificity of the Thaw is that these principles were no more engineered nor disseminated in the official press (such as the *Pravda*) but in the literary one. To this respect, the journals *Novy Mir* and *Oktiabr’* (established, respectively, in 1925, and 1924) were mirroring the two bounds between which the ideological debate was unfolding.³⁵² Indeed, these voices have articulated the inner dialogue of power. They have coexisted simultaneously,

³⁴⁸ N. Il’ina, “Moi prodolzhitel’nye uroki,” *Ogoniok*, 1988, № 17, p. 27.

³⁴⁹ Walton, 228.

³⁵⁰ Walton, 204.

³⁵¹ Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children. The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2011), 24.

³⁵² On the the literary debates during the Thaw and on the journal *Oktiabr’* in particular, see Evgeny Dobrenko, “Uroki Oktiabria”, *Voprosy Literaturny*, 1995 (2), 27-55; Dobrenko – Tikhonov, *Ibid*, Chapter 9; Yitzhak Brudny, *Reinventing Russia: Russian Nationalism and the Soviet State, 1953-1991* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), Chapter 2.

struggled with each other, nourished each other, and, ultimately, they have contributed to the constant evolution of the Party line.

On the one hand, close to the left wing in politics and to the consciousness of the *shestidesiatniki*, *Novy Mir* has given way to the liberal tendency in the revolutionary tradition and displayed generous universal values. Alexandr Tvardovsky (1910-1971), the editor-in-chief from 1950 to 1954 and from 1958 until 1970, was the kingpin of the journal who instigated, among others, the publishing of Ehrenburg's *Thaw* (1954), then of his memoirs in 1961, and of *One Day of Ivan Denisovich* (1962).

On the other hand, *Oktiabr'* was the mouthpiece of the conservative wing. In 1959, it became the writers of the RSFSR's organ, aimed to counterweight the authors of liberal sensibilities. Its discourse was consisting of the Soviet Marxist ideology, basically the National bolshevism.³⁵³ In literature, it has recommended the upholding of the Socialist Realist canon. In 1961, the Stalinist orthodox Vsevolod Kochetov (1912-1973) was appointed an editor-in-chief; afterwards he has remained at this function until his death. This 'Kochetov's rule' has marked the end of the literary campaigns with the liberals at the turn of the 1960s (Dudintsev in 1956, Pasternak in 1958); "it was a bridge between Stalinism and brezhnevo-suslovian restalinization."³⁵⁴

Who was Kochetov? After he has spent World War II on the front line as a war correspondent, he began his literary career with military prose (*On the Plains of the Neva*, 1946). Then he has written on the reconstruction of Soviet economy (*Under the Sky of Fatherland*, 1950) and on a workers' dynasty (*The Zhurbin Family*, 1952). With *The Brothers Yershov* (1958) and *What Do You Want Then?* (1969), he has engaged in ideological debates, in the wave of the intense cultural antagonism with the West and of the technical revolution. In those two books, he displays the principles of socialist ethics and blames subversive action

³⁵³ David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931–1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

³⁵⁴ Dobrenko - Tikhanov, 448.

of the imperialist camp against the Soviet Union. Concerning his other activities, from 1954 he was a member of the Writers' Union executive board. Later, Kochetov became the editor-in-chief of the journals *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (1955-1959) before he joined *Oktiabr'*. Maybe because of his revolutionary idealism, it is characteristic that time and again, he was at odds with his contemporaries. In 1954, he had to flee from Leningrad after his fierce criticism against Panova's last novel (*Span of the Year*, 1953), which he deemed "bourgeois literature."³⁵⁵ At the Khrushchev gathering of the intelligentsia in March 1963, he criticized Evtushenko and Voznesenski for their blackening of Soviet reality. After the publishing of *What Do You Want Then?*, twenty members of the intelligentsia have signed a letter protesting against the "obscurantist novel." Maybe, as argues Evgeny Popov, the rejection of Kochetov can be explained by the fact that "he was reacting too seriously at the strange time when Nikita Khrushchev had already ironically denounced Stalin's crimes after having been himself one of his most loyal lieutenants"³⁵⁶ To put it differently, nobody has wished to listen to a Stalinist zealot during Khrushchev's carnival; it is not a coincidence if Kochetov's novels have aroused two parodies,³⁵⁷ as if the content of the novel were tuned to the only register fitting to that time.

In addition to *Novy Mir* and *Oktiabr'*, the third voice in the literary polyphony of the Thaw was *Molodaia Gvardia*.³⁵⁸ Anatoly Nikonov (1922-1983) became the editor-in-chief of the journal in 1963 and soon he dismissed the most liberal fringe of the editorial board. Inspired by the ideas of the Slavophiles, the editorial line was genuinely patriotic. It was including the preservation of traditional architecture and monuments and the link between

³⁵⁵ *Pravda*, May 27, 1954.

³⁵⁶ *Попов Е.* Всеволод Кочетов как предтеча концептуализма // Октябрь. 2004. № 8. С. 164-179, 164.

³⁵⁷ S.S. Smirnov *Why Are You Laughing Then ? (Chego Zhe Ty Khokhochest?)* and Z.S. Paperny *What Does Kochetov Want? (Chego Zhe On Kochet?)*.

³⁵⁸ On the patriotic movement, see Nikolai Mitrokhin, *Russkaia Partia: Dvizhenie Russkikh Natsionalistov v SSSR, 1953-1985 gg.* (Moscow: Novoie Literaturnoie Obozrenie, 2003), 160-169 on the nationalist literary circles and 341-356 on the role of A. Nikonov.

man and earth and between literature and the people. The people (in the sense of the peasants) were considered as the bearer of the national values, a belief which would be illustrated in the phenomenon of the village prose later in the 1970s.

Certainly not all the nationalists were anti-Semite; however some of them had taken part to – or at least had supported – the anti-cosmopolitan campaign; among them, the sculptor Evgeny Vuchetich was one of the leaders of the so called “Russian Party” (according to N. Mitrokhin). They were convinced of the importance to inform the Party about the Jewish influence on Soviet artistic life. In 1949, Vuchetich befriended the writer Ivan Shevtsov, after the latter had published an article “Against the antipatriotic critics in the battle painting.”³⁵⁹ Afterwards, Shevtsov became one of the representatives of the “Russian Party.”

Ivan Shevtsov (1920-2013) was also belonging to the generation of war. He has fought during the World War II as a border guard on the Prut river, next to Romania. Later he recalled: “I have always said that I have been physically and spiritually hardened and educated by the border.”³⁶⁰ To this respect, Shevtsov has perfectly fit to the Thaw space as defined above, i.e. closed on itself and morally well-delimited. After the war, he has worked as a special correspondent in Bulgaria and Poland, and then as a deputy editor-in-chief of the newspapers *Sovetskyi Flot* and *Moskva*. His journalistic career was put to an end following the scandal around the publishing of *The Louse* (1964), his novel targeting the Jewish liberal intelligentsia and its deleterious influence on Soviet society. To Yitzakh Brudny, *The Louse* is a “rabidly anti-intellectual, Stalinist novel.”³⁶¹ Henceforth Shevtsov has spent his time writing other novels (twelve in total). At the beginning of the 1970s, Shevtsov built a dacha near today’s Sergiyev Posad and was joined by other friends from the nationalist circles, for whom he was a kind of guru: the writers Anatoly Ivanov, Efim Permitin, Arkadyi Perventsev, Piotr

³⁵⁹ I. Shevtsov, N. Zhukov, Kh. Ushenin, “Protiv kritikov-antipatriotov v batal’noi zhivopisi”, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, April 1949.

³⁶⁰ *Pogranichnik*, 1995 (6).

³⁶¹ Brudny, 64.

Proskurin and others. Because of the conservative views of its new inhabitants, the village was called an ‘anti-Peredelkino,’ in reference to Pasternak. Shevtsov was eventually accepted in the Soviet Writers’ Union in 1980.

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* *

So, during the Thaw, along with the social parasites, the main enemy was the liberal intelligentsia. A patchwork made of the bits of the Russian cultural history and consciousness, the Thaw enemy was a trope gathering arguments from the nineteenth century debate between the Westernizers and the Slavophiles, from Stalin’s views, and, in the case of Shevtsov, frankly anti-Semite clichés. The use of the Thaw enemy was directed toward a project of moral regeneration and to counter the influence of American values over the Soviet citizens.

The liberal intelligentsia, with its appeal for Western values, stands apart from the Thaw carnival, it does not fall in the unity of time and space which the carnival implies. Neither has it belonged to the homogeneous closed space of the Thaw, nor to the Khrushchevian prophecy of the advent of communism in the short term. The obsession of the intelligentsia with culture (*obrazovanshchina*)³⁶² has cut it from the people as the genuine source of inspiration; that’s enough to be suspicious to the supporters of the patriotic movements emerging from the mid 1960s, especially the heirs of the *pochvenniki*, the authors of village prose.

At the same time, the Thaw enemy was carrying the seeds of the neo-Stalinist resurgence. Indeed, the paradox of the carnival performance relies in the fact that to reverse the rules of the society (namely the Stalinist system) eventually allows strengthening them; it

³⁶² Alexander Solzhenitsyn, “Obrazovanshchina” (1974), *Novy Mir* 1991 (5), 28-46.

is a temporary suspension of the social strains which makes them more bearable in the long run. And, actually, we observe a neo-Stalinist turn a few time after the taking up of power by Brezhnev. Hence, the Thaw enemy embodies the negation of the post 20th Congress values and at the same time prepares the ground for the stagnation.

Part 3: Brezhnev Era.

Confronting An Invisible Enemy

Chapter 7. The Brezhnev Doctrine

*If someone somewhere among us sometimes doesn't want to live honestly...*³⁶³

From the popular song “Invisible Battle”

I. Transit to a New Paradigm: A Brief Overview

The Stagnation was the time of re-stalinization and stability. It was suitable for reassessment of the past and psychological introspection. As Yurchak put forward, at that stage the cracks in the ideology were irreversible and the language of power had nothing in common with reality anymore: “the more the immutable forms of the authoritative discourse were reproduced everywhere, the more the system was experiencing a profound internal displacement.”³⁶⁴ Even as soon as twenty years later, the system would break apart. In compliance with Schmitt’s theory, the collapse of Soviet ideals was mirrored in the erosion of

³⁶³ "Если кто-то кое-где у нас порой честно жить не хочет..." Written by the composer Mark Minkov and the poet Anatoly Gorokhov, the song became popular owing to the police story TV series *The Experts' Investigation* ("Следствие ведут знатоки", 1972-1989). The series were a direct order of Brezhnev's Interior Minister Nikolai Shchelokov (1966-1982) who wished to 'humanize' the figure of the Soviet police agent (*milititioner*).

³⁶⁴ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 294.

the enemy. One can find some examples of the enemy's erasure in Bondarev's novels: there, the enemy has become invisible, hidden at the heart of the Soviet self.

Brezhnev's rise to supreme power in 1964 marked a turning point in the general conception of enemy. Although this change of the political paradigm and closure of the Thaw period might not seem abrupt and, perhaps, has been rather perceived by the majority of the Soviet people just as a next step to communism, the consequences of it were definite yet irreversible. With no revolutionary turn, like the XXth Party Congress, Brezhnev's peaceful *coup d'état* brought about a new set of values and concepts; close in time but distant in content from the preceding Khrushchev era, they will dominate the life of the empire nearly during two decades.

The most remarkable political feature of the Brezhnev rule is, perhaps, that his predecessor could drop out of politics and remain alive. Unlike many from Stalin's close circle, Nikita Khrushchev was neither judged nor killed. In his memoirs Khrushchev explains this phenomenon only as his own achievement, such is a more or less common opinion. However, one can think that the dethroned Soviet leader liked to overestimate his role. Speaking conceptually, the Brezhnev paradigm did not imply an "existential enemy" having no place in the new time. Unlike Khrushchev himself, who started his epoch by eliminating the most dangerous enemies, like Beria, Brezhnev most certainly did not want to spill blood. This is why a story told by former KGB director Vladimir Semichastny about their conversation sounds unlikely: Brezhnev asked Semichastny if he could find the way to eliminate Khrushchev physically.³⁶⁵ The kremnologist Fedor Burlatsky also puts into doubt a possibility of such a conversation; he considers it as rather Semichastny's fiction aimed at

³⁶⁵ Cf. Yu. V. Aksutin, "Khrushchev", god 1964", //Труд. 1989. 26 November, p. 4. Idem Oktyabr 1964 goda «V Moskve horoshaya pogoda» //L.I. Brezhnev: Materialy k biografii, p. 45-58 ; Vremya Khrushcheva: ludi i mify / Beseda E. Krutilova s Yu. V. Aksutinym // Sovetskie profsoyuzy. 1989. № 21. C. 34-35. See also E. Yu. Zubkova, Opyt i uroki nezaverzhennyh povorotov 1956 i 1965 // Voprosy Istorii KPSS. 1988. № 4. C. 74-88 ; idem Oktabr 1964. Povорот ili perevorot? Polemicheskie zametki II. Kommunist. 1989. № 13. C. 92-101.

making Brezhnev the only author of the *coup d'état* 1964.³⁶⁶ Having come to power, he was not about to seek for new victims but legitimate himself as a just and necessary ruler promising peace and prosperity.

Not only time makes people but also the people make their time. Being on the very top of the social hierarchy Khrushchev and Brezhnev, each in his own way, contributed personally to the shaping of the *Zeitgeist* of their epoch. According to many sources, including recently declassified Brezhnev's diaries,³⁶⁷ Khrushchev was quick-tempered, spunky, often testy, and at the same time an ascetic showing no real interest in accumulating different sorts of goods and having pleasure; he was ill-mannered, allowed himself to reprimand his closest colleagues never hesitating to use curses in whatever context. Unlike Stalin, whose tight smile on public and occasional chilly jokes hid the character of "an intellectual and a murderer"³⁶⁸, Khrushchev, as Edward Crankshaw aptly notes, was "the showman and the extrovert <...> a man born to supreme authority."³⁶⁹ Brezhnev presented a totally different type of man: in spite of his modest education, he was always polite with his subordinates; even at the summit of his power, he was attentive to the opinion of the others, at least seemingly; he was emotional, if not to say sensual, his public kisses became legendary, yet sentimental especially with his front-line friends.³⁷⁰ He loved pleasures and luxury, also gifts and adoration, no matter sincere or theatrically staged. So, if, as we said earlier, Khrushchev was at large a carnivalesque figure emanating simultaneously an energy of the "showman and supreme authority," that one can consider a turned inside down Stalinism, Brezhnev, being perhaps no less energetic than his predecessor, saw himself as the renovator

³⁶⁶ F. Burlatsky, *Vozhdi i sovetniki: O Khrushcheve, Andropove i ne tolko o nih...*, Moskva, Politizdat, 1990, p. 278.

³⁶⁷ Cf. for details L. Brezhnev, *Working Diaries*. vol. I: 1964-1982 (*Рабочие и дневниковые записки*) and vol. III: 1944-1964, Moskva: Istoricheskaya literatura, 2016; also N. Katzer, "Dans la matrice discursive du socialisme tardif. Les „Mémoires“ de Leonid Il'ič Brežnev," in: *Cahiers du monde russe* 54 (2013), Nr. 1-2, S. 1-29

³⁶⁸ R. Service, *Stalin. A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 2004), p.5.

³⁶⁹ E. Crankshaw, *Khrushchev*, London: Bloomsbury Reader, 2012, p. 15.

³⁷⁰ Cf., for example, A. Maisuryan, *Another Brezhnev, (Dругoi Brezhnev)*, (Moscow: Vagrius, 2004) p. 191 et passim.

of justice as he understood it. The carnival named Thaw, in which he also took part, was soon over not even because it became annoying and harmful per se, although it did (keeping in mind Khrushchev's economic harum-scarum experiments), but first of all because, from Brezhnev's point of view, the Thaw period began to look more and more like what it anathematized, Stalin and his cult. As an example, one recalls the film *Our Nikita Sergeevich* (Setkina, 1961).

Thus Khrushchev was accused of voluntarism and of giving rise to centrifugal forces which have been destabilizing the whole country. Later Brezhnev will use the name of Stalin doing his best to clear it from the Thaw semantics. In 1965, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the victory in the World War II, when the General Secretary in his speech mentioned Stalin as Commander-in-Chief, the role of the debunked leader immediately became, once again, the subject of controversial public debates. Just after this speech the overwhelming majority of intelligentsia perceived the message from the Kremlin as an attempt to rehabilitate Stalin and his times, so the feeling of the end of Thaw was rampant. On 14 February 1966 some of the most notorious representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia, among which Andrei Sakharov, Viktor Nekrasov, Mikhail Romm, Vladimir Tendryakov, Pyotr Kapitsa, Konstantin Paustovsky, signed a letter to Brezhnev (now known as a *Letter of 25*), warning him not to rehabilitate Stalin since it may provoke the irreparable split in the society and bring to naught all the democratic tendencies appeared during the Thaw period.³⁷¹ In 1966, on the eve of the XXIII Party Congress opened on 29 March, Konstantin Simonov sends a personal letter to the General Secretary on the same issue; in it, the writer, acknowledging his own errors and illusions about the nature of Stalinism, appeals to Brezhnev's common sense not to make of Stalin an indisputable hero again and hide his

³⁷¹ For more details, see A.B. Bezborodov et al., *Materialy po istorii dissidentskogo i pravozashitnogo dvizheniya v SSSR 50-80-e*, Moskva: RGGU/ Max-Plank-Institut fur Geschichte, Goettingen, 1994, p. 24; M.P. Zezina, *Sovetskaya hudozhestvennaya intelligentsiya i vlast' v 1950-e –1960-e gody*, Moskva, Dialog MGU, 1999, p. 345.

crimes. "We need neither to asperse Stalin nor declare him innocent. We only need to know the historical truth."³⁷²

Indeed, as we know now, there were the invisible, both political and cultural, reasons for such a "rehabilitation." Following the carnivalesque logic, Khrushchev turned Stalin, a yesterday semi-God, into a scapegoat responsible for all the atrocities of the *Great Purges* of 1936-1938 and violation of the very communist idea; within the Thaw frame Stalin became not just the incarnation of an abstract evil slowing down the coming of communism but the inside enemy whose presence has been felt everywhere. According to René Girard, the function of a scapegoat is to attract and absorb violence accumulated in an society and let it out preventing the society from self-destruction.³⁷³ So, if the Thaw Stalin was supposed to be the object of the common disdain and hate, and the carnival that followed was the time of joy and pleasure from such unleashed negative forces, the Brezhnev period endows Stalin with a certain positive content. Occasional reference to his name at the highest level was enough to make him back to literature, that proves once again that literary consciousness in Russia is intimately interwoven with politics. In such works as *The Hot Snow* (1976) by Yuri Bondarev, *The Creation of the World* (1956-1979) by Vitaly Zakrutkin, *The Hade* (1967) by Vsevolod Kochetov, *The Victory* (1979) by Alexandr Chakovsky the figure of Stalin takes on a new shape: he is neither the bloody murderer and director-in-chief of the Purges, nor a scapegoat but rather a supreme commander, a patriarch whose personal involvement in the fate of the country and decisions, however not always flawless, contributed much to the present super-power position of the Soviet Union. In the post-carnival epoch, which followed the political downfall of Khrushchev, this is most certainly true that Brezhnev saw himself as such a patriarch directing his country to a stable prosperous life with no more carnivalesque empty promises, clumsy jokes, and bombastic threats peculiar to his predecessor, but in a much more

³⁷² Letter of 23 March 1966. President of Russian Federation Archives (АИПФ. Ф. 80), original, typewritten.

³⁷³ Cf. R. Girard, *Violence et sacré*, Paris: Grasset, 1972.

realistic way. Dmitry Likhachev makes an interesting remark that "the world of laugh is always on the threshold of vanishing <...> it exists only in the "laugh work"; it is impossible to repeat joke, it can't be frozen, the joke has no duration."³⁷⁴ Putting aside all kinds of carnival laugh, the main goal was to *de-carnivalize* the country and restore its perception, both from within and outside, as a whole and vital system governed by the wise man. In his book Maisuryan gives interesting statistics: comparing to the epochs of Stalin and Khrushchev laugh in the official meetings was significantly reduced. In all Brezhnev's speeches between 1964-1982 the audience laughed only 10 times.³⁷⁵ Thus the post-Thaw return to Stalin was not really a rehabilitation of the past, or an undoing of the Thaw main enemy, as it seemed to many contemporaries, but rather a de-carnivalization, a jump into the future, the shape of the image of the new patriarch.

The Plenum of the Central Committee, held on 29 September 1965, basically approved the economic reform initiated by Alexei Kosygin. It gave a certain independence to enterprise within the plan economics.³⁷⁶ This liberalization of the economic life had by no means its counterpart in the cultural life what shows the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial. The trial that took place in Moscow in autumn-winter 1965-1966 was, perhaps, the most notorious case when the writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, were charged for their literature. Officially they were not. Soviet law prohibited publication abroad, so having published their work in the West, the writers fell under the recently minted Article 70 of the RSFSR Criminal Code "Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda."³⁷⁷ However, in terms of the new paradigm, the trial tellingly illustrates Brezhnev's harsh attitudes towards his predecessor and his

³⁷⁴ D.S. Likhachev, A.M. Panchenko, N.V. Ponyrko, *Smekh v Drevnei Rusi*, Leningrad: Nauka, 1984, p. 38.

³⁷⁵ A. Maisuryan, *Another Brezhnev*, p. 170.

³⁷⁶ D.O. Churakov, *SSSR pri Brezhneve. Istoricheskoe rassledovanie*, (Moscow: Veche, 2014), p. 152 et passim.

³⁷⁷ It is worth to note that in 16 September 1966 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR introduced Article 190.1 to the Criminal Code "Diffusion of intentionally false fabrications denigrating the Soviet State and society." At first glance this article seemed to be more abstract but it was a trap since it allowed any saying of whatever genre to qualify as a "false fabrication." Indeed, it let the secret police put anyone under suspicion of being an anti-Soviet threat. Cf. for details, L. Mlechin, *Yuri Andropov. Poslednyaya nadezhda rezhima*, Moskva: Centrpoligraf, 2008, p. 175 et passim.

uncompromising turn from the Thaw and to the de-carnivalization. Daniel's *Moscow speaks* (1962) is a satiric carnivalesque short novel where the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the SSSR announced the “day of open murders.” In the beginning many believe this is the enemy's provocation but later they realize it is true. This monstrous festival day turns then to be a most difficult exercise for a good number of people.

Obviously, the official obstruction and severe judgment for the writer had a hidden reason: so by punishing Daniel, the new epoch squared accounts with the Thaw time when such a satire or even holy foolishness could pass with lesser consequences. At the symbolical level, Daniel was judged as if he were Khrushchev himself. To be sure, it was not “just a case” but the lesson to learn. Daniel's novel does show its author as a kind of holy fool who unabashedly tells the truth at whatever cost. Alexandr Panchenko notes that “the aim of the holy fool is blessing and weal, both personal and public.”³⁷⁸ Some twenty years earlier, in 1947, Daniil Andreyev was completing his *Wonderers of Night*, a novel with a non-linear structure, where events happen at the same time but in different places, also depicts the official reality something hideous and repugnant that the Russian people are challenged to go through. Like Daniel after him, Andreyev was arrested and charged for “Anti-Soviet propaganda”, the majority of his works were destroyed by MGB (Ministry of State Security). Time and again this example proves that literature in Russia has been never perceived as a fiction or fantasy but as the reality expressed by others tools. Denis Kozlov is right in saying that “the affair [Sinyavsky and Daniel] was certainly a product of traditional Russian views of literature, but it also revealed many people's perceptions of their time, politics, and history.”³⁷⁹

A small, however graphic detail of the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial was that two years before, in 1964, Isaac Budovnitz, an eminent expert in old Russian literature, published a paper on holy foolishness in which, contrary to the widely accepted conception, he tries to

³⁷⁸ D.S. Likhachev, A.M. Panchenko, N.V. Ponyrko, *Smekh v Drevnei Rusi*, p. 114.

³⁷⁹ D. Kozlov, *The Readers of Novyi Mir: Coming to Terms With the Stalinist Past*, Harvard University Press, 2013, p. 261.

prove that holy fools in Russia were nothing but the demented.³⁸⁰ Politically speaking, such an opinion about the dissidents, "Soviet holy fools," will become official, at least during Andropov's rule of the KGB, and so justify their psychiatric treatment.

On November 10, 1966 at a Politburo meeting Brezhnev appeared for the first time with a concrete and quite severe critique of ideological work. Basically, he said it is well-known that during the last decade many serious errors have been made, and especially in ideology; to correct them is a hard and urgent work. Further, he dwelled upon literature mentioning some particular names, for instance, Konstantin Simonov. Simonov's war diaries, confessed the General Secretary, left him perplexed. As a consequence, the diaries, earlier accepted for publication in *Novyi Mir*, were put under a ban. At the same meeting Pyotr Demichev, a deputy Politburo member, named *Novyi Mir* a propagandist journal diffusing anti-Soviet, liberal values. Mikhail Suslov, a Politburo member and an ideologist-in-chief of the Soviet Union, complained that the Party demoralized intelligentsia letting them go in all directions far-off from the socialist moral. In a word, according to Suslov, the campaign of de-Stalinization was a big mistake.

This radical turn in cultural politics provoked waves of restoration both inside and outside the empire. One can consider the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia as a somewhat direct consequence of this turn. Alexander Dubček, who dreamed about socialism with a human face, in April 1968 launched an Action Program of liberalization. The idea was to give more freedom to the press, freedom of speech and of movement with economic emphasis on consumer goods and the possibility of a multiparty political system. It also implied a certain containment of the secret police's repressive machinery and an incorporation basic democratic values as well as a bourgeois manner of life into socialism. The Soviet authorities realized, and not without reason, that in case of success the *Dubček* reforms could unleash dangerous

³⁸⁰ I.U. Budovnitz, "Yurodivye drevnei Rusi," in: *Voprosy Istorii Religii I Ateizma*, vol. XII, Moskva, 1964.

forces throughout the whole socialist camp. Reformed socialism is the dead socialism, as the same Suslov used to tell those days.

So, from the Brezhnev-Suslov point of view, to stop the process of reforms was an inevitable task, not only for punishing the Czechs but first of all for preventing all the others from such a political deviation. It is not surprisingly that the Prague 1968 events made a serious impact on the inner politics in the Soviet Union during all the Brezhnev period; it caused an almost immediate tightening the freedoms in cultural sphere (cinema, theater, literature...). Needless to say, what happened to the Dubček Czechoslovakia frightened Brezhnev and strengthened his disbelief in "socialism with a human face" as well as his role as a patriarch of the socialist camp is to protect this camp from the ongoing dangerous tendencies to put into doubt the socialist values. In a word, not only the Prague Spring disclosed the frail character of the socialist camp both at the political and ideological level, but also – what is more important for us – a crisis of the intelligentsia's values. If even close associates, like Dubček, also member of intelligentsia, in fact stood against the rest of the clan, nothing can prove the others' loyalty. Usually unnoticed but an interesting detail of the time is that the journal *Istoria SSSR* (5, 1968) published an article "Self-disclosure of the Enemies of Revolution" signed by G.L. Milaeva. She was Brezhnev's daughter Galina.

Let me stress: the Prague Spring seems to have shown quite clearly that Brezhnev and his lieutenants were afraid of whatever remake of the Thaw within the socialist camp first of all because it can conjure up the spirit of the Khrushchev time already doomed to go into oblivion.

And the consequences were not long in coming. The severe repressive means against Andrei Amalrik, the author of the essay *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (1970), show nicely one of the main features of the post-Carnival atmosphere: the society, entered the epoch of moderate consumerism, comfort, and self-assurance, doesn't need to indicate any

'precise dates' and needs no Khrushchev-like prophecies. Although Amalrik's fantasies were wrong, his book predicts the country's eventual collapse due to social and ethnic antagonisms and a disastrous war with China, Brezhnev saw in it – in the intelligentsia's free reflections in general – a threat to his main effort: stability. This is also important to note that the Khrushchev "Thaw" and the Brezhnev "stability" radically differ in their nature. The Thaw is a temporal phenomenon, it can last long and must one day come to an end; on the contrary, stability implies a long and smooth existence with no carnivalesque intemperance or revolutionary impulses. Thus within this new paradigm of stability it seems natural that any protervity *of* dissidents inside the country, be it political (Amalrik, Esenin-Volpin) or artistic ('Lianozovo Group'), has been viewed as a potential danger.

Inevitably, intelligentsia in the Soviet Union becomes a subject matter of the KGB and draws a special attention of its Chairman Yuri Andropov. In 1969 Andropov created the 5th Chief Directorate to scan all signs of dissident movement and political unreliability, in it the 10th Department is responsible for the Soviet intelligentsia; the 9th Direction was charged to suppress any unauthorized publishing (*samizdat*) of literature and journalism which can be viewed as anti-Soviet. It had to seek for *samizdat* printing presses, typewriters as well as investigate the unauthorized use of photocopy machines. Finally, the Jewish Department, established in 1971, was responsible for addressing Jewish dissidence, including discouraging emigration.

Whatever the Prague Spring consequences within the country, Brezhnev's diplomacy on the world scene, and first of all with the US, proved to be quite effective at the time. Unlike Khrushchev, he was against the politics of menace giving preference to diplomatic negotiations instead; Brezhnev's good personal relations with President Nixon contributed much to the disarmament reached in the mid-1970s. On 18 June, 1973 Brezhnev arrived in the US with his first official visit during which the leaders made a huge progress towards a more

peaceful coexistence. From Brezhnev's point of view, the negotiations were so successful that soon after his return home, the General Secretary stated: "the Cold War is over." It was followed by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held in Helsinki during July and August 1, 1975 which ended by the Helsinki Accords when thirty five states, including the USA, Canada, and all European states, signed the declaration in an attempt to improve relations between the Communist world and the West. Interestingly that this peak of disarmament between the super-powers aligns with Brezhnev's most activity as a political figure. From 1975 onwards he begins to lose interest in international politics and in the external world as a whole more and more focusing on himself. Leaving apart medical causes, these significant changes in Brezhnev's personality resulted from the fact that, as he believed, perhaps, not without reason, that his mission as a patriarch of the socialist clan was largely completed. He brought the country to a peaceful co-existence with the main adversary, something that never happened from the summer of 1959, when the American National Exhibition was held in Moscow, and stabilized the economic growth.

Inasmuch as the official propaganda has not ceased to insist on evident achievements and visible progress made since Brezhnev came to power, the enemy inversely began to lose his visibility becoming more shadowy and discrete. The words from the song cited above nicely mirror this situation: unlike in the preceding epochs, "someone somewhere among us sometimes..." gives no precise indication of enemy but, instead, allows the space and time of the latter to be open.

On the 3d August 1972 The Central Committee's Directive concerning Jews who wished to immigrate to Israel, says that they have to refund the state expenses on their education. Jews were not, of course, the open enemy but nevertheless present a sort of invisible enemy whose reliability is – and always was for the nationalistically oriented camps, like the authors of the journal *Nash Sovremennik* – dubious. Brezhnev, who tried to follow the

"golden ratio" in his decisions, on the 6 October 1972 notes in his diary: "Directive about Jews let's leave as it is, but let's not apply it de facto." An important event happened when Alexandr Yakovlev, a high-ranked official at the CPSU's Department of Ideology and Propaganda and a future "godfather of perestroika," on 15 February 1972 published an article in the popular *Literaturnaya Gazeta* called "Against anti-historicism." In it Yakovlev openly criticized Russian and Soviet nationalism pointing to the dangerous tendencies of certain respected communists wishing to present the October Revolution as a Jewish complot and thus splitting the socialist multinational society into the warring ethnic groups. In spite of the fact that Yakovlev's article was written in an orthodox Marxist-Leninist tone, it cost him his job.

No wonder that Yakovlev was soon sent as an ambassador to Canada, indeed, in exile. His main mistake, in terms of the new paradigm, was not even to criticize a most powerful ideological camp (the nationalists), but to visualize the enemy. Such a visualization is peculiar to carnival with its necessary spectacular effects (Khrushchev's shoe-banging incident occurred during the Meeting of the UN General Assembly, etc.). Stability works differently; even if there are enemies "somewhere sometimes...", the general tendency is rather to make them as less visible as possible. This is why Yuri Bondarev, one of the 'the most perfect' Brezhnev writers, whose works we will consider below, instead of displaying the figure of enemy, places it within an inner field expressed in one's doubts, desires, intentions, etc. So enemy is no longer viewed, observed, but can be felt and seized by the protagonist within his own emotional world.

Chapter 8. Case Study: Enemy at Heart. Bondarev's The Shore

Let me start with the plot of the novel. The whole story is divided into three parts: *Beyond, Madness, and Nostalgia*. The time of the narrative is two-folded: nowadays (*Beyond* and *Nostalgia*) and the end of the World War II (*Madness*).

The forty seven year-old famous writer Vadim Nikitin and his friend Platon Samsonov, also a writer, but less popular, flew to Germany at the invitation of Frau Herbert, a fan of Nikitin's talent. She invited him to a conference of the German literary circle to exchange views on contemporary culture, and a discussion on the topic "Writer and Modern Civilization." Nikitin takes Samsonov with him as an interpreter since the latter has a good grasp of German. On the plane they discuss the last letter of Frau Herbert, in which she admired the talent of Nikitin and compared him to the great Russian writers. Samsonov feared that his dear friend can be corrupted by this glory.

At the airport they were met by Frau Herbert herself. She is surprisingly different from what they imagined. A slender, pretty and elegant woman skillfully emphasizing her natural attractiveness at the most luxurious Mercedes meets them warmly, takes them to the hotel and invites for breakfast. On her question whether Nikitin was ever in Germany, he replied that he had been besieging a small town in 1945. After breakfast, friends went for a walk around Hamburg. They inspected the monument to the soldiers died in the World War II, then unsuccessfully visit a snack bar, watch French porn and barely escaped from the prostitutes.

Nikitin recalls his first fee of three thousand rubles which he spent on drink with the poet Vikhrov, ran into a fight with the youngsters in the gateway and rattled the police for allegedly launching this fight himself. From the money there were only seven hundred rubles, which did not even have enough to pay for the apartment.

On a visit to Frau Herbert Nikitin and Samsonov meet the journalist, the editor-in-chief of Weber publishing house Dietzman, the publisher Weber and his wife, the famous singer Lotoy Tittel. They talked about politics, current relations between Germany and Russia. They talked about the past war, how it influenced the development of Germany, how Russian soldiers raped German women, and concluded that Nazism is not a uniquely German phenomenon. Tittel scolded Hitler's policy and claimed that he disgraced the German nation. Mr. Weber described how he was in a concentration camp and how the Americans liberated them. After the conversation Frau Herbert asked Nikitin to stay; she then shows him an old album where there is a picture of a young girl against the backdrop of a country house. "Do you recognize?," she asked. And Nikitin remembered that 26 years ago in May 1945 his battery was housed in this house in Königsdorf, and this girl, now Frau Herbert, was his lover.

Madness

May 2, 1945. Berlin is half occupied by Russian troops. The battery, in which Nikitin commanded a platoon, took Königsdorf. After a hard battle everyone was asleep, Nikitin was also basking in bed, no orders were received. Senior lieutenant Granautov was in the hospital. The soldiers enjoyed a delightful feeling of the close victory. Inside the room Nikitin entered Sergeant Mezhenin, broad-shouldered, a bit overweight, a thirty-year-old, self-assured man. He found a broken German car nearby, and in it a safe with money and a clock. Mezhenin showed Nikitin a bag with clocks and bundles of money, asked if they could be worth something. Nikitin replied that the clock was cheap, and advised Mezhenin to give it to the soldiers, and to throw out the money.

Nikitin goes down for breakfast. Mezhenin told the soldiers about the find, they began to decide what to do with it. Nikitin ordered Mezhenin to give out the watch to the soldiers, and to pass the money to him. Mezhenin complied. Lieutenant Knyazhko, commander of a

neighboring platoon, came to them and brought a German cat, which Ushatkov, the youngest soldier began to feed porridge. Knyazhko and Nikitin went for a walk around the small town, they came across a drunk German who claimed that all Russians were good, and Russian vodka was even better.

They returned home in the evening. There the battalion commander Granaturov and Galya, an officer of the medical battalion, played cards. It turned out that Galya was in love with Knyazhko, however he cannot reciprocate her. Soon Galya decided to leave, Granaturov offered to accompany her but Knyazhko said there is no need. Galya refuses his offer. Before the wicket, Galya was escorted by Nikitin, she complained to him that Knyazhko ignores her but she still loves him.

When Nikitin returned, he felt uncomfortable with the silence, and he ordered Mezhenin to check how the sentry was. Mezhenin was gone for a long time, then there was a noise on the second floor in Nikitin's room. Rising to his room, he saw that Mezhenin was about to rape a young red-haired German woman called Emma. Nikitin ordered to leave the girl alone. Mezhenin refused, and then Nikitin threatened to shoot him.

Emma was fetched to the first floor, into the drawing-room. There, the sentry led a young boy, about fifteen, frail with glasses. Granaturov ordered Knyazhko to interrogate him. Emma cried and begged Kurt to tell everything. Emma and Kurt were a brother and sister, they came to collect some of their belongings and go to Hamburg to their grandfather. Kurt escaped from the German partisan detachment. This detachment consisted of the teenagers like him. The detachment commander, the corporal, recently killed the injured boy, so that he would not betray them. Granaturov wanted to physically interrogate the boy in order to compell him to tell more but Knyazhko, as a senior in rank, ordered the release of both.

In the morning Nikitin awoke from a knock on the door. It was Emma who brought him coffee in bed. She began to pester him, he tried to decline, but Emma remained persistent.

Suddenly Nikitin remembered how he had done it with Zhenya for the first time. They did not know what it was obeying only their love impulses. Then the Germans attacked the village Zhenya was severely wounded and died two days later.

Ushatikov brought Nikitin water for shaving, Emma had time to leave. After a while Mezhenin entered the room and said he knew about Nikitin's connection with the German woman and will tell about this affair to his superiors. Nikitin, in his turn, reminded him that in Zhitomir Mezhenin refused to comply with Nikitin's order committing adultery with two nurses from the medical unit.

After breakfast their troops body was attacked by two German self-propelled guns, so they decided to take the fight. Knyazhko and Nikitin drove the soldiers forward but they refused to go. Mezhenin said that soldiers could die out of Knyazhko's and Nikitin's desire to replenish Knyazhko's collection of medals. Nikitin ordered him to shut up and go into battle with dignity. The Germans blew up the bridge, it was impossible to pursue the self-propelled guns further, the Russians retreated.

But then the body troops of the lieutenant Perlin rushed in with a request to help remove the Germans from the forestry. Knyazhko agreed. On the way they came upon the corpse of a young German about sixteen years old. Approaching the forestry, they accepted the fight. Mezhenin threw two bombs into the house that caused an explosion followed by a cry. Knyazhko realized that there were no soldiers in the house, only the youngsters Kurt was talking about who are frightened and don't know what to do. Knyazhko left the weapon, went to the house and asked the Germans to surrender. They raised a white flag and, using the moment, shot down Knyazhko. Finally, the Russians entered the forestry and captured the youngsters.

Mezhenin shot the German corporal who killed Knyazhko. Galya was crying inconsolably over his corpse. In the evening, at a funeral feast with vodka, Nikitin said that

they are all guilty of Knyazhko's death; he committed a brave and noble act, and they are cowards. Afterwards Nikitin took Knyazhko's belongings, his letter to Galya, and went to his room. In this letter Knyazhko wrote to Galya that nothing can be between them since the goes on and it doesn't allow pipe dreams.

In the morning Nikitin woke up in Emma's arms. They were again captivated by a strong feeling of love. After a while, Ushatkov told Nikitin that he was summoned by the battalion commander. Granautov asked Nikitin that letter for Galya. Nikitin replied he has no letter but Granautov threatened Nikitin that he will write a report about his relations with the German woman whom he raped. Nikitin didn't answer anything. Galya went berserk asking both men to shut up saying to Granautov that she has no feeling towards him.

Nikitin told Mezhenin to go voluntarily under the tribunal. Mezhenin threw a chair into him furiously, Nikitin fired at him in return. Nikitin was arrested and Mezhenin sent to the medical unit. At night Nikitin asked Ushatkov, who guarded him, to let him meet Emma. When they met, they confessed in their love for each other and spent the night together. Next morning the Russians left Königsdorf.

Nostalgia

In the middle of the night Nikitin returned to the hotel. Incapable to fall asleep he calls Samsonov and asks him to come in. Nikitin tries to tell his friend who is Frau Herbert in reality, however Samsonov turns it into a joke telling Nikitin to be more careful with the pretty nice looking dangerous woman. On the next day Nikitin participates in a discussion where he and Dietzman argued about politics, history, responsibility, and how both of them see the relations between German and Russian today. They also talk about the cult of Stalin and Hitler.

After the discussion, the whole company went to the street prostitutes, then to the tavern "Joyful Owl" owned by a former prisoner of the concentration camp. Herbert and Nikitin dance and talk. She soon becomes tired, and they decided to find a calmer place. In a restaurant situated in a small Venice-like street they tell each other about their post-war lives.

Nikitin was married, he recently lost his six-year old son. Emma's husband died, her daughter lives in Canada. She told Vadim she still loves him, for her he is like a hero from a fairytale, a Russian butterfly. At the airport she rushed to his neck repeating again and again his name. On the plane he feels himself uncomfortable and decided it is because of cognac. Memories began to overwhelm him. He recalled how his son was dying, his wife nearly lost her mind out of grief, he recalled how he hunted squirrels in the forest, the shore from childhood, so dear and far away... Suddenly he felt himself very bad, Samsonov began to worry about his friend but too late. Nikitin dies from a heart attack being driven by a flow of remembrances.

In spite of its ideological righteousness and stylistic flawlessness from the Socialist Realist point of view, *The Shore* is nevertheless quite an unusual novel. It not only tells us a story about war and love, alluding to Leo Tolstoy's great classic, but also sets a task to study "the human subconscious, the hidden mechanisms of the I," as Bondarev says in one of his interviews." Unlike the overwhelming majority of the Socialist Realist heroes having a very simple, if not smooth psychological design allowing him or her to perceive the world mostly as black or white, Vadim Nikitin in Bondarev is rather a complex figure turned to himself, living in his own, created, world where reality and fantasy always overlap. As a writer but the Soviet writer first of all, Nikitin lives simultaneously "here" and "there," and "then" and "now;" to the standard task to depict reality as it is, defined already by Maxim Gorky and

other stalwarts of the canon, Bondarev's hero plunges into the realm of his own experience both past and present interwoven by his narration. His reality is not given, it is not an object of a depiction going from the fix first-person perspective, but rather a flow of emotions and perceptions resulting both from his war past and twisted presence which never gives him a feeling of security.

In the opening pages of the novel we read as follows: "he was starrng at the washed but still not autumnal green grass of the cautiously cut lawns where the sulked gulls were strolling, and his subconscious as always tried to hold that sea-like humidity and the duskiness of the streets in autumn; and this gliding along the shop-windows displaying equally humid crepe umbrellas in the rain's light fog, the mechanical blinking of the traffic lights at the same time retaining and emitting in the ravines of the streets the possessed mobs of the cars. *Involuntary memorizing, the egoistic work of the subconscious was Nikitin's second essence...*"³⁸¹ The settings of the main character are defined at the outset: on the one hand, Nikitin is an egoist who lives in the invisible world of his own and, on the other hand, an observer who perceives the external reality only as a series of emotions ruled by the subconscious, his "second essence." On 25 January 1978 during a TV-talk in Ostankino Tower Bondarev said: "I want to say that save consciousness there is also a field of the subconscious, those feelings that can't be explained by algebra and geometry, logic or by a general mathematical formula, and if it was otherwise, the man would have been a primitive machine. In order to comprehend the literary hero, to discover him for you not only by a verbal action but, if you wish, by his self-realization and self-punishment <sic!>, one should not disparagingly neglect this mysterious category of the subconscious <...> Literature is a study of the human consciousness and the human subconscious, opening the doors into the deep of the psycho and life passions."³⁸²

³⁸¹ Yu. Bondarev, *The Shore* (Yosh-Karala: Mariiskoe knizhnoe izdatelstvo, 1985), p. 13. (Italics added)

³⁸² Cf. N. Fed', *Khudozhestvennyye otkrytiya Bondareva*, (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1988), p. 106.

Today Bondarev's words, of course, sound rather as a truism but then, in 1978, it was an unusual statement moreover made by one of the Olympic Soviet writers who had also an official power in the literary world. One can think that Bondarev willy-nilly grasped the spirit of the epoch, not only the 'approved' one but in more wider sense, something which already was in the air of the Brezhnev universe. It seems true if to remember that in the same 1978 in Georgia (Tbilisi) a group of the leading psychologists, such as Apollon Sherozia, Alexandr Prangishvili and others, published a three-volumes study called *The Unconscious: Nature, Functions, and Methods*. A year later, Prangishvili published his own study called *Psycho. Consciousness. Unconsciousness. On the generalized Theory of Psychology*.³⁸³ Yet, Bondarev had worked on his novel four years 1970-1974, undoubtedly the hard period for the Soviet intelligentsia because since then any artistic activity, no matter official or dissident, has been already monitoring by Andropov. Another interesting detail is that in 1973 a twelve-part television series *Seventeen Moments of Spring* (dir. Tatyana Lioznova) was released and soon became the cult film. The movie tells the story about Max Otto von Stierlitz, an SS-Standartenführer in the Ausland-SD, who is in fact a Soviet spy Maxim Isaev, infiltrated into the German establishment twenty years ago. A few months before the end of the War World II Stierlitz received from Moscow a mission to determine who from the closest Hitler's circle conducts separate negotiations with the West. What made this film a cult is not the spy story or an action which, indeed, barely corresponds to a war detective but the figure of the main character who showed to then Russian spectators pretty much of what Bondarev spoke in his TV talk. Stierlitz from the *Seventeen Moments of Spring* incarnated the subconscious, more precisely, the Soviet subconscious that means a profound split between reality and the inner world of an intelligentsia member, and not only. Like Bondarev's Nikitin, Stierlitz lives simultaneously into two worlds: outward one in which he plays his role in a way nobody

³⁸³ А. Шерозия, *Психика. Сознание. Бессознательное. К обобщенной теории психологии* (Тбилиси: Мецниереба, 1979).

notices his strangeness and enemy-like behavior, and in the inward world where he is left alone with his invisible feelings and emotions. Although invisible and subconscious, these feelings are flawlessly seen, felt by the Soviet spectators because the majority of them, especially those who felt themselves strangers and outsiders in the Brezhnev-Andropov closed world, suffer from the same split and thus easily recognized Stierlitz's experience.

Stierlitz, a super-intelligent spy, a real hero, a man who knows how to survive in extreme conditions, is an upgraded version of Nikitin capable to spy only for his own inner, subconscious and fragile emotional fluctuations. The unparalleled success of the *Seventeen Moments of Spring* can be thus explained by the fact that a Soviet man identified himself with this character in one way or another. In fact, the film showed how to survive within the hostile world whose rules one must accept. The Third Reich on the threshold of its destruction, where Stierlitz acts as an invisible enemy, was most certainly and subconsciously, to use Bondarev's terms, was associated by many intelligentsia members with the Brezhnev-Andropov Soviet Union they lived in.

Like Stierlitz, Nikitin, although not among the enemies, resides in the split world between the irreversible past, hovering over him time and again, and the present in which, in spite of a social success, he feels himself uncomfortable. To put it more precisely, the dramatic situation of Nikitin is that he cannot connect his past with his present. Nikitin understands that the past will never return, and the more he realizes this fact, the more is past seems an ideal time despite the war and deaths and the more the present becomes meaningless and uprooted. His love for Emma, for that helpless, sincere and astonishing girl, will never return again, she will remain the shore that he will never reach neither in the present nor in the future, he is a prisoner of "now," and if so, the only solution to this imprisonment is to be now and then at the same time.

When they meet in Hamburg many years later, Emma speaks for him: "My God," she said, "and her face immediately lost the expression of the joyful game, a pale face, narrowed shoulders betraying her downtrodden mood. She bowed her front, squeezed her lips and, clenching her fingers, said: "my God! I was waiting for you... I thought you will come. You know what I prayed for? I am afraid to say what I have been thinking after the war. God, I prayed, let be the war again, let them shoot again, let them rape me again if only the Russian lieutenant has come back to me. Let him return to Königsdorf, to Hamburg with his guns and tell me: "Emma, I love you," and I would have replied: "I am dying without you." I have imagined it. What a fool I was? A mad, sentimental girl! It's funny to say it now..."³⁸⁴

An interesting detail, unlike Stierlitz's voice over in the film which articulates his inner true thoughts and feelings, Nikitin remains silent. Emma, his gone-forever past as if his "voice under" tells him what already cannot sound in his present: "A steel prong situated somewhere near his heart didn't let him reply; her words provoked in him a gloomy pain displaying her helplessness and fragile defense, something from the remote past suddenly burst out, something that let him come back in a moment to the past. Her sincerity was so unexpected that, he thought, he is unable to explain his post-war life to her, a whole eternity which elapsed since that time..."³⁸⁵

To be sure, this is not just a description of the love scene but what Bondarev calls "the subconscious" of the character or, more exactly, the conflict between the subconscious and the social (political, present). Again, subconsciously Nikitin remains in 1945 perhaps never really wishing to leave that moment of his life; even living in the social and much successful present where he reached an international recognition as a writer, first of all from his former enemy, the Germans, Nikitin lived in his memory or, more precisely, he made of his memory a living ever-present space. "Frau Herbert," said Nikitin trying to overcome his cogwheel

³⁸⁴ Yu. Bondarev, *The Shore*, p. 359.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

breathing, "in 1945 I believed that everything will change after the war, the world and all our life will be a continuous festival <...> Later the Cold War came and everything became split into two."³⁸⁶

Little doubt that the name of the heroine "Emma" alludes to Flaubert's novel *Madame Bovary* (1857) and the whole love story in *The Shore* is a somewhat response to one of Bondarev's favorite authors. Like Flaubert's Emma, Bondarev's one is fundamentally sole what represents the essence of the Western society the author criticizes. Bondarev insists that even he studies the inner, invisible part of the human existence, he remains a realist and in that sense continues the tradition of the French writer. One can even believe Bondarev since, like Flaubert, he wants to scan the woman's inward world too. If Flaubert anatomizes his Emma both on the sensual and physiological level, Bondarev remains exclusively in the framework of sensations. His idea, I think, is to show in Emma a continuity existing contrary to the world of men often torn by war and deaths. At a more symbolic level, Emma, an incarnation of what the woman should be, is what ablates the possibility of external enemy and, instead, gives the possibility of the internalization of enemy: enemy at heart. When the Russians entered her house and Granautov ordered the soldiers to interrogate her and her brother as the enemies, they failed. When Mezhenin tried to rape her, he failed too; this impossibility to harm Emma in one way or another betrays her quasi-sacred position in the novel. In a word, she is an anti-enemy.

Living in the memory as within the present influenced Nikitin's perception of reality. Often he experiences the attacks of hallucinations that drive him mad. Once he sees in a hotel room a tall man with unpleasant smile clad in black. "Who are you?," cried out Nikitin and the man disappeared like a bodiless ghost behind the door. And then with no understanding what is going on Nikitin got out of the bathroom, patches of foam fall down, and crossed over

³⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 360.

the room towards the door. He checked the door, it was locked. Trying to calm his throbbing heart, Nikitin assured himself that it was just a hallucination, possibly the result of the stress <...> However, Nikitin could not settle nerves. No, it was not a hallucination, although he locked the door, he clearly saw the man in black... Who was he?"³⁸⁷

The change of in the literary paradigm is obvious. Bondarev's main character is far from being a good socialist writer, kind of Kochetov or Shevtsov, with neither existential doubts nor hallucinations. What, indeed, happened? A general answer to this question can be as follows: the Brezhnev stability reached in the middle of the 1970s its apogee and, paradoxically or not, cleared the Soviet psychological space from politics. Always good news on TV, also always positive speeches of Leonid Brezhnev himself, an official atmosphere of prosperity with the apparent impossibility to struggle against the system alone, created a nationwide hallucination of the secure world in which politics is just a matter of the professionals. In a certain sense Bondarev was right when he turned the writer's attention to the inner invisible world of the man because in the world deprived of political issues, at least at the officious level, the man was left with no other possibility save to plunge into his or her own feelings and see what is true and what is not about them.

However, this new situation created what we call the "invisible enemy" who lived and acted according to the rules of Stierlitz: play your role and never show what you are. Indeed, the split turned out to be so profound that, as the time showed, it became irreparable. The figure of the new enemy has been shaped by the power itself.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 291.

Chapter 9. Becoming Your Enemy: Yuri Bondarev's The Choice

In order to know your enemy, you must become your enemy.

Chris Bradford

The Way of the Dragon

It would be rather a safe guess to say that the literature of Yuri Bondarev (1924 -), including his short stories and scripts, is to the official Soviet ideology what the Rambo film series is to the Reagan Doctrine. If the Rambo films aim to create the world of a worn-out Vietnam War veteran having difficulty adjusting to civilian life and whose extraordinary skills of survival explicitly allude to America's everlasting battle against communism, for democratic values, the Bondarev literature, especially his novels, creates the world of heroes who, like John Rambo, tormented by their military experience, try to find themselves in the new world came after the World War II. If Rambo uses his skills to save the lives of the others showing to the spectator that the values America stands for are universal, the Bondarev heroes, although having no super-man stature, struggle for the moral principles Soviet ideology was based on, at least rhetorically, both within themselves and in the world around them. Not haphazardly, as it seems, *First Blood* (the first film of the series) came out one year later after the publication of *The Choice*, in 1982.

The novel gained positive reviews from a variety of sources, and won the State Prize for Fiction in 1983 (also for his novel *The Shore*). The narrative structure of *The Choice*

resembles in many aspects that of *The Shore*, both novels are constructed as a sort of manifold where reality and remembrances, the present and the past overlap in such a way that the transit from reality to memories and back often occur unnoticed for the heroes themselves. In his interviews and critical remarks on what he has been up to Bondarev himself has stressed that in writing the novel his main interest was to plunge into the deepest realms of *consciousness* and try to understand profound truths about the human nature. In the recent preface to the collection of his early prose, Bondarev remarks: "In order to comprehend the literary character, to discover him not only by a verbal action, but, if you wish, by the way of his self-apprehension and self-punishment it is unnecessary to waft away the secret category of the unconscious."³⁸⁸

The plot of *The Choice* is quite simplistic. On the occasion of his exhibition, the renowned artist Vladimir Vasiliev came to Venice with his wife Masha. Unexpectedly he got a letter from his old friend Ilya Ramzin with whom they were struggling during the War World II, at the time Ramzin was also his commander. Twenty years passed after the war, the two men have never met ever since, and Ramzin asked Vasiliev for a meeting. During the meeting Ramzin tells Vasiliev his story, he was captured by the Germans in 1943 and after the end of the war could not return home because in the Soviet Union, according to Stalin's notorious axiom, the hostages were equaled to enemies, the traitors of the motherland. Ramzin tells Vasiliev that he is seriously ill having no more than five or six years ahead of him. What Ramzin is concerned about at most is his mother, and when Vasiliev tells his former friend she is alive, Ramzin asked Vasiliev to speak to her. After a while Ramzin managed to obtain permission from the Soviet officials to visit his native country and see his mother. Upon visiting the Soviet Union Ramzin meets his mother in person, it is their first and last meeting after more than twenty years of silence. *The Choice* is also a romantic – or, a

³⁸⁸ Yu. Bondarev, *The Battalions Request Fire* (Moscow: Detskaya Literatura, 2014), p. 8.

socialist romantic – novel since the part of its narrative runs in the memories and dreams of the heroes who live in two worlds, real and imaginary, mythic, at the same time; as Northrop Frye points out, “what we call romantic is the tendency to suggest implicit mythical patterns in a world more closely associated with human practice.”³⁸⁹

The main characters of *The Choice* certainly create such "mythical patterns" in trying to preserve the real world they live in with its values and codes shaped basically by the war experience and sometimes badly suited for normal life. The discrepancy between the two worlds, war and civilian, as well as between two times, past and present, *comes into clearer view when the hero sinks into his dreams and memories undergoing a dramatic change of feelings in a way the present reality looks odd and even perilous.* Before his meeting with Ilya Ramzin, Vasiliev, as he was drowsing off, clearly feels “the moony gloom wrapping the house with the opaque web, and suddenly he heard cracks of window frame when someone square-cut with leaden steps began to move toward his work room. Silence has squeezed all the world disseminating such overwhelming and unbearable grief that he started suffocating in loneliness saying farewell to his failed life which his friends considered cloudless, successful and lucky <...>.”³⁹⁰ And when Vasiliev finally meets old former friend in person, he “well remembered but barely recognized his voice which has lost its former vividness and archness of the commander. Now Ramzin pronounced his phrases abruptly with the excessive correctness peculiar to many Russian who lived long time abroad, and what hurt Vasiliev the most was not Ramzin’s look, his grey hair, artfully cut costume, his meticulously cared nails and sleek fingers, but this abrupt speech that apparently concealed his anxiety of making a mistake in pronunciation. – How does he see me? – he asked himself. The question drove Vasiliev to despair, and the very thought about the years that passed made him quail.”³⁹¹

³⁸⁹ N. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 139.

³⁹⁰ Yu. Bondarev, *Vybor* (Moscow: Molodaya Gvardiya, 1981), p. 40.

³⁹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 42.

Time is an invisible but all-pervading character in Bondarev's novel; it is divided into past and present, into what has indubitable values, as love, friendship and motherland, and what make these values obsolete: individualism, selfishness and indifference. Apparently, the latter is not compatible with communist ideology as a whole, neither with the moral presuppositions of Vasiliev who, despite his social and professional success, feels a stranger if not hostile to himself in the post-war situation.

On the one hand, Vasiliev is aware of the fact that the world of his youth, its ideals and principles is whittling away and nothing can preserve it in its initial shape; time passes and changes of all kind, including those of human relations, don't go past this world. On the other hand, this obvious fact bothers Vasiliev the most, his inner world comes barely to terms with his outer one, his past with his present. Like other main characters in the novel, he suffers from inadequacy between what he believes in and what he sees, between what he has been taught as a young man and a member of communist and what he understands now as a mature man and artist. As the overwhelming majority of tragic figures, Vasiliev is torn between his ideals he has never renounced and the possibility of their embodiment. Here lies the most dramatic point which turns the novel into a specific Soviet tragedy: due to his communist upbringing Vasiliev can never leave what he believes and loves, what imbues his art and makes sense of his life, but living in the particular historical context he realizes that his ideals and views were possible only in wartime. The critic Vladimir Korobov notes that Vasiliev "can already neither return to former himself nor find his new, another self... he is full of doubts about what he does and what he lives for."³⁹² The war was a disaster, it cost millions of lives and havoc in the country, but it also was a period when in many ways the ideals and some communist ideas came true. Needless to say, this period was so intense and challenging that in any case it could not last long, yet it was so demanding from a psychological point of

³⁹² V. Korobov, *Yuri Bondarev* (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1984), p. 281.

view – it had turned people into accomplished heroes ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the collective aim – that such ideal relations embodied in friendship, love and sublime patriotic feeling were inevitably exhausted.

Vasiliev is far from being so naive as to think that the principles and human relations on which war is based can be applied to civilian life, but this understanding does not bring him peace and comfort, or they are superficial. So was the Brezhnev stability, announced in the mid-seventies as a great achievement of the “New (Brezhnev) Deal,” that became a chief ideological mantra at the time. Nevertheless, this stability was something opposite to the war and Thaw periods, which were socially trembling and instable, each in its sense. In fact, however, the situation was quite to the contrary. What was proclaimed as permanent and the highest moral discoveries of communism, those that will conquer the world one day, turned out to be morally dubious and historically weak.

The Choice, published in 1981, one year before Brezhnev died, was a somewhat ‘alarm novel’ within the socialist-realist movement drawing much attention to the deep and still unsolved existential problems peculiar to Soviet mind. Permanent ideals turned out to be temporal; moral values, served as a ground for the new communist society, unsustainable, and human enthusiasm, having nourished much of the Soviet success, including victory in war, exhausted. In spite of the official political statements, the beginning of the eighties, started by the 1980 Summer Olympics, boycotted, besides, by the United States to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it was a time when the country looked more like a ramshackle house which shrank under its own weight. The country and let us say, collective sensibility bore a resemblance to the Soviet leader, an old and tired man who belongs to history much more than to the present.

Basically, the figure of enemy in the novel is two-level, we can tentatively call it “abstract” and “personal” or, if one prefers, “narrative” and “mythic.” *Narrative* in the sense

in use here is what happens without the hero's participation and often against his or her will, what does happen and must be accepted; *mythic* is what characterizes the hero's behaviour, no matter physical or mental. In the case of psychological prose, the characters construct their mythic world from their own past, from the memories, which is in many ways opposite or at best complimentary to the real one. Bondarev once noted that "the most secure instrument for time measurement is memory equipped with imagination."³⁹³ In *The Choice*, both Vladimir Vasiliev and Ilya Ramzin create a mythic reality that protects them from a total clash with what they are now but, as it is often the case of tragedy or drama, the irony lies in the fact that is that the same mythic reality points to the enemy inside the hero, i.e. to his consciousness split between two different and hardly compatible selves, the past and present one. In such mythic construing of reality time itself becomes enemy but of the second, narrative type. The notorious Soviet literary critic Nikolai Fedj remarks: "time in Bondarev's novel has two dimensions: specific, the time of the heroes' life, and historical, that of big events such as war, post-war reconstruction, etc. The juxtaposition of these two temporal dimensions acquires a philosophical and psychological sense in the novel inasmuch as the writer shows the intimate connection between history and the life of a particular person."³⁹⁴ Time brings changes, those changes willy-nilly concern all the aspects of life, social, private and inner, but in the mind of Vasiliev who, perhaps, learned better than others how to tarry with society, time is not the only all-powerful force, a destiny, compelling the people to obey, there is that mythic, a web of beliefs and values, that confronts any change.

Tellingly enough, in spite of Vasiliev's artistic profession, liberal *par excellence*, the mythic aspects of his consciousness conflate with the official party line suggesting that the country finally came to the epoch of stability and prosperity, and so it will go. Curiously,

³⁹³ Yu. Bondarev, *Essays on Literature and History. The Moments (Selected Writings of the Later Period)*, (Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel, 2008), p. 472.

³⁹⁴ N. Fedj, *Bondarev's Artistic Discoveries (Khudozhestvennye otkrytiya Bondareva)*, (Moscow: Sovremennik, 1988), p. 97.

neither Vasiliev, a fictional character, nor Brezhnev, the supreme leader of the country³⁹⁵ did or, most probably, could remove this mythic veil and see reality as is. It was, as I have already noted, a private mythology which had to protect the holders of the unsustainable values and beliefs from self-destruction. In this sense, the mythic characterizes both the private person, usually a member of intelligentsia, as Vasiliev or Ramzin, and the collective state of mind, a sensible pattern of the society went out of use only with the collapse of the Soviet state.

Whether Bondarev fully realized what exactly the message he sent to his public, including, perhaps, Brezhnev himself, is a matter of conjecture. It is clear, however, that the writer pointed to a deep psychological problem – came out of the post-war experience and took shape after the Khrushchev Thaw – this problem primarily concerned Russian intelligentsia squeezed between what she sees and must accept as present, thus temporal, and what she believes being permanent and true. Bondarev, focusing attention on this inner and deep split of the intelligentsia of his generation, tried to go so far as to tell his readers what he thought was new, namely that today no enemy outside, West and its influence, is more dangerous than the enemy sheltered within ourselves, something that can diminish or even completely devalue the traditional values of Russia.³⁹⁶

There is an eloquent passage in the beginning of the novel when Vasiliev and an Italian named Bozarelli, who wrote an article about Vasiliev's exhibition, discuss the contemporary art: "I would call your style rather as the realism of socialism, not the socialist realism," said Bozarelli. – "Does the terminology make any sense?, replied Vasiliev. – "Alas," said Bozarelli, "today the rules of the game compel me to love everyone. Critic is a courtesan, he must love all. My tragedy is that can't love all, some of the artists I even hate,

³⁹⁵ Recently published Brezhnev's private diaries show that the General Secretary did believe in what he had pronounced in his speeches and did share at large the ideals of communism. He was certainly convinced that the so-called advanced socialism has been already constructed in the USSR viewing his role, especially from the mid-seventies onwards, as the supporter of what has been already done.

³⁹⁶ In an interview, Bondarev relates that "political tempests and cultural hurricanes that would destroy the country originated in the quiet atmosphere of the late 1970s. And that is true. Precisely the carriers of such 'Catacomb', 'cabinet' and 'kitchen' culture, after they had gradually risen to power, became the 'revolutionary guard' of the coming coup" in Bondarev, *Essays on Literature*, p. 172.

but must love them.” – “Regrettably, it is so everywhere in the world,” said Vasiliev unkindly, “Because the human life today is just a trigger for art, but creativity is something personal, it expresses personality. To hell with the courtesans, signor Vasiliev!” <...> The task of art is to save the human into human beings, without all these damn De Sads, Freuds, and Sacher-Masochs, said Vasiliev.”³⁹⁷ The Italian critic is certainly a sympathizer of Vasiliev’s paintings, he shares with him his pessimistic thoughts on contemporary Western art making no exception for socialist realism. Vasiliev, in his turn, stresses the fact that the latter is the true art at least because it has never lost sight of the fundamental values common to humanity as a whole. Once again, Vasiliev speaks to Bozarelli from his mythic world coming with the same argument that painting, like other forms of art, should be concerned about the fundamental and eternal questions leaving aside all those gewgaws dear to contemporary vogue.

To put it another way, in the conversation with Bozarelli, Vasiliev defends the mythic against the narrative; the Italian art critic is not hostile to the Russian painter and to what he does, but as a man from the West he belongs to the present and narrative, i.e. to the world undergoing constant change and deprived of positive targets, the world governed by certain uncontrolled forces, like art market and vogue, thus dissolved to uncertainty. In opposing here the Western narrative to the Russian mythic, Bondarev offers his view on what the Russian choice is, making his protagonist, Vasiliev, the advocate of this view. Further, the fact that Venice has been chosen by the writer as the place of Vasiliev’s exhibition and his conversation with Bozarelli seems not to be random. Venice, a city renowned for its political freedom and social harmony, in 1309 anathemized by the Pope Climent V, is also a cradle of *comedia dell’arte* and mask festival, it is a place where everyone can chose his or her own mask and play the role he or she likes. Choosing Venice, Bondarev allegorically endowed his characters with its freedom and allows them to express any hidden thoughts and wishes they

³⁹⁷ Yu. Bondarev, *Vybor* (Moscow: Molodaya Gvardiya, 1981), p. 29-30.

could have. Thoughts and wishes come to light because, as Peter Ackroyd nicely noted, “there is no inwardness in Venice,”³⁹⁸ and, hiding one’s face, masks let speak. Supposedly, Bondarev’s picture of Venetian carnival in the novel is an innuendo to the Khrushchev Thaw and its carnivalesque frame to teach his reader that the freedom carnival gives to its participants changes nothing in their true nature. Thus, in *The Choice*, the Thaw period is, once again, opposed to the Brezhnev stability as masks to the real face.

Whatever new tastes and settings, rules and players, the true art is salvation, like Soviet Russia itself whose role, in the writer’s eyes, is to keep untouched the human within human beings. It is not haphazardly that in 2015 Bondarev was awarded the Patriarchal Literary Prize, established for years earlier, for his contribution to the spiritual education of the Russian people and work on propagation of the Orthodox values.

The Prize will find Bondarev decades later, but now, in the beginning of the eighties, as a Soviet writer, always subject to the socialist literary standards, solving the problem of the choice for intelligentsia, Bondarev must take his own position both as a writer and citizen, and give his own answer to this problem. His answer is definitive: although he does not judge his heroes in a way the Stalinist writers did, the novel ends by the suicide of Ramzin who comes to realize the meaninglessness of his existence outside his native country. “My great motherland buried me long time ago in the soldier-like way or as an officer... But I am still alive. Fantastic isn’t it?”³⁹⁹ Importantly, the conversation that follows reveals the clash between the narrative and the mythic as well as between two main characters of the novel who, after many years apart, look at the same things from different perspectives. Ramzin tries to explain to Vasiliev that, being captured by the Germans, he got no chance to return home, it was like a death sentence at the time. Vasiliev knows well the Stalinist rules showing neither approval nor disdain towards his former military commander; the story of Ramzin or, more

³⁹⁸ P. Ackroyd, *Venice. Pure City* (London: Vintage Books, 2009), p. 163.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

precisely, the way he tells his story is narrative in the sense I use this concept here because he feels and describes himself as a victim of circumstances, a set of tragic events happened to him without any possibility to change anything. What could he do if destiny, objective forces which made his history for him, were so powerful that no individual could do anything against them. Ramzin was bold and clever, he loved his motherland no less than his comrades, but when what must have happened happens, even the true love for your country, boldness and belief in communist ideals could not save one from misfortune. Vasiliev with his mythic view of things asks Ramzin how could the Russian officer nevertheless survive in the German captivity? “I will tell you,” Ramzin said, “I have grasped for any chance to live. Moreover, I will tell you, there I realized what life is and what is it like to be *a* worthless person. – Where did he get this scar on the temple?,” thought Vasiliev. He hated himself for this question trying to appease his doubts imagining Ilya had fallen unconscious due to the wound in the temple at that fatal night when they were ordered to fetch the weapon left in the occupied territory <...> And now, do you still fight for your life now? – *Now my life is not worth living.*”⁴⁰⁰

Becoming the enemy of their own, however at different levels, the narrative and mythic, both men realize completely that now the common past, happy youth and mutual values they ever had, matter little or nothing for them today; they became strangers not only to each other but to themselves. No attempt to rekindle the former friendship is already possible, it all had passed in irrevocable manner. Even their memories from the past do not speak to them in the same language. If Ramzin tries to find a justification of his choice and right to live seeing no reason to be morally punished by his former friend, Vasiliev, on the contrary, enjoying unchallenged moral stature, at least in his friend’s eyes, wants to justify his luck and social success that sometimes having hostile feelings towards himself. Yuri Idashkin,

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 48.

another Bondarev scholar, is right saying that “among all Bondarev’s positive characters Vasiliev seems to be the least canonical one. Vasiliev permits the writer to highlight the most important social, ethical, and aesthetic problems worrying our contemporaries.”⁴⁰¹ When Ilya Ramzin asks him for help in obtaining Russian visa, Vasiliev “began to hate himself thinking that now they both came to an abyss which in a moment will absorb the sacred and dear that was between them in the remote past, something that they will never have again.”⁴⁰²

As the last demonstration of his good will, Vasiliev agrees to accompany Ramzin to visit his mother, Raisa Mikhailovna, the only person on earth Ramzin still loved, a tired old lady who has never ceased to think of her son, their meeting is an easily readable allusion to Rembrandt’s *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (1669). Like in Rembrandt’s painting where the son has returned home in a wretched state from travels in which he wasted the inheritance received from his father, in *The Choice* Ramzin returns to his mother and, after a short exchange of words, understands that he lost her trust. He kisses her tenderly, wishing for forgiveness, and offers money, but she declined telling him that all she ever wanted from him was love. “Mother, I am not a poor man, believe me,” said Ilya. You will not make me poor. Every month I will send you money, you will be able to buy everything you wish in special shops reserved for foreigners... Raisa Mikhailovna took her hands off her face, gave Ilya a dry look, smiled gloomily: – Too late, Ilyusha. Life passed. You came to the end of my life.”⁴⁰³

In a Rembrandt-like style Bondarev depicts the picture of irreversible events; if one made the wrong choice, becoming his own enemy, even the mother’s love can vanish and no salvation can be found in this case. Unlike in the preceding epoch of the Thaw, allowing the carnivalesque reversibility of time and values, the Brezhnev stability was the period when everyone was supposed to make the right choice, according to the mythic worldview shared by all who accepted or must have been to accept the Brezhnev shift in Soviet paradigm, even

⁴⁰¹ Yu. Idashkin, *Yuri Bondarev* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1987), p. 193.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 50-51.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

those who, like Bondarev, sensed its unsustainable nature and tried to find a remedy, however in vain.

To that extent, Bondarev's position is close to Yurchak's one, when the latter argues that Soviet people "were reproducing the system and participating in its continuous internal displacement."⁴⁰⁴ Everybody was taking part to the meaningless rituals – or at least those rituals had different meanings than the original ones – and progressively the gap between Soviet myth and reality has become wider and wider. During Perestroika, the myth itself ceased to exist.

⁴⁰⁴ Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, p. 294.

Conclusion

At the term of this study on the enemy, one can be struck by the variety of his faces on the relatively short span of forty years. This diversity was aroused by the propaganda contest in the wake of the Cold War. But it was also an evidence of the fluid nature of the Party line. From the moment of the revolution, state ideology has constantly been changing and adapting itself to circumstances, so demonstrating its fundamental instability. The originality of my research lies in its interdisciplinary approach to decipher Soviet ideology, resorting to political scientists, historians and anthropologists. Moreover, it includes authors not previously studied (namely Shpanov, Kochetov, Eriomin, Maltsev, Bondarev and Kochetov), unpublished materials I collected in the archives of the Soviet Writers' Union (Moscow), and the literary criticism of the epoch.

Under Stalin, in the aftermath of World War II and concomitant to the first skirmishes of the Cold War, the enemy was highly political. He concentrated the features of the invader (the Nazi agents), of the spy (Shpanov's 'enemy with a cloak and a dagger'), of the political elites betraying their people (the French or the Italian politicians). The characters of the official prose were embodying the recent and actual history: the threat to the very existence of the Soviet Union and the setting up of the new world order. For example, the « Italian conspiracy scheme » I reconstructed in the text of *Storm over Rome* made the transition between the enemy-invader and the hostile influence. Moreover, the line of the alliance with the Nazis is another clue of the persistence of the former enemy in the shaping of the Cold war one; his profane nature anticipates the ethical dimension of the Communist dogma during the Thaw.

After Stalin's death, the enemy paradigm was adjusted to the new moulds of ideology. The situation was totally different. Hitherto the country did not have any more the enemy at the gates and the Party leadership was aimed to enjoy the fruits of the hard and bloody last decades. According to Khrushchev prophecy, the Communist society was to be built. There is a rich body of scholarly literature on the question of the Thaw enemy. Miriam Dobson considers that "the vitriolic invective elaborated as part of the ritual of the Stalinist performance was now shifted from those once imagined as spies or saboteurs, modified and redirected towards those regarded as threats to social order and respectable conformity."⁴⁰⁵ Denis Kozlov brings some reservations to this statement, arguing that "changes in ideas of social membership during the 1960s went beyond "refashioning the enemy" and portended a gradual but noticeable decline in the exclusionary paradigm of social membership."⁴⁰⁶ Apart from the social outcasts, the moral stance of the Thaw was castigating the liberal intelligentsia, suspected for conveying the 'seeds of decay.' The Thaw enemy, as he appears in the novels of Vsevolod Kochetov, was a threat to the communist orthodoxy. His mercantile or/and egoistic motives, despising revolutionary romanticism and the sacrifices at war, tends imperceptibly to seduce the young minds.

Later, the period of Stagnation was dominated by a general feeling of loss and uncertainty: the war casualties echo the absurdity of mass murders (Bondarev's *The Choice*, 1981) and the losses of a heavenly Golden Age destroyed by modernization, mourned by the authors of the "village prose." The Soviet writer was tempted to seek shelter in introspection, trying to struggle against the invisible enemy.

⁴⁰⁵ See Miriam Dobson, "Refashioning the Enemy: Popular Beliefs and the Rhetoric of Destalinization, 1953–1964" (Ph.D. diss., University College London, 2003), 281.

⁴⁰⁶ See Denis Kozlov, "'I Have Not Read, but I Will Say': Soviet Literary Audiences and Changing Ideas of Social Membership, 1958-66" in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 7, Number 3, Summer 2006 (New Series), pp. 557-597, 589.

Through the evolution of the trope of enemy, one can observe a double phenomenon: as time goes on, the character of the enemy has become more interiorized and more abstract.

Indeed, there was a tightening of the ‘hostile space,’ drifting away from the frontier of the empire towards the intellectual’s own consciousness and memories. For sure, the Stalinist enemy was a Nazi soldier on the battlefield or a spy trying to infiltrate the Soviet territory. Under Stalin, the enemy is from outside of the Soviet Union. As I tried to demonstrate with Maltsev and Eriomin, the enemy can be the enemy outside the country but inside the Communist movement. The denunciation of Stalin crimes was an earthquake which destroyed the Stalinist topology with its gigantic scale. It was replaced by reduced Thaw localities, allowing people to interact with each other and to participate to the life of small groups (the classroom, the kitchen, and so on...). This reduction has permitted the creation of interpersonal intimacy and to foster friendship as a social and aesthetical category of the Thaw (*I Am Twenty* by Khutsiev, 1965, *Walking the Streets of Moscow* by Daneliya, 1964). As a consequence, the enemy can be only the enemy inside, threatening to *contaminate* these “morally pure” small spaces with subversive Western values.

Once Brezhnev stability was reached, politics were expelled from the citizens’ concerns. The permanent illusion of a prosperous country conveyed by all the media and repeated in each Brezhnev’s speech along with the absence of any lever to conduct civic action has led the Soviet people to neglect the political arena. Without the possibility of involvement in civic life, the man has no choice but to seek refuge into introspection. This ultimate ‘mental space,’ the most reduced and the most hidden of hostile topology, is an oasis of freedom where the intellectual can give way to his doubts and remorse. After the Stalinist epics and the Thaw collective Bacchanalia, which left the bitter taste of unrealized utopias, the Stagnation was offering the more modest but glittering dream of private happiness. Such films as *Duck hunting* (Vampilov, 1967), *The Irony of Fate* (Ryazanov, 1976), *Office romance* (Ryazanov,

1977) do not show extraordinary heroes but, on the opposite, the average person and his inner circle, be it his beloved or his friends. Analogously, Bondarev's heroes Nikitin and Vasiliev are condemned to struggle with their demons deep down inside themselves.

In parallel with the reduction of the territory of enmity, the enemy has become more and more evanescent. The Stalinist enemy was a character of blood and flesh presenting the risk of political as well as physical damages: the Nazi officers or the agents of capitalism were aimed to cause human loss among the Soviet population and the ruin of the country. Of course, the ideological credo of these protagonists was totally different from the Soviet one, but the ideology *per se* was not at stake. That was a fight for survival.

Under Khrushchev, things strongly differ. Several reasons explain the dematerialisation of the enemy. Firstly, victory over Nazism destroyed the physical enemy. Moreover, unlike the late Stalinism, the mid-1950s was already the time when Soviet people began to forget the persisting rear of German tanks and to come back to the ordinary life after reconstruction. Henceforth the threat was limited to the ideological sphere. This shift from the political to the ideological content of the debates appears in the 'Problem of Generations' as "one of the basic factors contributing to the genesis of the dynamic of historical development."⁴⁰⁷ The children of war were the sons of the children of Revolution, they *were* the new men, the products of Communism; they epitomized this idea. Analyzing the film *The Big Family* (1954) based on Vsevolod Kochetov's novel *The Zhurbins* (1952) which tells the story of the dynasty of steamboat manufacturers, Evgeny Dobrenko notices the difference in the cast of the actors between Zhurbin Jr. and Zhurbin Sr.: the choice of Alexander Batalov with his thoughtful face introduces a new type of "educated worker"⁴⁰⁸ in contrast with his father's stakhanovist

⁴⁰⁷ Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations", *Essays in the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Routledge and Keagan Paul, 1959 (first published in 1952), p.320. To Mannheim, "Youth experiencing the same concrete historical problems may be said to be part of the same actual generation" (p.304).

⁴⁰⁸ Evgeny Dobrenko, *Political Economy of Socialist Realism* (Moscow: NLO, 2007), 351.

stature, played by Boris Andreev. There is nothing surprising in it. As the author explains earlier, the new model is “the realized utopy *hic et nunc*.”⁴⁰⁹ Besides, in the overwhelming majority of the Thaw fiction the artists have replaced workers as main characters. From now on heroes and enemies epitomized ideas rather than the people itself. They were promoting an ethic of faith more than a social order *per se*.

Finally, the reason for which the enemy has become more and more abstract in the course of the Cold War had to do with the evolution of the Party line. And here the circle comes back around. Carl Schmitt’s theory, used as the premise of our research, appears anew as the converse of his basic assumption: if, according to Carl Schmitt, the definition of the enemy allows the emergence of a politicized world, so in return, the weakened political doctrine can only cloud the outlines of the enemy, making them fuzzy and evanescent. And it was precisely the case during Brezhnev’s rule: half-a-century old Lenin’s testimony and its “revolutionary-imperial paradigm,”⁴¹⁰ yet renewed by the Stalinist patriotic doctrine, became ramshackle. Its theoretical content, elaborated in the beginning of the twentieth century, had already nothing in common with the 1970s Soviet reality within the Cold War world (Yurchak). In 1975, after the Helsinki Accords marking the climax of the Détente, the Soviet Union has made the most of this atmosphere of appeasement to set back from an active involvement in the international affairs. At the same moment, Brezhnev himself began to retire from power. Despite the fact that he remained the General Secretary of the Party until his death in 1982, the Soviet leader has lost his interest in political affairs and was no more exercising power. The country was ruled by Brezhnev’s inner circle, beginning with Yuri Andropov. In addition, the inertial force of *partocratia* and, first of all, of the old Politburo barred any “fresh contact,” the “up-to-dateness of the Youth.”⁴¹¹ On the eve of Perestroika, the Soviet dissidents became in the majority of cases the mentally sick, “fools” who had to be

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 348.

⁴¹⁰ Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War*.

⁴¹¹ Karl Mannheim, 300-301.

cured in psychiatric hospitals. The enemy just vanished, a few years before the Soviet Union did.

Fearful and phantasmagorical, the enemy is surrounded by an inspiring universe which unleashes people's imagination. Allowing projecting on himself the deep processes of sublimation, identification, and rejection, the enemy is the most effective tool to focus the attention of the masses and to mobilize their affects on the mottos dictated by the power. In the Soviet Union, the specific function of literature as the space dedicated for the political and ideological debates (Clark) has put the enemy at the centre of the readers' interest.

Hence, not only literature mirrors reality, it also changes history. Through novels the face of the Cold war enemy has conquered the Soviet minds which in their turn were involved in the shaping of the country's policy. Then occurs what Sam Keen calls the "adversarial symbiosis,"⁴¹² an interdependent system where enemies need each other to define their own strategies and, eventually, themselves. In the Soviet Union the unsustainable nature of Socialist Realism has led to the entire evaporation of the enemy. Soon after the country itself vanished. Socialist Realism, the language of power, turned out to be the best proof of what Winston Churchill calls the "power of words." The depositary of this sacred gift, the Soviet intelligentsia was called upon to perform the supreme task of author of his epoch. While Stalin was the conductor of the orchestra composed of professional writers, the score chosen by the power was thoroughly followed. However, in 1953, after the total control over literature stopped, to write the national narrative – with its mighty or modest protagonists – proved to be a too hazardous game for the power in place. Eventually, the poet found himself an enemy of his own story.

⁴¹² *Ibid*, p. 22.

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