TROIKA

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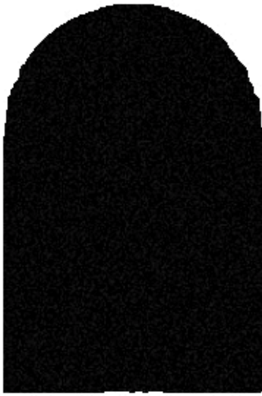
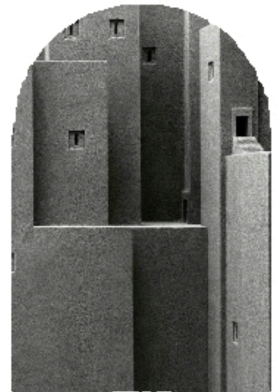
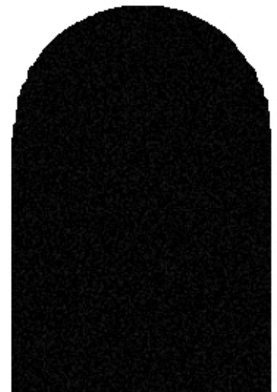
Spring 2023







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A Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

This edition of Troika is our second publication after a two year hiatus due to the pandemic. While we have been able to get the journal up and running again, we still faced road bumps along the way. Our team perservered through it all, and are so happy we can continue publishing the brilliant work of undergraduates in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies across the world.

We are saddened by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the war that perisists.

Though many of our pieces are associated with Russian politics, art, and writing this is not indicative of support for Russia. We publish pieces submitted to us, and do not look for pieces that fit a specific agenda or political view. Troika's main goal is to highlight and celebrate undergradutate work.

This issue could not have happened without our amazing team who worked so hard this entire year. We are ecstaic that we have been able to recover from the pandemic, and that we continue to publish brilliant work. The team is excited for you to read our 2023 issue and we hope you enjoy it!

Angelica Smith & Troika Team
Spring 2023

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Is Putin Just A Dostoevsky Character?

Blake Bullock, Brigham Young University

On February 24th, 2022, after months of tensions and the buildup of hundreds of thousands of troops along Russia's border with Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale invasion with the aim of capturing Ukrainian territory and annexing it for the Russian Federation. The world watches with horror as cities are bombarded, civilians murdered, and war crimes perpetrated. People ask themselves, – *what on earth possessed him to do it? Why so callously mock another state's sovereignty? Why subject hundreds of thousands of young, conscripted soldiers to the horrors of war?* I've been pondering these very questions over the past year. In studying Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, which psychoanalyzes the leading up to and the aftermath of the main character Rodion Raskolnikov's committed murders, I discovered eerie parallels between Raskolnikov's and Putin's rhetoric and actions that may decode, at least in part, Putin's baffling behavior. Thwarting the notion of independence in Eastern Europe, Putin seeks to justify himself in committing atrocities and aggrandize himself as one of Russia's greatest leaders by alleging that Ukraine is an oppressive regime that actively discriminates against its Russian-speaking population and that Russia must step in to save the sinking ship.

Early in *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikov toys with the idea of slaying Alyona Ivanovna, a greedy pawnbroker, on the grounds that society would be better off without her. Alyona Ivanovna is described as being a "disgusting little hag," "a terrible harpy," someone who is "wicked" and "capricious," who "gives four times less than the thing is worth, and takes five or seven percent a month" for her customers' pledges (Dostoevsky, 67). In essence, Alyona Ivanovna is loathed by those who know her. Likewise, Putin charges that Ukraine is foul and oppressive and that Ukrainians that speak Russian "are being forced to deny their roots" and that they "are not allowed to raise their heads" and "have had their legal opportunity to defend their point of view in fact taken away from them," "facing the creation of a climate of fear in Ukrainian society, aggressive rhetoric, indulging neo-Nazis and militarizing the country" (Putin, 2021). Putin claims that Russian-speaking Ukrainians are being oppressed under conditions of absolute despotism that must be abolished. Indeed, he proclaims "we [Russians and Ukrainians] are one people" and "we will never allow our [Russia's] historical territories and people close to us living there to be used against Russia," implying his intent to interfere in Ukraine's sovereign internal affairs to suit Russia's interests, thus preventing true political independence in Eastern Europe (Putin, 2021). He insists that "true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia," and with that statement he drives home his point that Russia's purportedly benevolent intervention is the only way for Ukraine's accused injustices to be adequately addressed, thus weakening Ukraine's autonomy and implying the underlying ineptitude of the state's government (Putin, 2021). Raskolnikov has similar ideas, and he when overhears some men talking about the pawnbroker in a bar saying that "a hundred, maybe a thousand good deeds…could be arranged and set going by the money that old woman has doomed to the monastery," he perks up his ears (Dostoevsky, 69). The man goes on to say that someone should "kill her and take her money," and then asks the rhetorical question, "wouldn't thousands of good deeds make up for one tiny little crime?" As he listens, Raskolnikov realizes that "exactly the same thoughts had just been conceived in his own head" (Dostoevsky, 69). These ideas pose an intriguing dilemma: are there situations in which transgressing against moral and legal codes is justified for achieving the greater good of society? Raskolnikov, it seems, feels that the answer to that question is *yes*, as does Putin. This is evidenced by the fact that Putin maintains that the alleged systematic oppression of Russian-speaking Ukrainians can only be addressed by Russia both literally and metaphorically stepping in. From the rhetoric contained in his essay and his subsequent actions, it can be deduced that Putin, who "vowed to protect people from eight years of Ukrainian bullying and genocide," feels justified in committing murder just like Raskolnikov does, taking lives

so that others' lives can be spared (Kirby, 2023).

It seems that there's another dimension to this, though. Raskolnikov's essay and the ideas contained therein paint a strange picture, one that puts people into one of two categories—the ordinary and the extraordinary. Raskolnikov breaks down his dichotomy of ordinary and extraordinary people and puts forth the idea that "an 'extraordinary man' has the right…that is, not an official right, but his own right, to allow his conscience to…step over certain obstacles…only in the event that the fulfillment of his idea…calls for it," intimating that if a man has decided for himself that he is extraordinary, he may do whatever deems necessary to achieve his grandiose goals (Dostoevsky, 272). An extraordinary man is above laws and morals as long as the ends justify the means, even if it means "sacrificing the lives of one, or ten, or a hundred or more people" (Dostoevsky, 272). Once an extraordinary man has determined his own greatness, his greatness knows no bounds and his work's importance exceeds that of human lives. Later, as Raskolnikov confesses his murders to Sonya, he explains his motives, alluding to ideas from his essay. He reports that prior to the murders he asked himself questions such as "do I have the right to have power?" or "would Napoleon have gone ahead or not?" which essentially equates to asking himself whether he is extraordinary, and therefore, whether he has the right of an extraordinary man to remove pesky ethical obstacles from his path to greatness (Dostoevsky, 440-441). He exclaims, "I wanted to kill…for myself, for myself alone," indicating that he committed the murders to prove a point to himself and to test his nerve, and by so doing he finds out if he is "a louse like all the rest, or a man" (Dostoevksy, 441). It's entirely possible that Putin has the same sorts of ideas and personally aspires to greatness or being infamous, depending on who you ask. During an interview, he "compared himself to Peter the Great, saying he shares the 18th-century czar's goal of returning 'Russian lands' to a greater empire," indicating his desire to become one of the all-stars of Russian history by pilfering Ukraine's territory (Smith, 2022). But has he been proven to be a louse like all the rest, or a man? The war has not been quick nor has it been as easy as it was once assumed it would be, and Putin "has sought to distance himself from military failures," and "his authority, at least outside Russia, has been shredded" (Kirby, 2023). Whatever Putin thought this war might do to bolster his reputation as a mighty leader is not panning out, and the world sees him as a despicable warmonger instead of a glorious liberator. As Raskolnikov came to find that "he's 'exactly the same louse as all the rest,' and he failed his own test to see if he was truly extraordinary, Putin is running into the same dilemma, having desired to prove himself extraordinary by calculated transgression but instead falling on his face (Dostoevsky, 441).

One question remains, though: what will become of Putin? Raskolnikov's fate is fixed: he admits culpability and is sentenced to eight years of hard labor in Siberia. It's clear that Raskolnikov's delusions of grandeur have led him astray, and as he contemplates his life in a Siberian hard labor camp, he reflects that "existence alone had never been enough for him; he had always wanted more" and that "perhaps it was only from the force of his desires that he had regarded himself as a man to whom more was permitted than others" (Dostoevsky, 572). Despite desiring to be great, and feeling that his goals warranted taking ethical liberties, the only thing his ideas do for him is send him to a forced labor camp. Putin's story is ongoing, though, and it's unclear what will happen to him. Perhaps he's beginning to come to some of the same realizations that Raskolnikov did, but questions abound about his fate. Will he be deposed and exiled? Will he be tried for war crimes? Will he himself admit defeat and come quietly, as Raskolnikov did? Will he come to terms with his true motivations and understand where he went wrong? Time will tell. But it's important to note that thus far, Putin has been going down the same path as Raskolnikov, albeit on a much grander scale, so it follows that he could face similar consequences to his literary counterpart.

All in all, Putin and Raskolnikov's rhetoric and actions bear distinct similarities to one another. Putin seeks to ennoble himself as the proud defender of Russian-speaking Ukrainians' rights and the great unifier of Russian-speaking peoples, self-justifying himself to perpetrate crimes on an unfathomable scale in order to advance his agenda – and thereby crippling the country's independence. Raskolnikov views himself as a Robinhood figure, aiming to ascend to greatness through his morally ambiguous exploits of killing a wealthy woman with the reasoned motive of distributing her riches to the hud-

dled masses, but in actuality merely seeking to prove that he is extraordinary and failing. *Crime and Punishment* is a fictional story with a beginning, middle, and end, but Putin exists in the real world so his saga is ongoing. In closing, I'd like to leave two questions for the reader to consider: 1) What will become of Putin? 2) As long as Putin is in the picture, can there be true independence in Eastern Europe?

Trickster

Valeriya Umerova, University of California Berkeley

Обманщик

Мой отец был чудовищным глобусом который улыбался над криками моей нежной, деликатной матери. Он гулял по городу, забавляя людей своими шутками и бесконечно забавными историями. Чернота в его глазах осталась незамеченной всеми, кроме нее, которая могла видеть завораживающее безобразие его необыкновенного остроумия и легкой манеры.

Он верил, что любил; не был любим; и его жизнь была жестокой трагедией. И когда он говорил, он либо злобно смеялся, либо невыносимо кричал, холодная пустота пронзила его шоколадно-молочное лицо.

Экстаз плавания в соленой воде каждого был его греховным сном. Страшный кошмар, в котором он наслаждался собой. И истории его детства в конце концов затуманили его измученные глаза. Он отказывался от своих болезненных страстей, но никогда не от себя.

Trickster

My father was the kind of monstrous globe who smiled at the screaming of my delicate mother. He walked through town amusing people with his jokes and endless funny stories. The black in his eyes going unnoticed by everyone but her who could see the fascinating ugliness of his extraordinary wit and easy manner.

He believed that he loved; was not loved; and his life was a cruel tragedy. And when he spoke, he either spitefully laughed or unbearably screamed, the chilling emptiness shooting through his chocolate milk face.

The ecstasy of swimming in everyone's salt water was a sinful dream of his. The dreadful nightmare that he had ravishingly enjoyed himself in. And the stories of his childhood had eventually dimmed his tormented eyes. He was abandoning his morbid passions, but never himself.

Introspectivity, the Root of Happiness

Ivan Fediv, Notre Dame

The Brothers Karamazov, Fyodor Dostoyevsky observes three types of relationships, namely, an individual's relationship with themself, with their community, and with God. In doing so, he highlights the fundamental role of introspectivity—the ability to reflect on one's thoughts or actions and develop them fruitfully. As such, Dostoyevsky not only shows how neglecting introspectivity fractures these relationships, but he dives even deeper by observing that in absence of introspectivity, good relationships can no longer be cultivated on any level. This is because introspectivity serves two important functions. First, it guides individuals to reflect on harmful thoughts and actions. Then, it motivates those individuals to seek reparation. This process paves a path for redemption against sin and allows those who exhibit introspectivity to, as the epigraph states, "bringeth forth much fruit" for themselves and others (8).

To illustrate the importance of introspectivity and its fundamental role in character development, Dostoyevsky dissects the lives of a father, Fyodor, and his two sons, Dimitri and Alyosha Karamazov. From the outset of the novel, Fyodor struggles to learn from his errors and, at times, even embraces them. His inability to overcome his flaws through self-reflection seeps into and infects his interpersonal relationships, which are found selfish and base. As a result, Fyodor lives miserably and dies tragically, a clear warning to Dostoyevsky's readers not to live such a way. Dimitri inherits his father's sensualist tendencies, making him a danger to society. Yet, unlike Fyodor, Dimitri somewhat maintains a sense of introspectivity, which allows him to achieve redemption, however slowly. Even so, Dostoyevsky makes clear that Dimitri's setbacks cause him to lapse back into his foolish ways, as seen in his interactions with his father and Katerina Ivanovna. Nonetheless, Dimitri's character arch offers readers a glimpse of hope that all sins can be mended through introspectivity. Finally, Alyosha is a saintly figure, whose ability to reflect on his actions and how they affect others not only grants him self-mastery but motivates strong relationships with others and God.

Fyodor Karamazov lacks introspection, by which his focus on personal indulgences neglects the impacts his way of life has on those around him. In the initial chapters, Dostoevsky highlights how this way of life appears, foreshadowing Fyodor's inevitable ruin. For instance, Dostoevsky writes, "He seemed to find it enjoyable and even flattering to act out before everyone the preposterous role of the injured spouse" (18). Fyodor's tendency to enjoy living the life of a public fool so as not to undergo a character change shows he would rather cause suffering to those around him than suffering himself to change. Dostoyevsky reiterates this idea when he writes, "Many would even add that in their opinion he enjoyed appearing in the revamped guise of a buffoon," to highlight that Fyodor's actions are of free choice (18). Dostoyevsky thus acknowledges that introspectivity requires self-sacrifice, a virtue Fyodor is unwilling to cultivate. Because Fyodor cannot exhibit introspectivity on a personal level, he acts selfishly, creating disorder for himself and those around him. In many respects, Fyodor is like a ship in a storm lost at sea in that, without a moral compass, he lacks control over his actions.

In this immediate path are Fyodor's wives and children, who are left to deal with the unjust consequences of his actions. Dostoyevsky acknowledges the ripple effect of Fyodor's sensualist tendencies, acknowledging that, "It may, of course, be imagined what kind of an educator and father such a man (Fyodor) would be" (19). This powerful quote from the narrator acknowledges the idea that Fyodor's inability to turn inwards and understand his priorities sets both his family and himself up for failure. For Dostoyevsky, action is necessary for change and Fyodor's inability to act on his foolish nature leads to two failed marriages and three forgotten children. Rather than reflecting on why his first marriage failed, Fyodor embraces his vile behavior by having orgies in the presence of his second wife and spending his time "extravagantly, drunk and indulged in debauchery" (22). In addition to the traumatizing effects that this undoubtedly had on his second wife, Sofya, his sons also suffer greatly. Alyosha and Ivan

"suffered almost precisely the same fate as that endured by the first son, Dimitri: they were completely forgotten and neglected by their father" (24). It is heart-wrenching that these young children, who have no way of reconciling their father's actions, are unjustly left to bear the consequences of his buffoonery. If Fyodor had reflected on how his choices impacted his family, he could've prevented the suffering of his children both when they're young and as they age.

Although Fyodor does not necessarily acknowledge the existence of Alyosha, his lack of restraint and decadence sets barriers in their relationship. However calm and collected, Alyosha struggles to deal with his father, as in chapter 3, book 8, when Fyodor verbally attacks his second wife, Sofya, who is at this point dead in the novel: "The drunken old codger continued to spray himself with spittle and did not notice anything" (183). Fyodor's provocative statements evoke a strong emotional response from Alyosha, who loved his zealous Christian mother. Alyosha's reaction is unlike anything seen throughout the novel: "He turned red, his eyes began to burn, his lips to tremble… then he covered his face with his hands, fell as though the legs had been cut from under him" (183). Despite witnessing his son in such a fragile state, Fyodor fails to properly console him, thus echoing his deficit of emotion as a casualty of his inappropriate behavior.

The Karamazov family is not alone in suffering from Fyodor's provocative behavior and corollary lack of introspection. During the rape of Lizaveta, although not entirely clear as to whether she became pregnant, the implication is strong. Fyodor refers to Lizaveta as a woman with a "special kind of piquancy" while he is both intoxicated and "behaving outrageously," following the death of his wife (132). Additionally, when everyone is surprised that she is pregnant, Fyodor does not show any signs of empathy for the woman he previously observed with great interest. Dostoevsky bolsters this insinuation by drawing attention to the fact that, by the time the town had received word of the pregnancy, the potential witnesses "had gone their separate ways" (133). Given what is already known about Fyodor's inability to mend his vulgar ways, it is clear that Dostoyevsky wants to show his readers the threat Fyodor's lack of introspection poses to the rest of society. In the same way his family had to bear the unjust burden of his actions, Fyodor claims two new victims: Lizaveta, who is left to deliver a baby on her own, and Smerdyakov, her son, now a bastard-child.

Fyodor's failure to build fruitful relationships through introspection on a personal or social level also impedes his ability to understand God, leaving him without any sense of inner peace. In light of this book being a Christian novel, it is important to consider the concept of an afterlife as a motivation to both become a better person and bear the struggles of life. For many, including Alyosha and Father Zosima, the teachings of Christ are coupled with the virtue of introspection to offer guidance on how to actively become a better person. However, Fyodor's inability to think about whether his actions are just or not affects his ability to intellectually contemplate the notion of justice itself. This impedes his spiritual development, rendering him helpless and unconcerned with the notion of morality. "Fyodor Pavlovich would on occasion suddenly experience within himself, in his drunken moments, a sense of spiritual terror and moral concussion that echoed… within his soul" (126). Despite his state of vulnerability, Fyodor refuses to turn to God for help but instead denounces heaven, suggesting that he will never change: "'I don't want to go there… any decent man would be ashamed to go to that paradise of yours'" (228).

Despite the miserable outcome for Fyodor, change is possible in Dostoyevsky's world as exemplified in Dimitri's development. Dimitri Karamazov would follow the same path as his father but eventually become an introspective man. In many respects, Dimitri experiences disorder in his life because he does not know any better, reemphasizing Dostoyevsky's view on the effects a non-introspective father has on his children. In fact, Dimitri lives an almost identical lifestyle to that of his father's, spending money on women, getting drunk, and maintaining unhappy relationships. However, unlike his father, Dimitri exhibits episodes of introspectivity which develop as the novel progresses. For Dostoyevsky, this single aspect is the difference between Dimitri, who slowly struggles to cultivate relationships on all levels, and Fyodor who struggles to even understand himself.

From the beginning of the book, Dimitri exhibits episodes of introspectivity as he reflects on the disorder in his life. This is seen in book 3, chapter 3,

where Dimitri confesses his unsettling state of life to Alyosha, "Why, brother, I think of almost nothing else but that degraded man (referring to a poem he read)... The reason I think about that man is that I myself am such a man" (143). Dimitri's ability to acknowledge his wrongdoing offers hope for his future because, for Dostoyevsky, personal acknowledgment of wrongdoing allows for action to be taken against it. He foreshadows that he will take such action during an introspective discussion with Alyosha, when he exclaims, "I may be cursed, I may be base and vile, but I too shall kiss the hem of the robe in which God enwraps Himself" (144). Even though Dimitri finds himself in a similar situation to his father at the beginning of the novel, his introspectivity equips him with the proper tools for change.

Nonetheless, Dostoyevsky in no way attempts to claim that such a change is easy. In fact, for much of the novel, Dimitri struggles to cultivate fruitful relationships with anyone, seen in the way he distances himself from Katerina Ivanovna and nearly kills his own father. These dramatic scenes suggest that utilizing introspectivity to develop communal relationships is not a formulaic process but rather one that requires continuous struggle. It is not until Dimitri is falsely convicted of a murder that he carries out change in his relationships (even then, this change is not perfect). Dimitri expresses his development when he says to Alyosha "Brother, during these last two months I have felt a new man in myself, a new man has been resurrected within me" (756). The concept of Dimitri being a "new man" is revisited even after his tragic conviction: "It was as if he had experienced something that day to last him all his life, something that had taught him and made him understand something very important, which he had not earlier comprehended" (956).

Despite being seen as guilty in the eyes of the judicial system, Dimitri ends up an honest man who, in many respects, mirrors the image of Christ. Unlike Fyodor, who struggled to know God on any level, Dimitri knows God on a deeper level, living in God's image as he struggles for redemption. Furthermore, this redemption reconvenes with the epigraph, as it shows how Dimitri's ability to die inwardly and slowly change his character allowed him in some capacity to be reborn a new man—even though he has more work to do. Although the reader does not know Dimitri's life outcome after he is convicted, it is clear that he has become less like his father and more like his brother Alyosha, who is considered the hero of the novel. Knowing this, the reader is left hopeful that Dimitri's arduous struggle throughout the novel will be noticed either later on in his mortal life or with God in Heaven.

While Dimitri struggles to attain introspectivity, Alyosha establishes a precedent for how an ideal introspective life should be. Dostoevsky begins by calling our attention to the importance of Alyosha's role in the novel before it begins, referring to him as his "hero" (10). As the book progresses, it quickly becomes apparent that Alyosha is not like his brother or father given his deeply self-reflective nature. Dostoyevsky even details how Alyosha would often "lapse into reflection" at a young age (31). It is clear that this introspective nature sets the foundation for his strong character development: "He never made any attempt to show off among his coevals…He never remembered an insult" (32). From a young age, Alyosha carefully thought about everything he did and assessed how he might effect those around him. Additionally, he acknowledges the negative effects of his inner judgment, understanding that because he is not God, he has no right to condemn those around him: "He did not want to be a judge of men, that he did not want to take upon himself the task of censure" (30). Dostoyevsky makes his message clear that saintlike Alyosha lives a more orderly life because of his introspectivity.

Alyosha's ability to understand the effects of his actions not only allows him to flourish on an individual level but also at the level of his community. Introspectivity motivates him to act with courtesy and inspires him to want to do good for those in his community. This is seen when Alyosha goes out of his way to try and make things right with the wretched Captain Snegeryov, who was publicly humiliated after Dimitri dragged him out of the local pub by his beard. Alyosha apologizes for his brother's senseless actions and promises reparations in the form of a public apology and money. Alyosha's desire for justice shines through when he rejoices over the captain's initial willingness to accept the forgiveness money. Alyosha exclaims, "It will be your salvation, and even more, of your boy… and we shall remain brothers!" (276) Through this encounter, Dosto-

yevsky not only unveils Alyosha's desire for communal justice but also the idea that Alyosha is the only Karamazov consistent in his intentions to mend the past, as demonstrated in his habitual introspectivity.

Even though this capacity makes Alyosha stands out from his family, Dostoyevsky maintains a degree of realism by showing how even virtuous men can sometimes have thoughtless actions. He shows how breaking from introspectivity can undermine an orderly life when Alyosha gives into temptation for sin. This is seen during Alyosha's rebellion following the unjust treatment of father Zosima. As a result of overwhelming frustration, Alyosha questions his faith and quits the monastery "with a wave of his arm, as though he had not even any concern for proper deference" (437). In the midst of this frustration, Rakitin, a young seminarian, invites Alyosha to visit Grushenka in hopes of turning him "from saint to sinner" (444). Surprisingly, Alyosha accepts this invitation, a brief break with his introspective habits that is rarely seen again.

Despite his lack of introspectivity during this scene, Alyosha quickly reverts to his saintly ways upon arriving at Grushenka's, showing how habitual introspectivity constantly guides him back to living fruitfully. Dostoyevsky does not stop here but instead turns a potentially dangerous scene for Alyosha's spiritual life into one filled with redemption on both an individual and communal level. This begins when Rakitin attempts to tempt Alyosha again with a glass of champagne, to which the latter responds, "No, I don't think I'd better" (454). By keeping himself composed, Alyosha suggests that drinking will not solve his difficulties. Instead, he shows the reader that his rebellion against God is short-lived when he refuses to act carelessly, stating, "Rakitin, do not tease me about mutinying against my God" (455). Upon seeing Alyosha's composure, Grushenka radically changes her seductive demeanor into an expression of pity. In this sense, introspectivity allows both Grushenka and Alyosha to experience a rectification. As Alyosha states, "I found a treasure, a loving soul… She spared me just now" (455). Through this brief, though important spiritual rebirth, Dostoyevsky sets the foundation from which Alyosha can bring forth even more fruitful change to those around him. The final scene highlights the power behind fruitful memories, which are in themselves a form of introspection. Alyosha brings out their importance when he states, "Know then that there is nothing more lofty, nor more powerful, nor more healthy nor more useful later on in life than some good memory, and particularly one that has been borne from childhood" (983). Here, Dostoyevsky establishes a multilayered analysis that demonstrates how introspection works to cultivate relationships. First, memories can realign anyone who is straying away from an orderly life. Alyosha sheds light on this when he tells the children "however wicked we may be…this very memory alone will keep him from great evil…" (983). These memories serve to cultivate the children's relationship with God.

In depicting the lives of Fyodor, Dimitri, and Alyosha Karamazov, Dostoyevsky shows how introspectivity can shape life to be good and happy. He does not lecture his readers but rather places them within his melodramatic story so they can form a deep understanding of how his characters think and feel. Coupling this deep understanding with the novel's ambiguous ending, Dostoyevsky challenges his reader to carry on the lessons observed through the failures or successes of his characters into their own life. In this way, the reader is left to finish the story on their own. Although filled with hardship, Dostoyevsky suggests there are two ways of life: wallowing in sorrow to face a tragic death (like Fyodor) or bearing the struggles of life to better understand one's relationship with God, a life with flourishing reward.

THE CALL TO NOWHERE MAN: The Poetry of Alexander Blokhin

Restorers by Boris Ignatovich, 1928

Edited by Oliver Egger

Translated by Anton Talsky

Introduction by Mikhail Makharov

Biography of Alexander Blokhin

Little was known about the lyrical work of Alexander Blokhin (1891-1938) until the recent discovery of a pamphlet of poems by scholar Mikhail Makorova in the archives at Tyumen State University. Makorova published the pamphlet, titled *Napa Копеек (A Couple Kopeks)* through Moscow University Press in 2005. These poems are the first and only English translations from *Napa Копеек* and any of Alexander Blokhin's works.

In his time, Blokhin was known as an ardent Bolshevik, political organizer, and editor for a series of important early post-revolution literary magazines such as *Proletarian Culture*, *Magazine for All*, and the *Proletarian Avant-Garde*. He was a founding member of the *Proletkult* and *Forge*, two experimental Soviet artistic institutions born from the rubble of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Blokhin is a long-missing figure from the canon of early Soviet literature. These poems will aid literary scholars as well as enthusiasts of Russian poetry to see a more holistic picture of those turbulent, but hopeful early days of the Soviet Union.

Much of Blokhin's work is inspired by the Bolshevik writer, philosopher, experimental doctor, and rival of Lenin, Alexander Bogdanov, and the playwright and novelist Maxim Gorky. Blohkin rejected the materialist foundation of Marxism and instead embraced these men's philosophical idealism which is generally categorized as "god-building."[1] This philosophy, which arose from Ludwig Feuerbach's work, primarily his concept of the "religion of humanity,"[2] attempted to build a new socialist religion. They imagined a human-centered spirituality that stressed the awe-inspiring power of art and individuals to serve a greater good within the framework of socialism. A depiction of socialism as a form of faith that revolves around the sanctity of human beings, rather than a deity, can be read in much of Blokhin's surviving poetry.

1 Богостроительство (bogostroitel'stvo)

2 "If man is to find contentment in God, he must find himself in God." From Ludwig Feuerbach's most famous philosophical work Das Wesen des Christentums (The Essence of Christianity).

The Attic Prayer

The son of God who art in heaven,
you, no, thou[1] brought my old mother peace,
as she read your words to me
on the fifth floor[1] with the smell
of a half-spoiled fish from the street.

The stink rising to my throat
past the Galilee sea of chipped floors,
thou, or you, saw it all, or so my mother said.

You saw our knees bent and the way
the hot air of moldy vendors would spill
through the windows, turning our
rumbling bellies. Mother, you were always
right, so I know thou, who art in heaven,
remembers, and smelled that sleepless apartment.

But you, like Judah's mighty whale,
swallowed it all up and spit it back out
in a sigh of silence, in a vomit of mucus
and half-rotten fish.

Ɇiɥɢłɜɚ ɧɚ ɱɟɪɞɚɤɟ

Божий сөн, иск[снөй в раф,
ɫө — нeɫ, Тө — [спокаивал моф cɫap[ф маɫœ,
когда она мне ɱиɫала слова Твои
на пɹɫом ɷɫаже, средœ ɲедɲего с [лищө
запаша подпорɱенной рөбө.

Та вонœ пробираласœ к моем[горл[
Чрез Галилейское море ɫреɳин в пол[.
Тө — нeɫ, ɫө — видел всё ɷɫо. Так моɹ маɫœ говорила.

Тө видел, как мө cɫоим на коленɹɯ,
а ɫеплоɫа оɫ заɫшлөш ларœков
проровaeɫcɹ в окна, живоɫө наɲи
засɫавлɹɹ [рɱаɫœ. Мама, права ɫө бөла,
и знаф, Тө, райский иск[сник,
вдөшаеɲœ и помниɲœ ɷɫоɫ бессоннөй дом.

Но ɫө, как И[дө мог[ɱий киɫ,
проглоɫил ɷɫо всё и сплфн[л обраɫно
с молɱаливөм вздошом, с рвоɫой из слизи
и рөбө подгнивɲей.

1 A hard line to translate as Russian uses the informal and the formal "you" unlike English. The "thou" was used in this translation to show the transition into formal speech when the speaker is addressing God. 37 Most apartments in Saint Petersburg at the time were on 5 to 6 floors. The higher you lived the cheaper your apartment was. Blokhin is referencing the severe poverty he lived under.

The Righteous Garden

The bushes are all broken branches,
the Siberian pea tree roots
are overlapping the hunched back
of the willow's decayed trunk.

While weeds, all woven with the daisies,
leave green and golden light
to crawl up the rickety arbor,
and between the mud-carved cobblestone.

High above in chaotic clumps
giant aspens hold the twig-torn
nests of ravenous, beaked ravens.

Everything is both withered and blooming,
more than nature or art's beauty[1],
the once constrained greenery,
coming into its own.

ɋɚɞ ɫuɚзȷɞɥɢзiꟸɢ

Kɭcɬɵ все — сломаннɵе веɬки.
Корни сибирской акаɰии
нарасɬаɸɬ на горбаɬɭɸ спинɭ
ивɶего гнилого сɬвола.

Сорнɹки, провиɬɵе все маргариɬками,
осɬавлɹɸɬ жɻлɬɵй, зелɻнɵй, свеɬ
взбираɬɶсɹ по ɭɬломɭ сводɭ,
пробираɬɶсɹ меж запаɱканнɵɯ валɭнов.

Вɵсоко-вɵɲе в беспорɹдоɱнɵɯ зарослɹɯ
на гиганɬскиɯ осинаɯ — свиɬɵе палки:
гнɻзда клɸвасɬɵɯ и алɱɭɳиɯ воронов.

Всɻ одновременно расɰвеɬаеɬ и вɹнеɬ.
Силɶнее природɵ и красоɬɵ искɭссɬва,
некогда сɬеснɻннаɹ зеленɶ,
всɬɭпаеɬ в свои права.

1 This line is most likely a reference to Nikolai Gogol's influential novel Dead Souls, particularly the sentence describing the landowner Pliushkin's overgrown garden as "...beautiful as neither nature nor art alone can conceive…" Gogol was a major influence on the work of Blokhin and he wrote often in letters about his deep fascination with the 19th-century giant of Russian literature.

Shell-Shocked Soldier Comes Home

I visited the hospital and faced
a thousand sleepless nights.

I fell asleep once and woke next century,
without eyes, lips, ears, or a nose
and tried to grope my way out
into the street below,
scream for help,
till I realized I had no tongue to cry with.

I am trying to be brave.

I am afraid.

Ʉiɧɫɭɡȷɧɧɵɣ ɫiɥɞɚɬ зȷɪɧɭɥɫɹ ɞiɦiɣ

Я оказалсɹ в болɶниɰе и пережил
ɬɵɳи бессоннɵɯ ноɱей.

Однаждɵ ɭснɭл — проснɭлсɹ в следɭɸɳий век
без глаз, гɭб, носа, ɲей.
Попɵɬалсɹ вɵскоɱиɬɶ
на ближайɲɭɸ ɭлиɰɭ,
закриɱаɬɶ о помоɳи,
но понɹл: криɱаɬɶ — неɬ ɹзɵка.

Я пɵɬаɸсɶ бɵɬɶ ɯрабрɵм.

Мне сɬраɲно.

Carving the linoleum sheet with a small chisel, I made the image of the little house. I cut a geometric pattern using the same process on the reverse side. The forest plates were made using styrofoam (a more economical counterpart to linoleum)—with a dull pencil; I pressed into the styrofoam to create lines. To print, I first used a roller to spread the ink over plastic wrap (a temporary palette). Using the roller to coat the printing blocks, I pressed them into paper and, using a roller, flattened the paper for a bold print. After achieving the intended, envisioned, and expected result, I experimented with different color combinations—making two-toned prints, different compositions, and finally, using the ink palette itself as part of the art. While the ink on the plastic wrap was still wet, I placed it onto a sheet of paper, transferring the remaining ink with a distressed, textured background.

Print No. 4, No. 18, and No. 9

Katharina Hass, University of California Berkeley

Printing over the dried background, I used different ink colors, combining white, red, gold, and black. In furthering my study, I placed the printing blocks askew, which I thought suited the image of disorder, decay, and memory I had initially tried to explore. Perhaps it shows a progression of the house, each print becoming more decomposed, with the final prints being the most poignantly distraught. The series of 17 total prints are combinations and experiments of composition, color, texture, and mood. Thus, the prints explore spaces that have been abandoned but earlier had been evidence of a happy and prosperous life. Once they become unoccupied and evacuated, the spaces are still trying to retain memories and their function as family homes, yet in the absence of the family, the house turns into a contemporary ruin—the least grand, most un-celebrated and not-remembered ruins there are. It becomes darker when we think of where these ruins could lie, why no one will return, and how they will stay—the last traces of a caring human hand will no longer interfere, and the cat—left behind, will quietly disappear. No one will return to these precariously placed ruins, not for a long time.

Dmitri Shostakovich: Perceptions, Debates, and Ambiguity

Hannah Bedard, University of Florida

What gives rise to controversial interpretations of a musical work and what are the results when interpretations are not clear–cut? The historical context of a symphony influences interpretations and the creator's original intention behind a piece becomes more distant over time. This is the case with the Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich and his Fifth Symphony (1937) composed during the Great Terror (1937 – 38) under Joseph Stalin. Before Shostakovich was publicly condemned by the state for his use of formalism, he was a highly popular composer in the USSR. The Great Terror was a precarious time for composers and musicians because of the great risks associated with creating music outside of the scope of socialist realism. Those who were deemed as operating outside of this standard and more within the Western style of musical composition were condemned or scrutinized like Shostakovich.

After Shostakovich was condemned, his Fifth Symphony redeemed him in the eyes of the Soviet state. This symphony is important because of the impact it had on Shostakovich's life and because the ambiguity of the Fifth's musical merit and political meaning has become the center of a variety of interpretations that were a result of socialist realism and the political tension of the era.

The Stalinist Era and Music in the USSR

In the Stalinist era, composers were writing music during a time when the state sought to both encourage and control every aspect of the arts. In 1924, the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM) was formed and formally condemned Western music that "exploited the masses" while they simultaneously projected proletarian music. Later[1] the Union of Soviet Composers was formed at the behest of the government when the Central Committee dissolved the non-state group RAPM in 1932.[2] Socialist realism became the official principle of Soviet art at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934[3]. At this meeting Andrei Zhdanov stated that socialist realism depicts "reality in its revolutionary development… combined with the ideological remolding and education of the toiling people in the spirit of socialism." [4]

However, a clear definition of socialist realism in music was elusive, as music is more abstract compared to a visual or literary work. The state attempted to inspire music that would be simple and within the grasp of the People, but they did so without initially explaining what musical techniques exemplified this style.[5] Eventually, the Union of Composers stated that socialist realism was "heroic classicism."[6] "Heroic classicism" was characterized by harmony, simplicity, accessibility, folk-music, and classical influence such as Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*.[7] *Example 1* shows the section in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony where Ode to Joy appears for the first time[8]. Despite its Western composer, this symphony was the state's primary example of socialist realism. This was because of the piece's easy-to-follow melodic line (highlighted in boxes), *Ode to Joy's* popularity, and its triumphant ending.

Example 1: Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, IV, mm 84 - 123

1 Slonimsky 3
2 Frolova - Walker et al.
3 Tompkins 17
4 Bukharin et al.
5 Blokker and Dearling 23
6 Fanning and Taruskin 25
7 Fitzpatrick 213
8 Beethoven, https://imslp.org/wiki/Symphony_No.9,_Op.125_(Beethoven,_Ludwig_van)

Ultimately, socialist realism limited musical expression and served as a tactic against Western styles of music which the USSR labeled as formalism. Formalism was made up of harsh sounds through atonality and dissonance; which were deemed more important than the subject matter of the piece[9]. This was in stark contrast to socialist realism, in which subject matter was extremely important. Moreover, it was easier for the state to recognize and condemn formalism, rather than praise artists for implementing socialist realism. The state's overinvolvement with the arts made the Great Terror that much more perilous for composers. Socialist realism affected Shostakovich because its vagueness made it difficult to appease the state, and its elusiveness has made it difficult for scholars to determine if Shostakovich's Fifth truly was socialist realism. Even before the Fifth came into existence, Shostakovich encountered issues with the lack of socialist realism and the presence of formalism in his works.

The Fall of Shostakovich

Shostakovich's implementation of formalism in his opera *Lady Macbeth* initiated his fall as a state celebrity. On January 8th, 1936, the state-run newspaper *Pravda* published a destructive editorial about *Lady Macbeth* entitled "Muddle Instead of Music," and later they published another article criticizing Shostakovich's ballet *The Limpid Stream*[10]. Although the articles were originally published under an anonymous author, some attribute it to David Zaslavsky, an individual actively attempting to appease Stalin and the state[11]. These articles did not land Shostakovich in a gulag, but they did bring him one step closer to those deemed "enemies of the people."

Subsequently, several colleagues and critics sought to condemn *Lady Macbeth* despite praising it before. For instance, the USSR Union of Composers felt it was necessary to further evaluate *Lady Macbeth* because of the *Pravda* article[12]. Stalin's totalitarian regime created an atmosphere in which artists denounced one another for their own safety or status. Even the composer and dear friend of Shostakovich, Ivan Sollertinsky, reluctantly succumbed to his fear by stating there were faults, such as formalism, within *Lady Macbeth* at the Leningrad Union of Composers' meeting[13]. Such instances are proof that it is difficult to discern which of Shostakovich's colleagues' opinions were declared in earnest. The lack of honesty in his colleagues' opinions is an example of the political tension caused by the Great Terror within the musical world of the USSR.

Shostakovich watched friends and family members be arrested around him, for instance, the librettist for *The Limpid Stream*, Adrian Piotrovsky, was arrested and eventually executed[14]. He knew his next work needed to redeem him. Moreover, the regime's limits on music led to the cancellation of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony which was set to be performed later in 1936 and would have been the first piece after his condemnation[15]. According to the musicologist Richard Taruskin, the Fourth was "anything but classical,"[16] leading one to infer the cancellation was due to the absence of socialist realist ideals, the presence of formalism, and pressure from party officials[17]. Despite the immense challenges of this period, such as widespread fear and censorship, one of Shostakovich's greatest works was born.

Shostakovich and "A Soviet Artist's Response to Just Criticism"

The primary piece of contention premiered on November 21, 1937: Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony[18]. Although this symphony restored Shostakovich, it has been both praised and dissected since its premiere. People have interpreted his symphony through musical critique, consideration of the symphony's emotive expressiveness, or its merit as a piece of socialist realism. The accounts of how people received and continued to interpret the symphony begs the question of whether this symphony signified political dissent against the regime, or if it purposely appealed to the standard of socialist realism. The audience appeared in raptures after the very first performance of the Fifth. Interestingly, one witness of these original performances, Yurij Yelagin, notes that the audi-

9 Tompkins 17 – 18
10 Wilson 109
11 Morrison
12 Wilson 112
13 Wilson 112
14 Wilson 121
15 Brown and Nikolskaya 167 – 168
16 Fanning and Taruskin 26
17 Wilson 115 – 119
18 Wilson 126

ence's approval of the piece at the premier came with a deep sense of "their indignation at the pressure that had been exerted in the field of art and their sympathy and understanding for the victim."[19] Their minds fixated on the symphony's "victim" and even projected their own idea that Shostakovich was this "victim."

On February 8, 1938, the Russian critic Georgiy Khubov presented an oral review of the Fifth at a 'discussion' of the Union of Composers[20]. This review, however, was not full of raptures. Khubov particularly criticized the *Largo* (third movement) and the *Finale* (fourth movement) because he felt the *Largo* did not prepare the audience musically for the last movement[21]. Therefore, Khubov believed the *Finale* carried on the tragedy of the previous movement and was "severe and threatening" as opposed to "bright and optimistic."[22] This interpretation directly contradicted the interpretation presented by Count Alexey Tolstoy in the Soviet newspaper *Izvestiya*. Tolstoy was a leading Soviet writer who described the piece as the "formation of a personality (within a social environment)," a characteristic Shostakovich himself approved of, although his commentary on his own symphony was scarce[23]. Tolstoy described this idea as a personality being developed by the tragic sounds of the symphony's beginning movements, and he stated the personality was "lifted up" by the optimism in the *Finale*[24].

Based upon this analysis, Tolstoy's review of the piece was titled "A Soviet Artist's Response to Just Criticism," and claimed this symphony was a response to the state's previous criticism[25]. As Taruskin has pointed out, while Tolstoy analyzed the piece, he utilized socialist realist clichés and phrases which presented the Fifth as music for the masses[26] and, according to Fairclough, Tolstoy's declaration that the Fifth was socialist realist could be seen as a risk he took for Shostakovich[27].

19 Yelagin 167 – 168
20 Fanning and Taruskin 36
21 Fanning and Taruskin 36 – 38
22 Fanning and Taruskin 36 – 38
23 Fanning and Taruskin 31 – 32
24 Fanning and Taruskin 32
25 Fairclough 353
26 Fanning and Taruskin 32
27 Fairclough 354

Socialist Realism and the Soviet Symphony

Socialist realism is an imperative component of the debates surrounding Shostakovich because it illuminates one important point: the totalitarian regime of the Stalinist era created a convoluted atmosphere for music. The integrity of composers, like Shostakovich, was challenged because of the restrictive musical parameters of socialist realism and by the fact that deviation from the state's desires had irrevocable consequences. But what evidence of socialist realism is there in the Fifth Symphony?

The meaning of the Fifth is inevitably ambiguous because of the apparent lack of socialist realism in the piece. For instance, why was there an absence of nationalistic ideas and folk music, and instead the insertion of tragedy?[28] In terms of "heroic classicism," the *Finale* contains the most socialist realism because of its loud and triumphant ending. *Figure Two* shows the beginning of the *Finale* and is appropriately described as "the simplest and most straightforward symphonic movement the composer had written thus far."[29] Note the loud dynamics (marked by f , ff, and fff which means forte, fortissimo, and fortississimo respectively), a marcato[30] style (marked by the > signs), and how the melodic line played by the woodwinds and brass is simple, similar to the melodic line in *Ode to Joy*. However, musicologists and critics were still hesitant to refer to the Fifth as socialist realism despite their overall praise.[31]

Figure 2: Shostakovich's Fifth; Finale

The success of this symphony, with its lack of explicit socialist realism, displays the difficulty that

28 Blokker and Dearling 65
29 Blokker and Dearling 71
30 Means "with strong accentuation" in music. It is a style used to emphasize specific notes. Merriam – Webster
31 Fairclough 360

comes with defining and labeling a piece as socialist realism. This is exemplified when the Fifth is compared with the less impactful Sixteenth (or *Aviation*) Symphony by Nikolai Myaskovsky which premiered in October 1936[32]. Myaskovsky's piece incorporated folk music and had an optimistic ending due to the inclusion of a popular song within the work[33]. This created what seemed to be an excellent model for socialist realism within a symphonic work. A year later in 1937, according to Georgiy Khubov, Myaskovsky's accomplishment with the Sixteenth Symphony (as well as the Twelfth Symphony, which was previously written in 1931) showed that "he strode along the path of Socialist Realism."[34]

However, another aspect of Myaskovsky's Sixteenth Symphony that aligned with socialist realism, and was starkly different compared to Shostakovich's Fifth, was his "Autobiographical Notes" in *Sovetskaya Muzyka*. In this, Myaskovsky discussed his previous works and stated that his Sixteenth Symphony specifically addressed the topic of Soviet aviation and the *Maxim Gorky* plane crash[35] although it still did not address issues of musical form or language[36]. Shostakovich, on the other hand, wrote this about his Fifth: "…the theme of my symphony is the making of a man. I saw a man with all his experience in the center of the composition, which is lyrical in form from beginning to end. The Finale is the optimistic solution to the tragically tense moments of the first movement."[37] Within this statement, Shostakovich did not purposely allude to Soviet ideals or dictate why he wrote the symphony like Myaskovsky did. His vague description leaves his audience wondering whether the "man" of this symphony represents a proletarian man, which is often propagated by socialist realism, or another "man" entirely. As opposed to resolving the piece's ambiguity, this statement reinforces it. Regardless, Shostakovich's piece was canonized more quickly while Myaskovsky's piece did not receive the same kind of attention, and it was not labeled socialist realism by all critics despite his creative objectives[38].

32 Fairclough 359
33 Fairclough 360
34 Frolova – Walker 108
35 A small plane crashed into the large Soviet Maxim Gorky airplane and killed 49 people (May 18, 1935). Denny
36 Fairclough 359
37 Blokker and Dearling 66
38 Fairclough 360 – 363

Symbolism and Ambiguity?

With Shostakovich's command of music and talent, it is no surprise that disagreements have arisen over what methods he did apply within the symphony. What makes the difference in interpretations so significant? While there is no question about whether the state influenced music during the Great Terror, there is the specific question of how the demands of socialist realism and the political tension affected perceptions of Shostakovich's Fifth. The total sum of these factors shrouds his Fifth in an atmosphere of ambiguity.

Upon review, the Fifth is ambiguous because of the era's political tension and the parameters of socialist realism. Within this context, Shostakovich was not allowed to be sincere with his music which makes it hard to determine whether the Fifth was a shrine to socialist realism or a rebellious statement against the Great Terror [39]. Furthermore, the Fifth's lack of explicit socialist realism could be seen as a form of rebellion; he employed heroics to appease the state while attempting not to compromise his own musical integrity. According to Dr. Eileen Mah, the ambiguity of the piece and its lack of socialist realism may "reveal a truth in itself," and could speak to his fear of the state or to a hidden rebellion against it[40]. Even Shostakovich's statement about the symphony's "theme of a man" stirs questions. Was the "man" he was referring to the Soviet ideal of a proletarian man, or an "enemy of the people" who rose triumphantly despite his previous condemnation?

Numerous scholars argue that the context and circumstances of the Fifth should not be an important criterion when evaluating it. I would argue that an analysis based only on musical merit has its place, but ignoring the context ignores significant elements that influenced both the creative intention and reception of the Fifth. Who can truly know what the Fifth Symphony would have sounded like if these factors had not been present? Without these factors constraining Shostakovich, there would not have been as many perceptions of the piece. The lack of clear truth is what compels scholars to search for it, but as noted the truth is hard to find, especially when the truth was denied in the first place.

39 Wilson 126
40 Mah 84

Euroscepticism in Bulgaria and Poland: Baseless or Justified?

Philip Kabranov, University of California Berkeley

The European Union (EU) is one of the most well-established international organizations with benefits for member countries including improved economic stability and growth, better integrated and more efficient financial markets, greater influence in global geopolitics, and a tangible European identity. With the ongoing 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, it comes as no surprise that Ukraine is one of several candidates for EU membership. Yet in spite of these advantages, what explains the continued critique of and opposition against further European integration, namely by Eurosceptics? Poland, Hungary, and the United Kingdom are typically used as examples in discussions of Euroscepticism. However, one country rarely mentioned– but useful for analyzing this phenomenon– is Bulgaria. Using Poland as a comparative case study, it is clear that themes of cultural identity and national sovereignty are shared characteristics of Euroscepticism that drive its appeal among its supporters. However, there are two factors that distinguish Bulgarian Euroscepticism from its counterparts. First, the economic hardship caused by Bulgaria's transition from state socialism to liberal democracy. Second is the focus of Bulgarian political discourse on anti-corruption, organized crime, and the so-called 'mafia.' Combined, these have prevented the social and identity-based brand of Euroscepticism from catching as strong of a foothold in Bulgaria compared to that of the nationalist parties in Poland and Viktor Orbán in Hungary.

To begin this discussion we must understand what occurred in the Bulgarian economy in the wake of its transition from state socialism to free market capitalism. Bulgaria experienced severe economic hardship in the early 1990s following the fall of communism across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Real wages (wages in terms of the amount of goods and services that can be bought) in the public sector decreased by 44% from 1992 to 1997. Unemployment remained at or above 12% during the same time period, reaching a peak of nearly 17% in 1993. Bulgaria also experienced hyperinflation, with an inflation rate of 335.5% in 1991 and 1061.2% in 1997. In 2007, Bulgaria joined the EU aspiring to reap the benefits of membership and grow its economy. However, in the present day, it still faces difficulties such as economic stagnation, corruption, organized crime, and issues with judicial reform which have been subject to monitoring by the European Commission. These issues have been at the forefront of Bulgarian political discourse, reaching a peak in Summer 2020 with widespread protests advocating for the resignation of the Borissov cabinet due to failure in dealing with corruption and private sector influence on the government. These issues are still ongoing as the Netherlands and Austria push for more anti-corruption reform, blocking Bulgaria's bid to join the Schengen area in December 2022.

In addition, we must examine how Euroscepticism manifests itself in other CEE countries. Like Bulgaria, Poland experienced economic difficulty following the 1989 revolutions, including high unemployment rates and inflation. After the Polish Solidarity movement held its Round Table Talks with the former Communist regime, Poland implemented democratic principles and modernized its economy in line with Western Europe over the course of 25 years. However, once the Solidarity movement dissolved, several new political parties emerged each with a different interpretation of the transition to liberal democracy.

One of these factions was the right-wing, populist Law and Justice Party (PiS), which won presidential and parliamentary elections by a slim margin in 2015. In Zofia Kinowska-Mazaraki's article, The Polish Paradox: From a Fight for Democracy to the Political Radicalization and Social Exclusion, she states that "national interest and a traditional concept of national unity are prominent in the PiS narrative. The definition of 'Polishness' is narrow and inexplicably connected with Catholicism" (Kinowska-Mazaraki 5). In fact, the PiS platform in 2019 stated that "[the] status of [the] Catholic Church in people's and state life is exceptionally important; we want to support it and hold that any unjust attacks at the Church and attempts to damage it are dan-

gerous to the shape of social life" (PiS 2019[1], p. 15).

So why, in spite of the economic benefits of EU membership, does Poland support Eurosceptic political parties? The PiS creates a social and identity-based brand of Euroscepticism; PiS' political narrative argues that the entire post-communist transformation was orchestrated by pseudo-elites that favored foreign interests and thus abandoned traditional Polish values in favor of the indulgent and immoral liberal cultural agenda. Included in this so-called agenda is the tolerance of ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities, access to abortion, and openness to refugees. Similarly, in Lucas Benderfeldt's paper[2], he notes that "Euroscepticism is used as a political tool to mobilize voters by appealing to national identity and identity sentiments." One example of this is when government-controlled public media printed "LGBT-Free Zone" stickers for readers to publicly display. The European Parliament responded by adopting a resolution condemning all public acts of discrimination and hate speech against LGBT+ people and "LGBT-Free Zones," alongside a recommendation that the European Commission should ensure that EU funds are not being used for discriminatory purposes. Although this position would suggest that the PiS advocates for withdrawal from the EU, their narrative simultaneously acknowledges the benefits of EU membership by suggesting that since 1989, Polish society has been overpowered by liberal organizations that "[monopolized] funding opportunities, especially from foreign foundations, including the biggest EU and Norwegian funds." (Kinowska-Mazaraki 7). Clearly, this social and identity-based Euroscepticism is fabricated and the PiS's influence over civil society has reversed some of the progress made since democratizing Poland in 1989.

Examples of nationalist, Eurosceptic parties in Bulgaria include Ataka and IMRO – Bulgarian National Movement– which both argue that EU membership infringes upon Bulgaria's national sovereignty and appeal to cultural identity. Natasza Styczyńska's paper, (Non)Existence of Bulgarian Party-Based Euroscepticism – Why Should We Care?, describes how Ataka's platform rejected foreign investment, called for withdrawal from NATO, and marginalized ethnic minorities when it was founded in 2005. Ataka's leader, Volen Siderov, accused Roma and Turkish minorities of causing economic struggles in Bulgaria, using nationalist rhetoric such as "I want a stop to the construction of mosques" and "Let's bring Bulgaria back for the Bulgarians" (Styczyńska 208). In Bulgarian Political Parties and European Integration: From Anticommunism to Euroscepticism, Dragomir Stoyanov and Petia Kostadinova note: "Bulgarian national populists interpreted European integration as a process that destructs Bulgarian economy and society. To national populists, European integration is a threat to Bulgarian society, with foreign companies and entrepreneurs often viewed as "external enemies" (Stoyanov & Kostadinova 15). Additionally, they mention that "EU cross-border cooperation programs executed jointly by Bulgaria and Turkey are regarded as 'indirectly promoting Islamization within Bulgaria', and 'Turkization of certain Bulgarian regions'" (Stoyanov & Kostadinova 17).

The rejection of Euroscepticism and extreme nationalism by the Bulgarian public is evident in Ataka's unsuccessful bid to win seats in Bulgaria's 2014 European Parliament (EP) elections. This is in contrast to Poland, where as of December 2022, the number of nationalist and Eurosceptic seats in the Polish lower house of parliament is 228 – 49.7% of all seats. Similarly, in the Polish Senate, the United Right Coalition has 46% of seats. In the Bulgarian National Assembly, however, 39 seats – 16% of the total seats – are held by extremist and nationalist parties. These numbers reveal that the Bulgarian public has less of an appetite for this sort of rhetoric compared to Poland. Stoyanov and Kostadinova emphasize that "the increasingly positive mentions of the EU in Bulgaria and Romania are contrasted with a decline in such support for the EU, across parties in other member states [for the same time period]" (Stoyanov & Kostadinova 8). In fact, the governing coalition in the Bulgarian National Assembly consists of GERB (Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria) and SDS (Union of Democratic Forces), two pro-European parties. Stoyanov and Kostadinova further note that "parties in Bulgaria share positive positions on EU issues; they are, on average, pro-European integration" (Stoyanov & Kostadinova 8). GERB operates on anti-elite and anti-mafia rhetoric, which appeals to Bulgarians who are disillusioned with their government. Instead, Bulgarian society has more faith in European institutions than

[1] https://pis.org.pl/files/Program_PIS_2019.pdf

[2] https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/publication/8993385

national ones to address longtime domestic issues.

Bulgarians believe that ineffective anti-corruption efforts and the elite political mafia are to blame for the present-day economic and political reality of Bulgaria, rather than the scapegoats of Eurosceptic political parties. An example of the wider reality of corruption in the post-socialist Bulgarian economy, Max Holleran's article, On the Beach: The Changing Meaning of the Bulgarian Coast after 1989, argues that the development of hotels and resorts on the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast symbolizes Bulgaria's unmet expectations of economic prosperity after joining the EU and the power of the political mafia.

Holleran divides his discussion into three time periods: the years prior to 1989 (the fall of state socialism); the years before Bulgaria's accession to the EU; and the years after Bulgaria joined the EU. Before 1989, the Bulgarian Black Sea coast was seen as a natural refuge from ever-increasing urbanization, and with it, symbols of socialist repression such as monuments or politically taboo topics. The remote, intimate environment of the coast provided a safe haven to escape day-to-day reality. After socialism fell in 1989, however, developments on the Black Sea Coast grew rapidly, including new tourist spaces such as casinos, hotels, and nightclubs. New buildings were lauded for featuring grand columns, colored glass, and golden sculptures borrowed from multiple historic periods to undermine the minimalist, utilitarian socialist architecture. In other words, "buildings should look like the prosperity they hope to achieve" (Holleran 240). Although the first generation of builders and investors in the coast were Bulgarian, Bulgaria's imminent accession to the EU resulted in a second wave of developers from Ireland, Great Britain, Israel, and Russia. As a result, the Black Sea Coast came to represent the potential for entrepreneurship and leisure. Bulgaria dreamed of creating its own Costa del Sol or French Riviera to attract tourists from Western Europe and open a new chapter for Bulgaria's economy.

In recent years, the Black Sea coast represents the failure of post-socialist Bulgaria to truly reach Western European economic prosperity. In addition to being seen as gaudy and tasteless, the overtly lavish architecture now symbolizes the Bulgarian political mafia, which was responsible for a large portion of these coastal developments; they typically exploited restitution laws and built on protected land. These developers constructed massive hotels and private homes, often illegally, using "neo-moorish arches, gold sculptures, reflective blue glass, and corinthian columns," which came to be known as the "mafia baroque" style. This style of construction represented both the political influence and cultural shift that the mafia produced–namely, popularizing turbo folk (chalga), which promotes sexuality and consumption. This disillusionment is evident from an account of an environmental activist in the coastal city of Varna: "We build one thing: cheap hotels. We have one market: young tourists from Western Europe who want to come party. We have one kind of developer: mobsters (mutri)" (Holleran 242). This substantial change in the nature of the Black Sea coast has evoked nostalgic sentiment for socialist times in older Bulgarians who long for its former status as a place of refuge and solitude.

Furthermore, Polya Ilieva's Bulgaria at the Cross-Roads of Post-Socialism and EU Membership: Generational Dimensions to European Integration sheds light on how the transition period from state socialism to liberal democracy in Bulgaria shaped outlooks on the reality of EU membership. Ilieva conducted a study in which she divided participants into three groups based on their age in 1989, which roughly corresponds to the time periods in Holleran's paper. Specifically, these groups of so-called informants consisted of: those currently in their sixties and were adults in 1989; those currently in their late twenties to early forties (children/adolescents in 1989); and those in their early twenties (born after 1989). The results of her study showed that the duration of time spent living under socialism had the most impact on views towards Bulgaria's integration in the EU.

One factor that influenced responses from the group of informants in their sixties was their perceived stability and security during socialist times. Regardless of their view towards the socialist ideology, following the disintegration of the Eastern Bloc and Bulgaria's transition to democracy in 1989, many informants reported experiencing economic hardship and political instability, and some reported that they had yet to see the tangible benefits of democratization and Bulgarian accession to the EU. Meanwhile, informants in the late twenties to early forties age group reported a breach of societal cohesiveness in the current EU climate similar to the perceived con-

nectedness under socialism. Finally, informants in their early twenties received an education that highlighted the need for dynamic social and political engagement within the broader context of European identity against the backdrop of Bulgaria's past.

In Natasza Styczyńska's paper, she effectively points out that "in Eastern Europe, the point of historical reference is the former communist regime: the new elites are accused of being the old elites with new masks" (Styczyńska 211). Clearly, Bulgarians can see that the extremist narrative that Roma and Turkish minorities are responsible for Bulgaria's economic difficulties is completely false. Rather, it is the Bulgarian political mafia that is the scapegoat. Nonetheless, one commonality between Euroscepticism in Bulgarian and Poland is a sense of marginality. Stoyanov states that "the feeling of the inferiority of Bulgaria as an EU member state and a lack of trust in the ability of national institutions to adequately defend national interests within the union contribute to [the development of Euroscepticism]" (Stoyanov 14). Upon accession to the EU, Bulgaria was subject to Cooperation and Verification Mechanisms to ensure compliance with standards for the political environment set by the European Commission. Similarly, the PiS promotes a sense of marginality based on the premise that the EU wishes to impose its own cultural values and looks down upon the 'backwardness' of Eastern Europe. Polish authorities also accused the EU of a "lack of respect for Polish sovereignty" on "politically motivated" grounds when the PiS began a series of justice system reforms which helped the government establish greater control over the judiciary. Moreover, in Euroscepticism and Europeanisation at a Margin of Europe, Polya Ilieva and Thomas M. Wilson state that, with respect to Bulgaria's accession into the EU, "the concomitance of the EU-negotiation and accession processes with economic and political instability seems to have projected negative sentiments accumulated during the transition process on to the process of European Integration" (Ilieva & Wilson 105).

The encroachment on national sovereignty that the Eurosceptic argument hinges on relates to cultural values. However, the main difference between Polish and Bulgarian Euroscepticism is that social and identity-based criticism is either absent from or not relevant in mainstream Bulgarian political discourse. This is largely because PiS explicitly enshrines the values of the Catholic Church into its platform, whereas no major Bulgarian political party makes such an endorsement. Instead, issues involving the national government– such as corruption and organized crime– take the front seat in Bulgarian political dialogue, whereas the most broadly-held view of the EU is as an external structure that can benefit domestic institutions. In fact, the World Bank has stated in its Bulgaria Country Economic Memorandum that "institutional change towards building capacity, ensuring independence, and promoting transparency and accountability of public agencies is thus a key transformational pathway towards Bulgaria's transition to high income…and real incomes can converge to the average EU level in about 15 years." From this, it is clear that the implementation of structural reforms as a predicate of EU membership brings stability and improvement to quality of life, and the Eurosceptic position intentionally distracts voters' attention to largely fabricated cultural and identity-based grievances.

Soviet and Post-Soviet AIDS Epidemic: Infection Via the Body and the State

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Since its inception in 1992, power retention of modern-day Russian leadership in its federal capacity not only draws inspiration from its historical Soviet counterpart by limiting political authority circulation, but also maintains a traditionalist sentiment that hinders the capabilities of socially delicate issues that at least require progressive tolerance. Such is the case for the Russian HIV/AIDS epidemic, whose unbridled 38-year spread from minority groups to the general population has created not only the question as to why the disease was historically able to proliferate in a first-world society, but how the Russian citizenry and government react to the epidemic today. By continuing to rely almost entirely on the state and its slow-moving response to calls for reform, the Russian healthcare system has demonstrated a clear failure to accommodate the needs of those who contract HIV/AIDS. With very little reliance and access to private healthcare and the system's need to adhere to state-supported information campaigns, confidentiality amongst Russian HIV/AIDS contractors is actively undermined and disregarded in extreme fashions. Modern Russian health policy has completely failed to address the HIV/AIDS crisis and continues to prevent further mitigation. Through an over-reliance on the central state, both Soviet and Post-Soviet politically motivated medical policies dictate over scientific necessity, actively suppressing any support for confidential practices or dissemination of education to treat HIV/AIDS and subsequent harm reduction programs. Moreover, a lack of support for Russian narcotic users has only exacerbated the epidemic.

Although the Soviet Healthcare system existed during an era wherein widespread, in-depth knowledge of the intricacies of HIV/AIDS was practically nonexistent, the history regarding its infrastructural priorities show how on a political and elementary medical level it gradually failed its patients. Soviet healthcare began during the Russian Revolution with the 1917 Comprehensive Sanitary Legislation. It was initiated by the Bolsheviks and entitled wage earners to state funds for accident and sickness recovery, healthcare, and maternity leave (Sigerist et al, 77). Upon the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922, the Semashko System was developed with the purpose of completely nationalizing healthcare en masse. It was extremely effective in the 1960s in eradicating infectious diseases such as Tuberculosis, Typhoid Fever, and Typhus, whose success was due to the healthcare system's focus on hospital care that prioritized nationwide curing of infectious diseases over the prevention of infectious ones (*Social Crisis in the Russian Federation,* 95). By the 1970s, the model transitioned into one that promoted outpatient care, which precludes the use of hospitals. Such a development primarily affected rural communities and smaller neighborhoods, as they had a heavy reliance on traveling to larger cities to gain access to hospitals, as they had no local infirmaries due to the naturally low populations of their hometowns. This led local healthcare to produce polyclinics, which were neighborhood clinics that provided vaccinations, and also diagnose and solve small-scale issues.

Declassified CIA reports indicate that Soviet citizens had low confidence in such clinics due to their constant shortage of equipment and, critically, reusing equipment such as gloves, catheters, and needles (Ricon). Despite the Soviet Union having four times the amount of hospital beds and doctors than the US during the 1980s (Britnell et al, 81-84), underinvestment caused doctors to lack up-to-date training with diagnoses and poor ensurement of quality care. As such, Soviet medical technology and drugs had constant shortages with subpar operation by medical personnel. This major shift in the quality of medical care was noticed in 1984 during the first recorded HIV infection of a Soviet citizen, specifically a 14-year-old girl infected by a blood transfusion in 1975; it is believed that Russia's pre-Perestroika isolationist policies prolonged the introduction of the disease into Russia (Twigg, HIV/AIDS in Russia 9). Olga Gayevskaya was the first one to die from AIDS in 1988 and was diagnosed with the disease post-mortem; she underwent an HIV/AIDS test in August 1988 and received a false-negative result. This was due to there being a shortage of diagnostic equip-

ment, which caused her blood to be combined with that of other patients while testing to save materials (Twigg, HIV/AIDS in Russia 11). A professional mistake of the magnitude of this size sewed distrust between patient and doctor, which would later manifest as a refusal to seek treatment amongst positive individuals. This pernicious relationship brewing between doctor and patient was further exacerbated by a letter sent by 16 medical graduates to the leader of the Federal Aids Center: "Dear colleagues: We graduates of a medical institute are categorically opposed to combating the new 'disease' AIDS! And we intend to do everything in our power to impede the search for ways to combat that noble epidemic. We are convinced that within a short time AIDS will destroy all drug addicts and prostitutes…long live AIDS!" (Novikov, 3-4). It is evident that Russian policy isn't entirely to blame, as these Russian medical graduates' social philosophies clash greatly with those necessary to combat the spread of sensitive diseases. The official stance of the 1985 Soviet government to the response to the AIDS outbreak is exemplified by Pyotr Nikolayevich Burgasov, the then Deputy Minister of Public Health: "AIDS is a dangerous disease; it must not be underestimated. No cases of this disease have been reported here in our country. The reason for this is that the problem is largely a social one, since it is connected with sexual promiscuity— this, alas, is tolerated in certain circles in the West, but it is unnatural for our society" (Perin, 76). The aforementioned containment of the virus to foreign lands was disproven as 1986 marked an 8-person outbreak amongst the Russian-born sexual partners of a bisexual translator returning from Tanzania (Twigg, HIV/AIDS in Russia 10). This, combined with the disproportional amount of homosexual men in the West being infected, caused the Ministry of Internal Affairs to privately police and enact a surveillance program that monitored the sexual affairs of bisexuals and homosexual men, sex workers, drug users, and foreigners engaging with natives (Ter-Glgoryan). The modern-day Russian stigma towards HIV/AIDS victims traces its roots to the 1987 Soviet Anti-STI law; this addition criminalized HIV exposure and transmission of the virus. Those that tested positive were required to register with the state (Hearne). Additionally, it was the policy of the Soviet Government to minimize the attention brought to the arrival of the disease to their shores by enacting propaganda campaigns to portray HIV/AIDS patients as deviants or as foreign sympathizers. Operation INFEKTION was a disinformation campaign operated by the KGB that utilized radio broadcasts and falsifying results of future scientific studies ("Soviet Bloc Intelligence and Its AIDS Disinformation Campaign"). Through these mediums, the KGB claimed that the disease was manufactured by the US import Detrick in Maryland while conducting biological weapons research; additionally, papers were published that rationalized the simultaneous African HIV/AIDS outbreak by claiming a Pentagon-owned lab in Zaire "succeeded in modifying the non-lethal Green Monkey Virus into the AIDS virus;" critically, the United States actively declined to assist Russia in dealing with any research support in the HIV/AIDS crisis so long as the disinformation campaign was being propagated ("A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986 - 87"). Ultimately, the operation failed when inaccuracies were detected within the KGB-produced reports and newspaper articles. While the politicization of the illness decreased the amount of public sympathy for its victims, the Soviet structuring of its health agencies is what ultimately prevented widespread treatment of the epidemic. Because the initial nationalization of healthcare back in the 1920s consisted of a centralization of power in the Ministry of Health, reactions to outbreaks and updates in medical policy was decided at a state level rather than at a local agency level (Twigg, *HIV/AIDS in Russia* 35). This left little room for deviation from the state-planned response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which was to largely ignore it; such a decision was a lasting legacy of the Soviet healthcare system well into the early 2000s after the collapse of the nation and entrance into the 21st century.

When attempting to gather enough statistical information to gauge the amount of HIV/AIDS infections in modern times, it is important to note the biases of the sources' findings. As of 2018, the Russian Ministry of Health reported the country had 850,000 HIV/AIDS infections ("AIDS Situation Stable, Under Control in Russia, Health Minister Assures"), both aware and unaware. However, non-federal, independent Russian health agencies, as well as international HIV/AIDS statistics collectors, report findings up to twice this number: "Vadim Pokrovsky, who heads the Federal Scientific and Methodological Center for Prevention and Control of AIDS in Moscow… estimates that between 1.1 million and

1.4 million Russians are infected with HIV…Michel Kazatchkine, special adviser to UNAIDS in Eastern Europe… published [a study] last year that the true number of infected people may be as high as 2 million" (Cohen). While this does compare to the similarly recorded 1.2 million cases in the United States ("U.S. Statistics"), it is essential to point out that Russia has an HIV/AIDS infection rate 3 times higher than that of the United States after population is considered, with Russia having approximately a 1.0% infection rate versus the United States' 0.36%. The Russian government's deceitful underrepresentation of the magnitude of the rate of infection of HIV/AIDS would be consistent with its Soviet era, which lends further credibility to Western and non-government-affiliated Russian data gatherers.

While sexual transmission is arguably the most established method of infection, injection drug usage (IDU) is the most historically prevalent transmission method in Soviet-era and modern-day Russia. The most effective preventative drug employed by the United States is Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. As of 2012, PrEP was approved by the FDA for general use; on a scientific level, its catalytic properties ramp up antibody production to limit HIV replication in the bloodstream once positive contact is made ("What is Prep and how does it Work"). This makes it especially prevalent for IDU-based needle sharers, as this is their only medicinal preventative measure against HIV when coming into contact with positive needles. Aside from preventative medication, first-world countries have also developed after-the-fact medication via Antiretroviral Therapy, also known as ART, which is administered in cases where a person has already contracted HIV but works to prevent the advancement of AIDS and the infection of HIV to others.

As the modern Russian Federation Healthcare system stands, it has had multiple failures in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic, some of which come in the form of active treatment program collapses, and some come in the form of a further lack of action. The effects of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 are seen within the budgets of public hospitals and medical technology, which decreased even further in the wake of the country's widespread economic instability. The Russian Federation immediately experienced spikes in mortality rates and lower living standards. It was also at this moment that Russia began to experience the side effects of prioritizing nationwide access to healthcare over medical technological advancements. Ivanov and Suvorov analyze the reduced efficacy of the Russian public healthcare system when dealing with extremely frugal budgets and a lack of a focus on medical advancement. Tuberculosis and Syphilis, diseases once thought to be eradicated, erupted within the general population (Ivanov et al, 1). Rather than attempt to rework public healthcare, the Russian Federation maintained the aforementioned Semashko System but allowed the public to solicit business from private healthcare providers. Today, only about 5% of Russians have access to private healthcare, who don't have to follow the rigid hierarchical formatting of public institutions ("The Healthcare System in Russia").

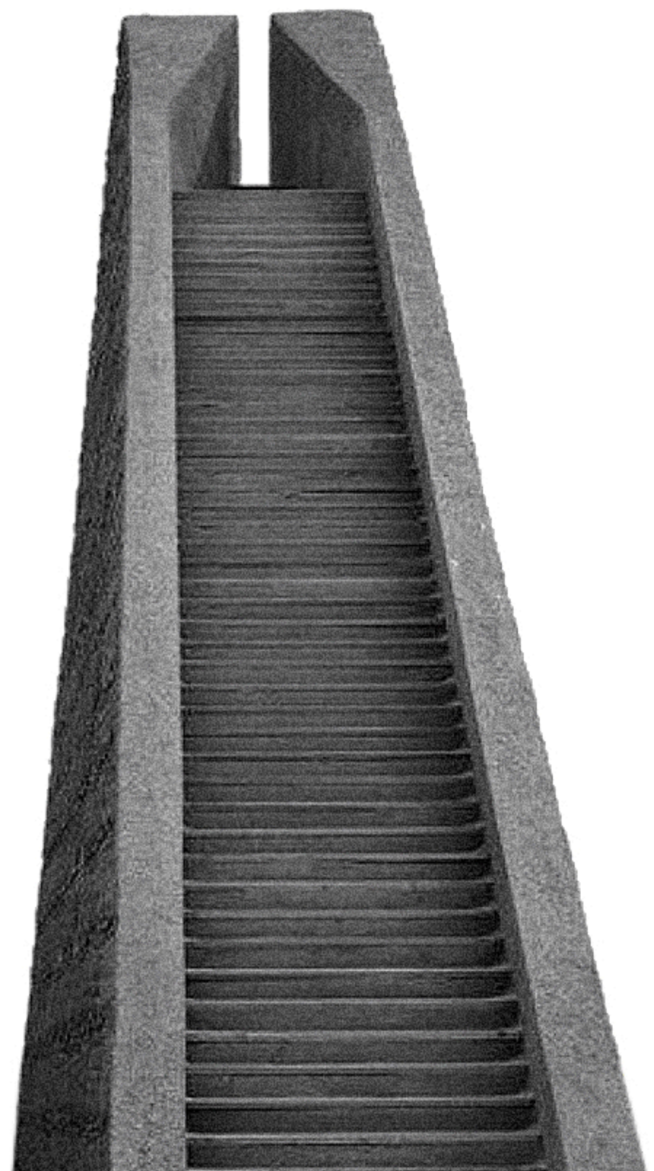
Russian public healthcare still follows the centralized power concentration as its Soviet counterpart, which continues to discourage any local coordination to combat specific diseases due to tightened budgets that only allow for the completion of their state-designated goals. Commands are passed down vertically and horizontal cooperation between agencies is almost nonexistent (Twigg, HIV/AIDS in Russia 26). This politicization also comes in the form of a meta-criticism of the Russian government, which is rather slow to enact new policies regarding what is championed as a robust healthcare system due to a lack of competitive elections to breed competition amongst policy-makers. Budgeting is not the only restricting factor, as Russian patients still have to deal with the traditional sentiments of medical personnel. A 2015 questionnaire taken at three Russian nursing schools demonstrated a lack of proficient knowledge of the intricacies of HIV/AIDS as well as a general homophobic attitude accompanying the administering of the test (Suominen et al). Additionally, the aforementioned ART and PrEP have historically been unavailable for Russian citizens. It was only in 2012, 26 years after the FDA approved it for US distribution, that Russians were able to attain ART, and it was only in 2017 when Russia started manufacturing ART drugs to distribute to its citizens. To this day, PrEP is unavailable to Russian citizens due to it not being imported or manufactured in-country (Twigg, Russia's Avoidable Epidemic). A number of Russian organizations dedicated to the dissemination of HIV/AIDS prevention have also been struck down due to the suffocating bureaucratic burden placed on

them to keep operating, whose total numbers have gone from hundreds to 90 local organizations being left in service (Twigg, Russia's Avoidable Epidemic). Furthermore, tight restrictions are placed on the advertising and public budgets allocated towards Non-Government-Organizations (aka NGOs), as they are classified as foreign agents. Each HIV/AIDS organization has been forced to register under such a title. While the HIV/AIDS epidemic has largely propagated throughout the country for political reasons, it's intertwining with the modern IDU epidemic is paramount. While the drug epidemic is worth an entire research paper on its own, it is extensively tied to the HIV/AIDS epidemic through the early transmission of the virus from the mid-90s to the early 2000s. The injecting drug epidemic traces its roots to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the injection of Western freedoms into the traditionally authoritarian culture. Such an introduction prompted an exploration of psychological escapes from the economic peril that was the Russian 1990s and 2000s. Going further back, after the Soviet-Afghan war in the 1980s, several soldiers returned with an appetite for heroin that was unfulfilled by Soviet border restrictions. Once the collapse allowed for greater individual privileges, widespread home growing of heroin took place in rural Russia while drug trafficking prospered in wealthier areas (Heimer). It is no surprise that the average age of introduction to injection-based narcotics has gone down from almost 18 years old in the 90s to 14 years old in the early 2000s (Tkachenko). Thus, the birth of a drug industry allowed for a new means of transmission for HIV/AIDS. While initially the 1000 cases reported in 1995 were contracted through 0.3% drug-based means, the later 1000 cases reported in 1996 were contracted through 87% drug-based means. This infection method grew in size as 90% of the 60,000 cases in 2000 were identified as drug-based infections (Heimer). It was in these initial years that strengthened the trajectory of the disease and influenced government response to the disease. Further stigmatization was placed on the HIV/AIDS community as they were labeled as associating with undesirable drug users and largely ignored by the Russian government in the late 90s and early 2000s.

This narrative fell apart as soon as the epidemic spread to the general population in the early to mid-2000s, which was the ultimate result of the failure to administer aid to said "undesirable group." Modern attempts to curb drug use or enact harm reduction campaigns have been unsuccessful, as treatments such as methadone substitution, clean needle exchanges, and voluntary detoxification programs are met with disdain (Twigg HIV/AIDS in Russia, 148). Moreover, Twigg explains that methadone and buprenorphine substitution are banned under Russian law due to Russian policymakers claiming they do not have access to enough Russian-based data to support the claim that such programs are successful, which is true only because they don't allow for any substitution studies to be conducted to begin with. They do not accept any data that supports the fact that these drugs reduce cravings and reduce withdrawal symptoms. Additionally, clean needle exchanges are met with local resistance by police departments that are tasked with overseeing the operation; according to Tkatchenko-Schmidt's article, 80 pilot projects have been established by the Russian Ministry of Health in the form of needle exchanges (Tkatchenko-Schmidt et al). However, individuals who engage with these programs have been reported to have been denied needle exchange by the cops themselves or even arrested for admitting to drug usage. Voluntary detoxification programs are offered to Russians convicted of drug offenses, but only 2% accept such offers due to their brutality. In a viral social media concoction, drug users were being filmed kidnapped and handcuffed to beds to force them to ride out withdrawals all the while undergoing various beatings. The United Nations has actively condemned these practices as human rights violations (Twigg, Russia's Avoidable Epidemic). However, arguably the worst stigma that HIV/AIDS and drug users face is from those who are supposed to treat them in hospitals. Narcologists have repeatedly expressed low confidence in the IDU users' recovery due to the damage the Russian state has made to the reputation of these prone groups. They are less likely to refer their patients to the existing Narcotics Anonymous sources; Twigg further explains that "physicians in St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Kazan, and Khabarovsk have all confided that they expect that no more than five percent of patients who complete detoxification will remain abstinent for six months" (Twigg, HIV/AIDS in Russia 148). Without the ability to receive appropriate medical help and substitution therapy, IDU abuse will not be able to be quelled and subsequently further propagate HIV/AIDS throughout Russia.

While Russia's history of dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic from the early 80s to the late 2000s has been riddled with over-politicization and unnecessary stigmatism of social groups, its stance has changed considerably in recent times. For instance, the Russian Latimer 10 Orthodox Church now actively participates in assisting recovering IDU addicts who are victims of HIV/AIDS ("Russian Orthodox Church"). Although the Church does actively condemn the associated lifestyle of sin that they believe the HIV/AIDS victim to have partaken in, they also understand that not all HIV/AIDS victims are caused by IDUs or through consensual sexual activity. They actively train clergy to prevent HIV/AIDS outbreaks within their communities and offer support to members who are afflicted: "[the] medical and psychological training of clergy [are] called to pastoral care of people living with HIV/AIDS, including inmates of penitentiaries; [we train] social workers, such as home-visiting nurses and counselors at hotlines and counseling centers for work with HIV-infected people and the affected; [we conduct] seminars, round tables, trainings and other methodological and educational activities devoted to various problems of preventing and overcoming AIDS; [we publish] methodological aids for clergy and church social workers engaged in the work with HIV-infected people and the affected, nursing and home-nursing HIV/AIDS patients'' ("Russian Orthodox Church"). While they do contribute to the stigmatization of the disease amongst non-parish members, they actively attempt to curb infection rates and offer support to those a part of their community.

Although the Russian government has yet to make serious improvements in the medical industry to offer support to existing HIV/AIDS victims, they are taking strides to curb the infection rate in modern times. In order to truly recover from this epidemic, the Russian government needs to acknowledge the inefficiencies associated with its lateral command across medical agencies, allow non-government organizations and medical agencies to work independent of their oversight, and actively attempt to support drug users. While this epidemic will not end soon due to the deeply rooted traditionalist sentiment that prevents several obstacles, an understanding of the country's political carelessness is being highlighted (and hopefully reformed) with its engagement in current events.



Lena and Iura: Conceptualization of Gender and Age During the Seige of Leningrad (1941-1944)

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During the Siege of Leningrad (September 8th, 1941 - January 27th, 1944), the *blokadniki* (people of the blockade) suffered tremendously over 900 days, fighting to survive without ample food, electricity, or water. Encircled by German troops, Leningrad was cut off from the rest of the USSR for most of the war; the *blokadniki* often referred to their city as "the ring" or "the island."[1] The deeply traumatic experiences of extreme isolation, deprivation, and death redefined Leningrad's cultural landscape, specifically raising questions about Soviet gender culture. One window into this cultural shift is through the examination of personal diaries written by the *blokadniki* during the Siege. Overall, children are often left out of the discussion on Siege diaries, which usually prioritize the diaries of artists, poets, and writers; these diaries are usually more aesthetic and contemplative, the two most well-known Siege diaries being that of Olga Berggolts,[2] a famous poet and playwright, and Lydia Ginzburg,[3] a prominent literary critic.

Adolescent[4] diarist, Iurii Riabinkin, demonstrates changing constructions of gender identity in his perception of traditional gender roles, self-worth, and masculinity. Though less refined than artistic professionals, Iura's perspective is crucial to understanding the depth and complexity of the Siege's impact; this diarist provides a unique perspective on gender norms as a physically disabled individual forcibly suspended between childhood and adulthood by the chaos of the Siege. As a subject, Iura is an extremely interesting sixteen-year-old student, who, in Soviet society amidst the chaos of war, struggles to find his place as a maturing adult, but more specifically as a man. Academic discourse has examined Siege diaries mostly through the lens of the Siege as a psychological phenomenon, as in Alexis Peri's *The War Within: Diaries from the Siege of Leningrad*, or as a primarily female experience, as in Cynthia Simmon's *Writing the Siege: Women's Diaries, Memoirs, and Documentary Prose*, but rarely as an adolescent's experience. Even finding source material is difficult since access to adolescent diaries in translation is extremely limited, especially for male diarists—Iura's diary is the only published and translated Siege diary by a male adolescent, and even then, it is only available in excerpts in an anthology. Adolescent diarists provide a particularly interesting perspective on gender as their identities are in flux during this developmental period in their lives. In Iura's case, the war destabilizes his known society, which makes this process of individuating from one's parents all the more difficult. Throughout this essay, I aim to illuminate this neglected aspect of Siege diary study by illustrating the fluidity of gender constructions in exploring the extraordinary entries of an adolescent male diarist.

Gender is not only a facet of Iura's personal identity, but also inherently related to his ability to categorize and understand the world around him. Historian Joan Wallach Scott cites the construction of Indo-European languages, which designate masculine, feminine, and neuter as grammatical genders, as the source of a more elastic definition of gender: "Gender is understood to be a way of classifying phenomena, a socially agreed upon system of distinctions rather than an objective description of inherent traits."[5] With this perspective, which this paper operates on, gender becomes a particularly "useful category of

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1 Peri, The War Within: Diaries from the Siege of Leningrad (Harvard 2017), 5.

2 Daytime Stars, by Olga Berggolts, translated by Lisa Kirschenbaum.

3 Blockade Diary, by Lydia Ginzburg, translated by Alan Myers.

4 The use of adolescent here, as opposed to teenager, is meant to emphasize the fluid and transitory nature of this time in these diarists' lives. The word "teenage" implies a more static stage, demarcated by being in one's "teen years" (13-19). Oxford Languages defines "adolescent" as of Latin origin from "ad- 'to' + alescere 'grow, grow up' and from alere 'nourish'" The use of this word then demonstrates that this time period is not easily defined by age and is more of a developmental process: a transitory state from childhood to adulthood.

5 Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (Columbia University 1999), 29.

historical analysis"[6] as it is cognizant of Russian's linguistic implications and how it impacts Iura's gender perception. Yet, the definition of gender by social norms is further reinforced by the mass emaciation suffered by the *blokadniki* over the 900 days.

The severe lack of food and water in the city caused millions to die from starvation and countless others to suffer from nutritional dystrophy to the point that it was known in the USSR as the "Leningrad illness."[7] Nutritional dystrophy not only emaciates the body but also disrupts bodily systems and atrophies the muscles and organs, causing an indistinguishable physical appearance between the sexes: "You could not tell whether it was of a man or a woman. It had become merely a body belonging to the earth."[8] In this way, traditional gender markers quickly lost their priority as a part of gender identity. In his entries, Iura only mentions his body when describing areas of pain. It is also important to note that Iura, as an adolescent, was particularly stunted by the effects of starvation: "Adolescence slowed dramatically in boys and girls… aspects of development, from height and weight gain to sexual maturation, became delayed in youths."[9] Losing his bodily markers of sex and age destabilized his understanding of gender as defined by physically presenting as a man, but also deprived him of the emotional development that comes with maturing into adulthood. To add to this, Iura was born with pleurisy and near blindness in one eye and could not serve in the army, which drastically impacts his view of masculinity as it relates to able-bodiedness and vitality. As a result, Iura's understanding of gender is immediately less corporeal than it is emotional or mental; in his diary, Iura instead frames gender as defined by behavior, environment, or state of mind.

The establishment of a gender identity is more than just an intriguing discussion, as it may also have connections to survival in the bleak, seemingly endless blockade. As a young adult, a sense of gender identity and self-worth is crucial to seeing a future for oneself and having a purpose in society, which would then strengthen their will to live. Siege diaries often mentioned a "moral dystrophy" that "took the form of apathy and acquiescence to death or of emotional volatility, which produced panic, despair, and obsessive behavior."[10] This mental state inhibited the *blokadniki*'s ability to work and contribute, which is the foundation of Soviet collective identity; as a result, Leningraders "associated the illness not only with irresponsibility but with insufficient patriotism. It was a political crime."[11] This mental weakness was "defined against the ideal of the New Soviet Person, whose steely body was matched by strong determination and complete self-possession."[12] Adolescents were particularly vulnerable to this accusation of "laziness," as they were expected to contribute to their families since they were more mentally capable than young children and more able-bodied than older adults. Moral dystrophy and its anti-Soviet connotations are particularly important for Iura because he is disabled, thus making it much more difficult for him to stay mobile and provide for his family. Once his masculine identity is destabilized by his inability to contribute, he frequently refers to himself as a burden on his mother and sister; he calls himself a "parasite, hanging around their necks."[13] This demonstrates a connection between unstable gender identity and despair or guilt which hinders his ability to function in the Siege.

When discussing gender as it relates to Soviet war culture, it is also important to note that the concept of the war itself was discussed in gendered terms. WWII was known in the Soviet Union as "Великая Отечественная война" which is translated as the "Great Patriotic War." "Отечественная" contains the root "отец" which means "father," thus gendering the war as male. In official propaganda, Red Army soldiers were supposed to be empowered by their "love of the Motherland"[14] to reclaim Russian soil from encroaching invaders. The word "родина" (motherland) is grammatically feminine. This metaphor then identifies the act of the war as masculine,

6 Wallach Scott., 28.

7 Peri, 180.

8 Ibid, 42. Quote from diary of poet Vera Inber.

9 Ibid, 42.

10 Peri, 188.

11 Ibid, 189.

12 Ibid, 188.

13 Riabinkin, Leningrad Under Siege: First-hand Accounts of the Ordeal, ed: Adamovich, Granin (Pen & Sword 2019), 152.

14 Berkhoff, Motherland in Danger: Soviet Propaganda During World War II (Harvard 2012), 205.

while justifying it as the defense of a feminine object. Early war propaganda drew heavily on this idea, which depicted the proper role of men as warrior-like soldiers and women as the essence of Russia itself. This helps contextualize Iura's immediate reaction to take up the role of the defender, as it is the only honorable place in society for young Soviet men.

From May to October of 1941, Iura was heavily influenced by Red Army propaganda as shown in his obsession with bodily strength and maximizing his contribution to the cause. In official propaganda and press, Red Army soldiers were defined by their "bravery, physical endurance, assiduity, readiness for self-sacrifice, devotion to [their] own people, hatred of oppression, and love of the Motherland."[15] In his diary, the war takes priority over Iura's own life events and often directly impacts his emotional state, demonstrating his devotion to the cause. Iura's entries contain detailed notes on front activity, including extensive knowledge of international news: "They are sending us a steady stream of American tanks and planes… the Japanese recently made an official protest about the Americans sending petroleum to us… Our forces have met up with the English in Iran."[16] He often lifts his spirits by remembering the anniversaries of great Russian military victories, such as the 129th anniversary of the Battle of Borodino between Russia and France, where "foreign invaders [were] met with a fierce rebuff."[17] Young boys in the city wished to be seen as extensions of the Red Army, which often encouraged anti-German sentiment and violence. While on a work break, Iura recalls, "The lads traced Hitler's ugly mug in the sand and began bashing it with their shovels. I joined in as well."[18] His preoccupation with military history and news serves as a way for Iura to feel as though he is supporting the war effort from within the besieged city.

Since Iura correlates masculinity and strength with the Red Army, living by their values and emulating the behavior of soldiers gives him a sense of self-identity as a young man. Following their depiction in propaganda as brave defenders, Iura connects his self-worth to his heroic behavior during emergencies, which further reveals his preconceptions of ideal masculinity. As early as four days after the declaration of war, on June 26th, 1941, Iura is drafted into a labor brigade along with his fellow male classmates. He pushes his body to its limits working ten-hour days, writing in his diary about his splintered hands or aching bones after a long shift. However, after he is rejected from army service in August 1941, the complaints disappear and are now replaced with confident reports of his courageous work in his school's bomb brigade: "We were working in dense, acrid smoke that seeped into our throats... penetrating into our very lungs; sweat was pouring down our faces, but we kept on dealing with the bombs."[19] After he was deemed unfit for the front, Iura appears determined to prove his value in warlike situations, describing himself in ways similar to the heroic depictions of Red Army soldiers in propaganda.

Iura's fixation with the Red Army could also stem from his inner frustration with his physical disabilities and low self-esteem due to his perceived worthlessness. His painful rejection from the army dissuaded him from even attempting to apply to the Naval Cadets, which was his sole aspiration. Iura laments: "I can see no future prospects for myself, not even mediocre ones… What is there for me now, when my own secret dream in life–joining the Navy–has become unattainable?"[20] Though he is only sixteen, he concludes he has nothing left to look forward to, implying that army service is the only respectable occupation for a young Russian man. His physical disabilities warp his perception of his young age, due to the correlation between youth and strength and vitality in Red Army propaganda. Since he defines the essence of masculinity as serving in the army, his rejection is akin to the loss of his life's purpose.

In modeling himself after the older men of the Red Army, Iura rarely mentions his age as it would only draw a further distinction between him and the soldiers. Even days before his sixteenth birthday in September 1941, he first reports, "It seems highly likely that the city of Ostrov has been taken since it lay in the path of the Pskov offensive. Which front is Voroshilov commanding?"[21] Iura draws himself closer to the Red Army ideal by prioritizing news from the front over celebrating his birthday, which

15 Berkhoff, 205.
16 Riabinkin, 40.
17 Ibid, 48.
18 Ibid, 9.
19 Riabinkin, 76.
20 Ibid, 41
21 Ibid, 39.

would only emphasize his young age and failure to serve. Iura also mentions that he had "grown up in an almost carefree, happy… idyllic setting,"[22] which implies he has already entered a grimmer adulthood. He mourns the loss of his naivety and simple childhood: "Farewell, childish dreams! You will never again return to me… Happiness! There is no other word to describe my previous life."[23] However, in moments of vulnerability, he explicitly mentions his young age to emphasize the cruelty of his circumstances. After he was unable to secure his family's food ration for the day, he writes, "I am sitting here crying, I'm only sixteen years old you know! What bastards they are to have brought this whole war down on our heads!"[24] As the only man in his family, failing to provide for his mother and sister is particularly emasculating for Iura, who is constantly trying to prove his worth by increasing his contribution. This frustration with losing his masculine identity makes him acutely aware of his young age, which only worsens his feelings of helplessness and draws him further from his Red Army ideal of masculinity.

In attempting to overcome his physical limitations, Iura doubles his efforts to identify himself with the war effort through his use of language and ideology as winter approaches. When reporting front activity in November 1941, he reports, "The situation on the front lines is better. The German troops are retreating in disorder toward Taganrog. We are on their heels."[25] Here, Iura specifically identifies himself with the Red Army and their successes by using the first-person plural "we" as opposed to "they." The propagandistic rhetoric continues as Iura proclaims, "Let the Nazi swine be butchered with all speed, damn them! But when they have been slaughtered, they will give off such a rotten stench that no one in their vicinity will remain alive."[26] This specific dehumanization of the Nazi troops by using bestial metaphors is consistent with Soviet propaganda, which "debased the enemy to such an extent that he was scarcely human."[27] Through this, Iura attempts to redefine masculinity as a way of thinking and feeling instead of as being represented by physical strength, which has become increasingly difficult.

His loyalty to the Red Army, and by extension the Communist Party, persists even in the face of starvation, demonstrating the depth of his dedication to what he sees as masculinity. During the devastating winter of 1941 to 1942, the worst period of starvation during the Siege, using an extra ration card was considered a crime of selfishness and detriment to the collective, which was innately against Soviet values. Because of this, Iura writes, "I would steal, rob – I don't know how far I would go. The one thing I wouldn't go so far as – I would never become a traitor."[28] If his family was caught with their illegally obtained ration card, Iura goes so far as to consider committing suicide, preferring death to an accusation of Party betrayal. He pledges to give his life to the war effort to absolve himself of his inner guilt, promising, "I will sacrifice my own life… I will volunteer for the People's Army, and at least do a good job at the front, laying my life down for my country. To lay my life down, not omitting to pay my debt."[29] He again identifies army service and dying in battle as the highest form of bravery and honor, which he hopes would compensate for his dishonest behavior. He ties self-worth and moral righteousness with the willingness to die for one's country, which is yet another example of the permeation of official Red Army propaganda.

Entering December 1941, Iura becomes much more concerned with survival and evacuation, distancing himself from his previous belief in the value of demonstrating military strength. Iura's already disabled body was further crippled by extreme starvation, which made queuing for food for hours on end extremely taxing. By mid-December, Iura begins to lack the strength even to walk without intense pain, let alone extinguish bombs or serve in labor brigades as he had before. Since these heroic deeds had been the main pillar of his masculine identity, Iura suffers a loss of purpose and with it, an encroaching sense of hopelessness and futility.

His struggles to redefine masculinity once he is physically weakened were likely exacerbated by the increasingly female population and the changing gender roles in Leningrad. Leningrad quickly became "overwhelmingly female" as men died from starva-

22 Riabinkin., 143.
23 Ibid, 104.
24 Ibid, 104.
25 Ibid, 113.
26 Ibid, 113.
27 Berkhoff, 168.
28 Riabinkin, 110.
29 Ibid, 144.

tion at a higher rate than women due to smaller stores of body fat.[30] Additionally, since men under 55 were drafted, women also began to dominate traditionally masculine industries: "Women constituted more than 70 percent of the city's industrial labor force and made up the bulk of the civilian defense."[31] While the women of Leningrad were revered for undertaking masculine tasks such as hard labor, "Leningrad press and propaganda… never acknowledged, let alone celebrated, the reciprocal phenomenon: the apparent feminization of men."[32] Though Iura does not explicitly mention the state of his body in his diary, he is most likely extremely thin from emaciation. Compared to the broad and muscular soldiers depicted in official propaganda, his feminized body served as a constant reminder of his emasculation.

Also important to note is the scarcity of male figures in Iura's diary at all, whether they be strangers or acquaintances. In his entries, there are two women, his mother and sister, whom he mostly mentions in passing, as well as the occasional female neighbor, fellow food queuer, or canteen worker. As more men were drafted into the Red Army, Iura saw his able-bodied classmates disappear to the front while he had to stay in Leningrad in a primarily female environment, intensifying his feelings of uselessness. He attempts to recapture his sense of utility by establishing himself as the sole provider for his family, which also takes on masculine connotations as the traditional role of the father: "If the evacuation doesn't come off… I will have to be capable of supporting Mother and Ira. There will be only one solution–to go and work as a hospital orderly."[33] Since most orderlies were young girls, Iura frames this option as a last resort for the noble cause of supporting his family, attempting to masculinize what he perceives as "womanly" work.

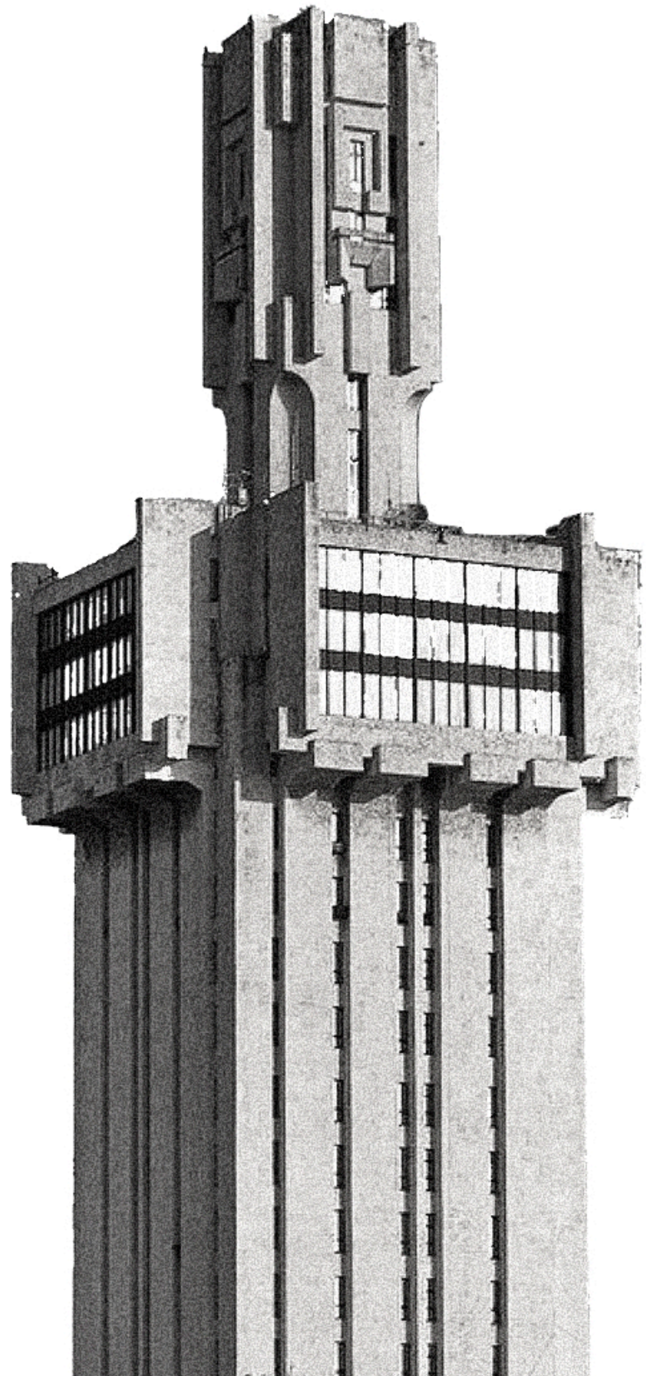
By the end of December 1941, Iura's entries are almost exclusively dreams of evacuation or food as he no longer finds solace in identifying with masculine ideals or following the war. He writes, "I remain indifferent to news of the front, whether they are winning or not, and untouched by any political event."[34] Iura uses the third person "they" here rather than the previous "we" to describe the Red Army, detaching himself entirely from the war effort. The sense of worth he gained by identifying with the Red Army appears to have lost its value once starvation makes bodily strength nearly impossible to achieve, especially with his disabilities. When describing the starvation of December '41, he notably begins to use gender-neutral terms, reporting, "So many people are dying every day in Leningrad! ...Starvation brings death to every living being."[35] He begins to identify himself with the genderless Leningrad collective that includes *all* living beings, a purposefully vague term that may include animals and others aside from his fellow citizens. In his loss of a sense of purpose and self, he becomes disillusioned with the societal constructs of masculine identity and strength, considering the inanimate city of Leningrad to be the only true lasting being: "Our bodies will rot, our bones will crumble to dust, but Leningrad will stand on the banks of the Neva for all eternity, proud and invincible."[36] Iura is too weak to walk to the train station to be evacuated with his mother and sister and so they are forced to leave without him; he pens his last entry on January 6th, 1942.

In his diaries, Iura explores his own self-worth and perceived purpose as it relates to his gender identity and age. He often finds pride in fulfilling his expected gender roles but then has difficulty reestablishing his identity when he is unable to maintain his masculinity. Initially, Iura's masculinity is defined by associating himself with the Red Army and seeing himself as an extension of their power and bravery. However, as he loses his physical strength and struggles to actively contribute to his family, he repeatedly attempts to reestablish a sense of purpose but eventually loses his grasp on gender and age. In his diaries, Iura demonstrates his fierce efforts to adapt gender and masculinity to persist in the unique circumstances of the Siege since it is essential to retaining a sense of worth and hope.

As a maturing adolescent, Iura's construction of gender is malleable since he is establishing his self-identity when he is thrust into the chaos of wartime. This elasticity attempts to ensure that he still sees himself as a functioning citizen of Soviet society, which is central to the way Iura experienced the world around

30 Peri, 42.
31 Ibid, 42.
32 Ibid, 45.
33 Riabinkin, 140.
34 Riabinkin, 130.
35 Ibid, 143.
36 Ibid, 143.

him. Through analyzing this diary, we can see the simultaneous rigidity and fluidity of gender norms; though it was originally defined by army service, Iura transitions his sense of masculinity to be related to rhetoric, mental state, or contribution to the family. However, it is important to note that this project only examines a single case study and does not (and cannot) represent the vast range and complexity of other adolescents' reactions to the Siege; Iura is only one man building his identity according to his individual understanding of gender and his unique experiences as a disabled person. His adaptation of identity also brings into question how adolescents were able to navigate in the postwar period with markedly different gender conventions than the rest of Soviet society.



Victory Over the Sun: A Feminist Approach in Translating Eastern European Suprematist Texts

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Abstract

In 1983, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art produced a reconstruction of the Russian Suprematist opera *Victory Over the Sun*, translated by American poet Larissa Shmailo. Originally premiered in 1913, *Victory* was an interdisciplinary opera constructed by several key figures in the movement, including Mikhail Matyushin, Kazimir Malevich, Aleksei Kruchenykh, and Velimir Khlebnikov. In translating the work to English, Shmailo encountered two central issues within the text that were the result of *zaum* (зáумь), a linguistic style employed by writers. While the original writers utilized the zaum style to experiment with a "universalizing" form of language, translating a linguistic form that "breaks every possible rule of grammar and syntax," according to Shmailo herself, created difficulty. Additionally, Shmailo found that the zaum style amplified misogynistic undertones within the text through "masculinized" female and neuter adjectives and nouns created by Kruchenykh; *desiataia strana* (десятая страна) in Russian becomes masculinized to *Deciaty Stran* (Десяти Стран). In order to reconcile these two key issues Shmailo found in translating the opera, this paper seeks to answer the question: What manner of translation, or lack thereof, would be most appropriate in a future reproduction of Victory Over the Sun and other Suprematist works? I argue that a localized approach in translating the opera would best reconcile the conflict between the unorthodox grammatical conventions of zaum and the outdated gender norms present throughout the original work for a modern English-speaking audience. I also argue that because the Suprematist movement focused on challenging "old systems," misogynistic aspects of the opera can, and should, be left out of a future reworking. An acutely localized translation method would lead to a more successful reconstruction of Victory Over the Sun and other works by Suprematist writers.

Victory Over the Sun: A Feminist Approach in Translating Eastern European Suprematist Texts

An offspring of Cubo-Futurism, the Suprematist movement in Russia began with the works of Kazimir Malevich around 1913. The Suprematists aimed to transcend "traditional boundaries and conventions in art"[1] by destroying old forms and developing new ones. One particularly notable work that developed from this movement was *Victory Over the Sun*, an interdisciplinary opera that was a cumulation of the talents of Matiushin, Malevich, Kruchenyk, and Klebnikov.[2] The performances were characterized by Malevich's geometric and visually fracturing approach to costume design[3] and Kruchenyk's similarly fracturing approach to language. *Zaum* (зáумь), translated to "beyond the mind," was a style employed by Kruchenyk for his script writing. Robert Benedetti, a co-author of the 1983 reconstruction of the opera, describes Kruchenyk's style as being able to "communicate the speaker's internal state directly, often departing from narrative logic and sometimes disintegrating altogether into abstract imagery and pure emotive sound."[4] In other words, the style employs a creation of new words and deconstructed syntax in order to transcend conventional boundaries of expressing feelings and ideas through sound.[5]

1 Benedetti, "Victory Over the Sun," 18

2 Benedetti writes, "It was created by the composer Matiushin, a painter and violinist, the painter Malevich, who later became famous for his abstract Suprematist paintings, and the poet Kruchenykh, who was a member of a group of young Moscow artists called Hylea…they returned the city and enlisted the support of another Hylea member, the poet Klebnikov, who la supplied the prologue for Victory." Benedetti, "Victory Over the Sun," 18

3 Bezverkhny, Malevich in His Milieu

4 Benedetti, "Victory Over the Sun," 18

5 Shmailo, "Victory Over the Sun," 1; Kisselgoff, "Victory Over the Sun"

Despite the positive reception and apparent vibrancy of the 1983 reconstruction of the work, it has received criticism for utilizing an English translation. Anna Kisselgoff of the New York Times writes, “Had this production been given in Russian rather than English, the importance of its literary base would be clearer.”[6] Eva Bezverkhny shares a similar sentiment in her Hyperallergic article, writing that it seemed “counterproductive to choose a staging of the opera translated into English, when the specific jagged, rhythmic sounds and effects of the poetry read aloud carried particular meaning (or lack thereof) in Russian.”[7] Another issue that became apparent in the translation of *Victory Over the Sun* came from the primary translator herself, Larissa Shmailo. Aside from the difficult-to-translate irregularities inherent to the zaum style, Kruchenykh “masculinized” female and neuter adjectives and nouns. For instance, *desiataia strana* (десятая страна) in Russian becomes masculinized to *Deciaty Stran* (Десяти Стран)[8] Shmailo points out that this stylistic choice that Khlebnikov made was ideologically misogynistic, citing his manifesto “The Word as Such.” In discussing some of the negative criticism he received as a response to *Victory*, Khlebnikov writes:

“Delving into the eternally playful tone of our critics, we can infer their opinions about language, and we will notice that all their requirements (oh, horror!) are more applicable to woman as such than to language as such. Indeed: clear, pure (oh of course!), Honest (um! Um!); sonorous, pleasant, tender (absolutely right!), Finally - juicy and colorful... (who is it? Come in!)”[9]

These artistic and feminist criticisms pave the way to asking the question: What manner of translation, or lack thereof, would be most appropriate in a future reproduction of *Victory Over the Sun* and other Suprematist works? Throughout this paper, I argue for the utilization of localization ideology as a method for translation, but that under a feminist lens that this ideology should not necessarily be used in every aspect of a future translation of *Victory*.

Unlike the highly contentious work of the Italian Futurists, the primary goal of *Victory* was to pave the way toward a new form of art with an *underlying* foundation of political themes;[10] *Victory* was created to target “old” traditions and belief systems.[11] The idea of challenging traditional belief is essential when recontextualizing the work of the Suprematists. In Branislav Jakovljevic’s article, “Unframe Malevich!: Ineffability and Sublimity in Suprematism,” he argues that the Suprematist paintings in museums, despite attacking convention thematically, have been receiving conventional treatment in museums through being framed.[12] Because “concepts are just as important as paint on canvas”[13] in the movement, the technique of framing destroys the conceptual illusion between the painting itself and the environment that surrounds it.[14] In fact, Malevich’s original works (1915-1935) remained unframed during their exhibitions.[15] Jakovljevik’s argument contrasts various perspectives regarding tradition, modern perception, and historical authenticity in the presentation of art. The variety of perspectives that go into the presentation of a historical work speaks directly to the dilemma faced by Benedetti when reconstructing *Victory*, as he wrote:

“As the work progressed, the precise aim of the reconstruction had to be clarified: What should the audience get from it? The Museum saw it from a curatorial perspective and was interested in presenting the work as an example of the tradition to which the exhibition was dedicated. The scholars who advised us on the project saw it from a historical perspective, and their focus was on an accurate reproduction of the piece itself. We saw it from a theatrical perspective and were concerned with recreating the original experience for a contemporary audience. A successful reconstruction, I decided, would have to satisfy all three of these interests to some degree.”[16]

It is a battle between the three audiences that Benedetti describes, along with the unconventional values of the Suprematists themselves, that causes a conflict regarding the proper method of translation of Suprematist works. For instance, a museum’s

6 Kisselgoff, “Victory Over the Sun”
7 Bezverkhny, Malevich in His Milieu
8 Shmailo, “Victory Over the Sun,” 2
9 Ibid, 4
10 Benedetti, “Victory Over the Sun,” 18
11 Valentine, “Rejecting Reason,”40
12 Jakovljevic, “Unframe Malevich!,” 25
13 Ibid, 20
14 Ibid, 28
15 Ibid, 27
16 Benedetti, “Victory Over the Sun,” 25

interest in a traditional framing of a work falls directly in contention with the Suprematist view of transcending boundaries. Even so, ironically, Jakovljevik's opposition to the conventionality of framing Suprematist paintings fell closer to what Benedetti called the museum's traditional "curatorial perspective." By not framing Suprematist works, the paintings maintain the artists' vision in preserving their original presentation and meaning.

In the same way that a frame can alter the meaning of a painting, the language and style of translation utilized in an opera can directly impact the interpretation of the work. Aside from the challenges of translating a gendered language into a non-gendered language, the misogynistic utilization of language within the work has grown to become part of an "old" system of thought. For a future reconstruction of *Victory* to be reproduced, the curatorial perspective and the modern feminist perspective must be reconciled in order to maintain the opera's communicability, authenticity, and adherence to Suprematist ideals. In other words, a future translation of the opera must still be able to communicate the message of *Victory* in a manner that is reminiscent of zaum, while also challenging the "old," misogynistic system of thought that the Suprematists held.

A method unto which I propose that the gendered language of *Victory* can be addressed comes from Urzula Paleczek's analysis in translating Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day, House of Night*. Paleczek emphasizes that, since Tokarcczuk's work is a feminist text, that "successful literary translation of gendered language is important because gender's grammaticalization reveals a great deal about the way a culture constructs and perceives the binary of gender."[17] In any case, translating gendered grammatical conventions into a gender-neutral language can pose some difficulty. In fact, the article found that a great deal of the nuances that Torarczuk employs in the original Polish text had been lost in the English translation.[18] There are many instances in which Torarczuk invents new words to be grammatically feminine to transcend the boundaries of the language, such as creation words like *grzybosc* (mushroomness).[19] In cases where words convey a masculine virtue, such as *mestwo*, but have no feminine equivalent, Torarczuk suggests words like zenstwo to communicate an equivalent, feminine virtue.[20] The approach that Torarczuk uses in creating new words to convey wordless concepts is ideologically consistent with that of that Zaum literary approach, and could only truly be expressed using a localized translational method.

Unlike *Victory Over the Sun*, Olga Tokarczuk's *House of Day, House of Night* is an explicitly feminist work that directly combats patriarchal norms. Should the creation of new words be employed in an English translation of *Victory* to reveal nuances that actively upholds patriarchal values? In "Translation of Method and Ideology of Sexist Attitudes in Novels," the authors emphasize the importance of translators in that they "become a person who is responsible for delivering the author's message toward readers in the target language."[21] Further on, the authors describe the two general schools of thought when it comes to translation. In describing the difference between foreignization and localization ideology, the article reads:

"A translator who follows foreignization ideology tends to side with target language by maintaining the rules and norms from source language such as structure, diction, and even the cultural value inherent in the text without considering whether the translation work can be accepted well by readers in target language (Leskovar, 2003). It is different with the translator who follows localization ideology. They tend to match the delivering of the message that is conveyed by the author by using language style and culture in the target language."[22]

As the authors describe, foreignization ideology would be difficult to employ on a work like *Victory*. Because new words and non-words in the zaum style do not have a direct translation, the utilization of zaum would leave gaps in the translation, making it incomprehensible to audiences. On the other hand, following localization ideology in a work like *Victory* would allow the translator to express the abstract ideas of the author while still remaining true to both

17 Paleczek, "Gendered Language in Feminist Translation," 47

18 Ibid, 48

19 Ibid, 51

20 Paleczek, "Gendered Language in Feminist Translation,", 51

21 Manggarrani, Nababan, and Santosa, "Translation Method and Ideology," 248

22 Ibid, 249

the source material and communicable to the audience. Additionally, a localized style would allow the translator to address cultural differences among the two languages, allowing for a feminist lens in omitting the misogynistic undertones on the source material.

Still, the logistics of translating patriarchal nuances remains in the air. "Translation of Method," with the authors stating that their research gives representation regarding the free choice that a translator has in taking either the foreignization or localization approach, even when working on source material that is inherently sexist.[23] I believe that a right-of-center (see figure 1) approach should be taken in the reconstruction of *Victory*. The localization ideology of translators would allow for many of the elements that were lost in the original translation of *Victory*, such as the "specific jagged, rhythmic sounds" that Bezverkhny mentions, to be reintroduced by modifying already existing English words. At the same time, however, applying the same modifications to words or ideas that would make *Victory* more misogynistic would be counterproductive to the cultural values of a modern audience and the meaning of the work as a whole. As aforementioned, the purpose of Suprematist art was to reinvent artistic forms and ideas in the foreground, with political ideas remaining in the background. Because the central focus of *Victory* as a work isn't the misogynistic values themselves, but rather on the speed, power, and mechanical energy of modern life,[24] the artistic integrity of the work can be preserved while addressing its problematic undertones.

As maintained by Robert Benedetti, a successful reproduction of *Victory Over the Sun*, would satisfy an adherence to historical authenticity, audience coherence, and theatric components. The central focus of this essay explored translation as a means to reconcile a Suprematist perspective on historical authenticity and the perspective of a modern feminist audience. The Suprematist idea of challenging "old systems" is altered as the misogynistic undertones upheld by Khlebnikov become part of an "old system" in their own right to the modern audience. In the same way that a frame can alter the meaning of a painting, translation has the potential to completely alter the meaning of a work, especially when the source material is written in an unconventional format. Through careful translation using a localizing ideology, I believe that the artistic flair of the original *Victory* can be upheld while gendered words loaded with misogynistic undertones can be translated without gender into English. Assuming that the reproduction is for an English audience, to uphold the pillar of communicability from the stage to the audience, it would be essential that the translation of the work would also be written in English. The utilization of a localized translation ideology could uphold the integrity of the work in the creation of new words and alteration of existing words, returning a lost flair back into the work. At the same time, however, the localized approach should be used acutely, not being applied to words in the original text that were altered in order to uphold misogynistic values. Because the main takeaway from the work is not the misogynistic ideals infused by Khlebnikov, it would not harm the overall authenticity of the translation to not modify his altered words. It would also be counterproductive to a modern audience to go out of one's way to purposefully infuse the gender-neutral English language with artificial grammatical masculinity, especially when it says nothing about the meaning of the work as a whole. This approach to *Victory* is only one of many that a feminist lens could tackle, however. There are varying degrees of modification that an English translation could take on; the right of center approach suggested in this paper places a heavy weight on adherence to source material, Supermatist ideology, and communicability. Addressing all of these factors through the method of an acutely localized translation, I believe, would lead to a more successful reconstruction of *Victory Over the Sun*.

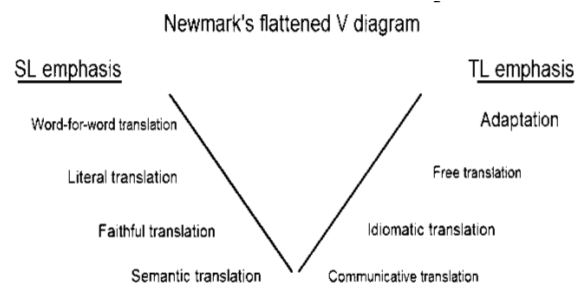


Figure 1: Newmark's Flattened V. Diagram
Source: Manggarrani, Maria Dita. "Translation Analysis of Sexist Attitudes in Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk Novel." MOZAIK HUMANIORA 19, no. 2 (2020): 194. https://doi.org/10.20473/mozaik.v19i2.13230.

23 Manggarrani, Nababan, and Santosa, "Translation Method and Ideology,", 251

24 "Russian Avant-Garde and Beyond," Imj.org.il

"Guitar Poetry" as an Expression of Non-Conformity in Central and Eastern Europe Communist States, 1960s-1970s

Daniel Majer, University of Bristol

In the popular demonstrations that spread across the Eastern Bloc by the late 1980s, music was at the forefront. Through its ability to orchestrate political identity and collective memory, many prominent figures attributed the subsequent collapse of Communist rule to the influence of music. The leading Czech dissident and statesman Václav Havel long cited the arrest of the Plastic People of the Universe as the driving force behind the anti-government Charter 77 (Slobin, 1996, p.6). In the Baltic Soviet Republics, the events of 1988-1991 became synonymous with the term "Singing Revolution," due to the prominence of patriotic hymns during the self-determination movements. Whilst ethnomusicological studies of Central-East Europe have tended to focus on Anglo-American "rock" with its highly subversive content and its impact on youth culture, less attention has traditionally been attached to the development of "folk" music phenomena. That said, both contemporary and pre-1948 traditions of folksong found comparative success during the period and routinely challenged the regimes' cultural and political ideology. This study emphasizes the modern phenomenon of singer-songwriting that reached its peak in the 1960s, remaining significant worldwide throughout the 1970s. This folk movement, although lacking in consensus definition, has been generally recognised for its understated performance, simple guitar arrangement and for possessing an introspective or critical nature.

This essay adopts Djagalov's (2013, p.149) usage of the term "guitar poetry", originally conceived in Gerald Smith's (1988) study of the Soviet model, to refer broadly to the global movement. While traditions of the bard in the Russian SFSR, the *Liedermacher* in the German Democratic Republic and the *písničkář/pesničkár* in Czechoslovakia are rooted in their respective national contexts, the striking similarities in which they negotiated the cultural and political systems demonstrates the suitability of cross-analysis. In order to understand the non-conformist position occupied by guitar poetry across these former communist states, a holistic approach has been taken, encompassing not only thematic and lyrical analyses of sample texts but also considering the movement's influence on socio-political life and its perception by the respective ruling elite.

Within the movement, the salient non-conformist message was transferred by the sung poetry. The compositions' musicality admittedly brought the genre immense popularity domestically and internationally. However, unlike the punk or rock genres of the later decades which relied on dissonant or unconventional sound to express disenfranchisement, the music behind folksong was not considered non-conformist per se. Indeed, the sparse instrumentation of these songs, typically just chordal accompaniment provided by a guitar, conveniently gave greater weight to the poetic lyrics. As will be discussed in the following section, acoustic means nevertheless facilitated the spontaneity of underground performances, especially in the Czechoslovak and Russian cases, through its portability and relative ease to learn. Additionally, the acoustic guitar, traditionally seven-stringed, held a historical symbolism for bards who performed as part of the amateur 'author's song' movement and subgenres. Noack (2013, p.176) argued that the renewed usage of the guitar in the late 1950s, an instrument once prejudiced for Stalin-era associations with the petit bourgeois, was in fact a "conscious countermotion" which emphasized "a cultural break both with high culture and with the immediate Soviet past." Whilst the poetry set to this simple backing appealed to a broad range of experiences and worldviews, certain generalizations can be made about the topics it covered.

Tom Dickens (2017, p.11) in his analysis of Czech Folk genres highlights the prominence of several subject matters including love, suffering, urban life, justice, faith, and celebrations of morality. Despite the ostensible apoliticism of many state-sanctioned folksongs, these foci could be ambiguous or even dissentient, in the context of a system that aimed to subordinate all areas of life to Party doctrine. Questions of spiritual or moral values, exemplified in the songs of Vladimir Merta or Jaromír Nohavica, were

especially problematic when considering the enshrined godlessness. Similarities can be drawn with Soviet Russia, where a lack of music appealing to the feelings and values of the youth necessitated a new amateur song movement distinct from out-of-touch state-endorsed music. In their compositions, artists such as Bulat Okudzhava or Vladimir Vysotsky frequently addressed cherished social values, friendship, and "the road." The theme of the journey is particularly pertinent to the closely related 'tourist'/hiking song both in a literal sense, representing the physical escape of tourist trips, and ontologically, referring to the "path of life" filled with uncertainty, ordeals, aspirations and self-discovery (Levin, 2000, as cited in Noack, 2013). This introspection contrasted strikingly with previously endorsed genres, such as military-focused music (Honcharova et al., 2022, p.50).

That being said, guitar poetry was more ambiguous in 1960s and 1970s East Germany. Operating under greater regulations since the end of the cultural thaw in 1965, political song was associated more often with support for the regime than alterity (Robb, 2016, p.7). Critics of the regime, most of whom espoused reform of the existing system and not, as some might tend to believe, it's complete dismantling, thus faced a difficult balancing act. Figures like Hans-Eckardt Wenzel who wished to critique SED machinations relied on allegory, hidden messages, and increasingly on a repurposing of 1848 *Revolutionslied*, instead of original compositions (Robb, 2010, p.302). Although it would take until the 1980s for many *Liedermacher* to take an open critical stance (Robb, 2000, p.199), across all three national contexts several politically engaged singer-songwriters were prepared to directly cast aspersions.

Amongst the most accomplished of these dissident poets are Karel Kryl, Alexander Galich, and Wolf Biermann whose provocative songs came at great personal cost. They share similarities in their rich poetry incorporating irony, iconoclasm, and social commentary. Taking the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia as an illustration, we can see how each artist intended to rouse their compatriots. Kryl composed the pathos-filled title track of his defiant 1969 album *Bratříčku, zavírej vrátka* "Close the Gate, Little Brother" in spontaneous reaction to the abruptly 'broken path' of liberalization. With the apostrophe 'Little Brother', Kryl establishes a pessimistic dialogue with his compatriots, one rich in irony: "stop sobbing" he implores, "they are only soldiers". The nation-as-family metaphor, established by the diminutive, is made even more caustic considering the Soviets' frequent configuring of the occupation as an act of fraternal love. In the chorus Kryl warns of the Soviets' violent arbitrariness. His prophecy "this night will not be short" would regrettably come to encapsulate Husak's normalization era (Dickens, 2017, p.6). Galich adopts an intertextual approach in his poem 'Petersburg Romance', dated August 22nd, 1968. The song employs the Decembrists of 1825 as a symbolic subtext to call for renewed resistance: "In the same way, not any easier / Our time puts us to a test / Can you come to the square / Do you dare to come to the square / … / At the agreed hour?!" (Rura, 2010, p.6) This metaphorical call was indeed answered. On August 25, 1968, eight dissidents gathered in the Red Square to openly protest the Soviet led invasion. For Biermann, who had left his native Hamburg to participate in the construction of socialism, the brutal suppression of Dubček's reform experiment had distressing significance. His composition *Das Land ist Still – Noch* exploits the semantics of adverb 'Noch', which possess both an ongoing meaning, 'still,' and an anticipatory one, 'yet' (Robb, 2013, p.205): "The war enjoys its peace / Silent / The country is silent / YET." The juxtaposing "NOCH" shouted emotively during live performances, represented Biermann's strong belief in the inevitability of reform communism's renascence. These lyrics exemplify the medium's remarkable capacity for critique and escapism.

Nevertheless, guitar poetry's subversive tone cannot be attributed to lyrical or musical elements alone. Despite the poetry's pre-eminence, often it was the performances' setting which conferred the movement's non-conformity. Above all, folksong's pertinent impact on socio-political life should be stressed. The author's song movement developed informally during the Khrushchev Thaw as "songs sung among friends during tourist trips, geological expeditions, student parties," (Honcharova et al., 2022, p. 50). It was in this youth-leisure setting where the movement would flourish as a space for self-expression and escape, beyond the state's suffocating control of cultural life dictated by the Ministry of Culture and creative unions. As the genre grew in influence and reached a mass audience, it maintained its characteristic sociability. Through tourist or hiking

gatherings in the country, unofficial concerts, where artists set their own repertoire and communicated directly with fans and independently organized song clubs – the first being created in Moscow in 1967 –, guitar poetry became a hotbed of self-expression, freedom, and resistance. In Czechoslovakia, singer-songwriting was equally connected with an alternative lifestyle. There are parallels between Soviet tourist songs and the Czechoslovak tradition of tramping. Although this musical movement was perhaps more inspired by American country, bluegrass, and Western than folksong, (Sparling & Pospíšil, 2001, p.78) tramping nonetheless provided a comparable mode of political escapism in the context of the normalization era. Unregulated groups would gather in the countryside on weekend trips to engage in communal activities such as hiking, drinking around the campfire, or sharing often politically controversial songs (Dickens, 2017, p.5).

It would seem, however, that the underground lifestyle of singer-songwriting was somewhat less prominent in East Germany. With the stability that the construction of the Berlin Wall had afforded the GDR authorities, there was greater artistic freedom in the early 1960s to listen to a greater variety of music styles (Robb, 2013, p.228). When this thaw ended in 1965, it was frequently Rock or 'bigbeat' countercultures that prevailed. Regardless, the well-attended concert halls, student clubs, and informal gatherings (Robb, 2013, p.227) are a testament to guitar poetry's strong social role. In all three cases, singer-songwriters used these performances to communicate directly with the audience, evidenced notably by Biermann's 1976 concert in Cologne where he gave intersong anecdotes, poetry recitals and debated with audience members in the West.

A further element to consider is guitar poetry's undermining of the state monopoly on licenses, broadcasting, and publishing records. Whether it was *Amiga* in the GDR, *Melodiya* in the Soviet Union, or the Czechoslovak *Supraphon*, the authorities' grip on publication forced musicians to find alternative ways to disseminate unsanctioned material. Guitar poetry in Soviet Russia initially had a strong word-of-mouth and arguably folkloric structure (Garey, 2011, p.1). Fans of the genre astutely transcribed live performances to later reproduce the compositions and teach them to others. However, the most significant development for guitar-poetry circulation came with the introduction of the commercial reel-to-reel tape recorder in the early 1960s. Finally, bootleg recordings of performances, made during tourist trips and public or private concerts, could be reproduced with ease and distributed amongst social networks, even by those lacking musical knowledge. This process, known as *Magnitizdat*, allowed bard song to reach a massive audience that challenged the state's own music production. This practice was replicated in both the GDR and Czechoslovakia, even being employed by the musicians themselves. An example of this is Biermann's 1968 album *Chausseestraße* 131, his first after being blacklisted from the Party and banned from performing and publishing. The album takes its name, in sardonic fashion, from Biermann's flat where the album was humbly recorded using a tape recorder and microphones procured in the West. The tones of East Berlin trams, two-stroke Trabant engines, and birdsong complement the entire record, situating the listener firmly in an intimate dialogue with the poet. *Magnitizdat* was equally prevalent in Czechoslovakia, as evidenced by the hundreds of samizdat and exile music recordings held by Libri Prohibiti's collection in Prague. One of these notorious recordings was in fact Kryl's debut album. Following its prohibition by authorities, the 50,000 copies produced were subsequently duplicated and circulated amongst friends. As was the case across the Bloc, prohibited music was also repeatedly smuggled outside the Iron Curtain, finding a platform on Radio Free Europe in Munich (Dickens, 2017, p.6). Despite repeated attempts to jam the broadcasting signals or infiltrate the headquarters, the station reached vast audiences across Central-Eastern Europe. Demonstrably, guitar poetry brought together individuals with closely shared interests, prepared to go against Party doctrine in the exercising of their artistic freedoms.

Consideration should also be given to the authorities' reception of guitar poetry if we are to fully understand the challenges it posed. Unsurprisingly, the extreme popularity of the movement, together with its frequent rejection of socialist values, caused the state to adopt a suspicious and hostile attitude. Across the three regimes, a variety of strategies were taken to regulate the movement and its representatives. At a fundamental level, prohibition and censorship of music deemed subversive involved removing it from state-controlled broadcasting, concert venues

and publication. This was the case for Czechoslovak pop-folk singer Marta Kubišová, whose 1968 ballad *Modlitba Pro Martu* 'A Prayer for Marta' emerged as a symbol of resistance to the occupation, resulting in its prohibition by 1969. Kubišová would decide to avoid public performances throughout normalization, performing again to enthusiastic crowds only during the 1989 Velvet Revolution. In extreme cases, dissident musicians were themselves directly targeted to silence their lyrical criticisms, although this was often complicated by their international popularity. Indeed, Kryl (in 1969), Galich (in 1974) and most infamously, Biermann (in 1976) were all forced, under diverse circumstances, to leave their countries for the West. Biermann's expatriation caused domestic and international uproar, signaling the end of the liberalization that had defined Honecker's cultural policy of the early 1970's. This political repression triggered a human rights petition amongst prominent GDR figures, to which the SED responded unequivocally by excluding its leading members from the Party and writer's union and exiling several others.

Whilst these are clear illustrations of the extreme lengths the authorities could go to suppress the anti-government criticism, it would be erroneous to categorize the authorities' relationship towards singer-songwriters as purely dogmatic. The respective Parties recognized they could not outright forbid all critical musical expression, especially given the spontaneous quality of the Russian model. Likewise, music could function as a safety valve that was preferable to open dissent. As such, the respective governments routinely tried instead to obfuscate the political subtext behind guitar poetry. This phenomenon can be understood through Szmere's (1991, as cited in Garey, 2011) depoliticization/re-politicization model of Rock music co-option in Hungary. Through depoliticization, guitar poetry is removed from its subversive contexts and situated in a newfound state-controlled platform, remodeled as a conventional entertainment form. In Soviet Russia, this was achieved through support provided by the Soviet youth organization, the Komsomol. This support often manifested itself as performance spaces, such as clubs run by the organization, or other financial and administrative aid. This is somewhat echoed in Czechoslovakia, where the state had a strong grip over mass gatherings and folksong festivals such as Porta. Performers were vetted thoroughly (Dickens, 2017, p.9), particularly in the 1970s, and consequently, many artists self-censored. In the given political environment, many were grateful to have the freedom to sing and get-together, even if it came at the expense of expressing discontent.

Co-option was also taken a step further in the re-politicization of folksong movements, that is, the institutionalizing of the genre as a proponent of real socialism. This was perhaps most prevalent in the GDR which had long construed political folksong as a socialist tradition. Evidence of this can be seen in Hootenanny-Klub Berlin, a political music group modeled on an American folk revival tradition of informal 'hootenanny' gatherings. Following the cultural thaw that had led to the growth of relatively unrestricted folk movements, a resolution was passed by the SED's *Zentralkomitee* in late 1965 requiring groups to maintain a strict pro-socialist character (Robb, 2013, p.229). Thus, the FDJ appropriated Hootenanny-Klub (later renamed Oktoberklub), promoting the group and other successive *Singeklubs* as channels of propaganda. In 1968 the group performed *Sag mir, wo du stehst*, an adaptation of Pete Seeger's 'Which Side Are You On', co-opting the song to defend Czechoslovakia's occupation (Kutschke, 2013, p.202), whilst in 1970 the group founded the *Festival des politischen Liedes*, an annual event lasting until 1990, featuring international artists aligned with GDR ideology like Silvio Rodriguez.

Nevertheless, not all folk musicians could neatly fit into categories of subversion or conformity. Most musicians attempted to carefully balance cooperation and opposition to keep their performance licenses and source of income. As Garey points out (2011, p.9) "rather than being divided into strict 'state' and 'non-state' spaces, avenues of censorship and circulation overlapped, parasitic on each other." This line of argument seems applicable to East Germany. The situation is exemplified by Karls Enkel, a group founded in 1976, which was at times sponsored by the state and at other times criticized for its ambiguous lyrics of social commentary (Robb, 2013, p.241). A more extreme example of guitar poetry's ambiguous legacy emerged in early 2007 with the revelation of Nohavica's, albeit seemingly small-scale, collaboration with the Czechoslovak secret police. It is perhaps this very ambiguity and continued threat of governmental pressure which attracted so many to the movement.

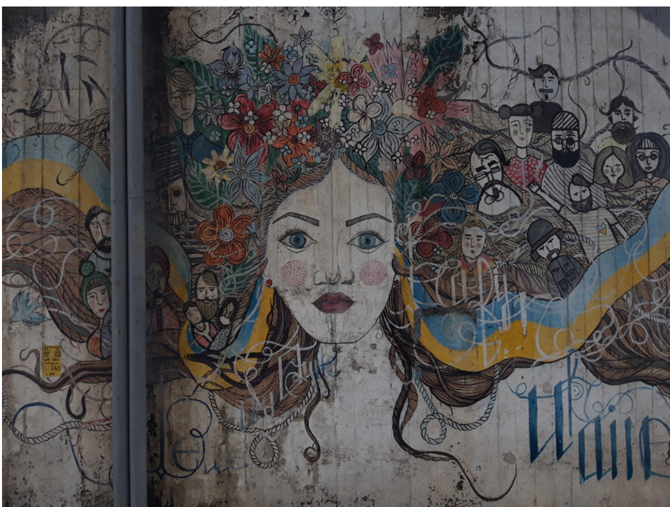
By the late 1970s guitar poetry's cultural force had undeniably swept across most of Central-Eastern Europe, gaining popularity amongst nearly all age groups and social strata. Although it remains difficult to quantify the precise extent to which the movement challenged the communist regimes of the Eastern Bloc, several conclusions can be made about folksong's success in Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Soviet Russia. Citizens clearly found a liberating voice in the movement, describing their personal experiences and very often, whether conspicuously or not, critiquing the overbearing socialist system they lived in. Besides undermining officially endorsed channels of culture, the informal configurations of the movement, seen most clearly in the Soviet case, provided ample opportunities for social and political engagement and free expression. Finally, the repeated and multiple attempts to control guitar poetry are testament to the great concern it provoked in the upper echelons of the Party. Although folksong's influence would somewhat cede to rock genres by the late 1980s, the genre never disappeared completely and made long-lasting impressions in the memories of those who experienced it.

Images of Ukraine

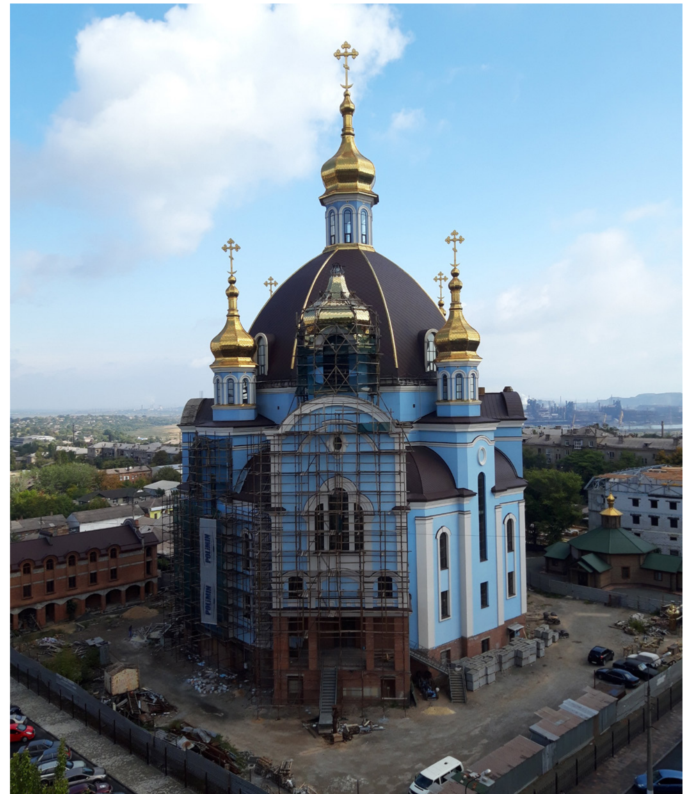
Noah Hebdon, Bringham Young University

Graffiti of the Ukrainian flag, Prospekt Mira: Mariupol, Ukraine, 2019

Blue apartment building, Right Bank: Mariupol, Ukraine, 2019



A mural of a woman in a traditional Ukrainian head-dress, or vinok, Pishokhidnyy Bridge: Dnipro, Ukraine, 2021



The Orthodox temple under construction, Church of the Intercession of the Mother of God, Mariupol, Ukraine, 2019: Due to the recent Russian occupation of Mariupol, the temple has been claimed by the Russian Orthodox Church. In 2019, however, while under the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the temple was in the process of renovation - the red brick was covered, and the building became bright blue and gold, reflecting the Ukrainian nationalization of the area before the 2022 invasion.

The red building and orthodox temple in the background, Theater Square: Mariupol, Ukraine, 2019

The Right to Quality Education for Youth with Disabilities

Nicole Brunette, University of Washington

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) motto is "Leave No One Behind." This Issue Brief will highlight specific laws concerning the rights of children with disabilities and explore barriers that have prevented Ukraine from achieving SDG 4: quality, inclusive, and equitable education. This brief aims to promote action by outlining steps Ukrainians can take to achieve SDG 4 for children with disabilities.

Understanding Disability

Disability results from interactions between an individual with an impairment and social and environmental barriers that hinder their participation in daily life (CRPD, 2006).

This brief will define a "child" as anyone under eighteen, which aligns with Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 2011).

Important Laws

Constitution of Ukraine:

Article 53: Everyone has the right to education.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):

- **Article 7:** Children with disabilities have access to the same human rights as non-disabled children.
- **Article 24:** Persons with disabilities have the right to education, and states are entrusted to make education accessible and inclusive.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):

- **Article 23:** Children with disabilities should live dignified lives with the greatest opportunities for integration and autonomy. States should work to ensure access to education which will aid in inclusion and independence.
- **Article 28:** States must ensure education on the basis of capacity, and they should participate in international conversations to successfully implement children's right to education.
- **Article 29:** Education is a tool to develop children's personalities, talents, and individual abilities to the best extent possible.

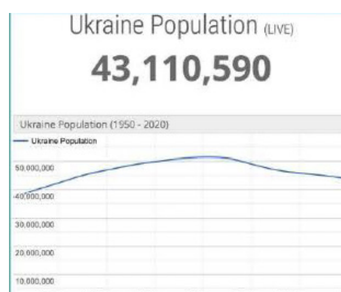
Universal Declaration of Human rights (UDHR):

- **Article 26:** All human beings have the right to free and compulsory primary education.

Barriers to Education in Ukraine

Ukraine has voiced support for achieving SDG 4, which promotes "Education for All." Ukraine has also ratified the CRPD, CRC, and UDHR, which "guarantees children with disabilities access to inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education." While Ukraine claims it gives children the opportunity to study in mainstream schools, many barriers have restricted these children's access to inclusive education (Buchanan, 2015).

- **Segregation:** Children with disabilities live in or attend separate institutions.
  - Special schools structured as boarding schools separate children based on impairments and are far from home. During the 2005-2006 school year, there were 396 special schools that 54,100 children with disabilities attended (Raver, 2007).
  - The collapse of the Soviet Union and the current conflict has led to an increased abandonment of children with disabilities. Orphanages are understaffed and cannot provide the quality, or inclusive education children deserve.
- **Public Attitudinal Barriers:** Non-disabled people believe integrating children with disabilities into mainstream schools will take away from their non-disabled child's already limited educational support (Raver & Kolchenko, 2007).
- **Educational Staff's Negative Attitudes:** Many teachers believe their job is to "educate a certain type of student" and they are unwilling to accommodate their classrooms (Rotatori et al., 2014). A lack of resources also prevents school officials from enrolling children with disabilities in their schools.
- **Inaccessible Built Environments & Buildings:** Schools without mobility accommodations, such as wheelchair-friendly desks and ramps, force families to send their children to special schools that are more accessible (UNICEF, 2013).
- **Conflicting Government Policies & Funding:** Ministries of Ukraine (Ministry of Education, etc.) operate as separate systems, which hinders the inclusion of all children with disabilities (Rotatori et al., 2014). Funding for inclusive education is impossible since there is no clear statement on inclusion, and there is incomplete data on all children with disabilities (Raver & Kolchenko, 2007).



Why SDG 4 Matters

In 2011 the CRPD report stated that the populationon of Ukraine was 45,598,000, with 6% being people with disabilities (United Nations, 2012). This included 165,121 children with disabilities (2012). The population of Ukraine has been declining since the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, but there continues to be many children with disabilities (2012).

Economic growth has been a significant focus of Ukraine since the end of the Soviet Union. If the country continues to fall to achieve SDG 4, it will not attain the most economic growth possible. By providing an inclusive, quality, and equitable education for children with disabilities, children will learn essential skills to contribute to Ukraine's development and economic growth. They can make valuable contributions to their community with the right support and accommodations.

Case Study: Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Ukraine

Overview: The Canadian International Development Agency funded the pilot project "Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities" in Ukraine from 2008 to 2013. Three main goals: establish inclusive educational goals at pilot schools in Lviv and Simferopol, strengthen surrounding communities, and develop policies to support inclusive integration.

Inclusive education brings a new point of view. Those with different opportunities should have equal rights too! There is a world in every child, no matter how small, Education, respect and equality for all!

Vision of the Canadian International Agencies project

Barriers Faced:

• **Negative Educational Staff attitudes:** Teachers were skeptical because of the lack of success in "[producing] compliant children" in Canada's school system ("Town and Country," 2012).

• **Negative public attitudes:** Some parents believed that children with Down syndrome were "contagious" (Canadian International Development, 2013) and should not attend the same school as children without Down syndrome (2012).

Addressing Barriers:

• **Partnership:** Teachers worked alongside professionals to develop inclusive practices .
  • Not being overbearing allows children with disabilities to gain independence and life skills.

• **Education for future and current teachers:**
  • Bachelor's and Master's programs for educating teaching assistants on inclusive educa tion were created (Canadian International, 2013).
  • Institute for Professional Upgrading of Teachers (IPUT): Created an 18-hour course introducing inclusive education, leadership, differentiated instruction, and profes sional collaboration.
  • Guidebooks on how to support diversity and create inclusive classrooms.

• **Collaboration between Ministries:** Workshops where Ministries came together to learn about inclusive education and create shared understandings about children with disabilities.

• **Data:** The Index of Inclusion tool created a tool to allow for continuous evaluations of the inclusiveness of classroom and school practices and policies throughout Ukraine.

Outcomes: The pilot school in Lviv inclusively integrated the first two children with Down syndrome into mainstream schools in Ukraine's history. The project's success showed that with the proper support and accommodations, children with disabilities could be successful in mainstream schools. The pilot project set an example for other schools to follow, and from 2012-2013, over 50 schools in Crimea created inclusive educational settings (Rotatori et al., 2014). While the project led schools in Crimea and the Lviv oblast to work towards change, schools in other regions can implement successes from this project into their practices and settings to provide the high-quality education every student deserves.

Key Methods for Addressing Barriers to Education & Promoting Inclusion

• **Early inclusive integration into mainstream schools** to promote independence & community engagement ("Town and Country," 2012).

• **Supporting families** with information on the rights and needs of their children will help them work with educational staff to best support their child's learning (lvanyuk, 2007).

• **Support children with disabilities** by providing unique accommodations and resources to make their educational experience as inclusive as possible (Buchanan, 2015).

• **Provide training and support for educational staff** to learn about and create inclusive practices (Canadian International Development, 2013).

• **Developing a shared, inclusive statement from the Ministries of Ukraine** on children with disabilities in education to be included in Ukraine's national policy will lead to more funding being allocated to this problem (Raver & Kolchenko, 2007).

• **Data** on the number of children with disabilities and the number attending mainstream schools should be continuously updated in order to track progress, understand the impact of policies, and decide where more funding is needed (Raver & Kolchenko, 2007).

• **Reducing physical barriers will allow** children with mobility impairments to be able to attend mainstream schools (Buchanan, 2015).

Appendix

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until next time

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