BEING SOVIET

Identity, Rumour, and Everyday Life under Stalin

1939–1953

Timothy Johnston

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For Joy

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Preface

'*Being Soviet*' is the product of many months spent in the former Soviet archives in Moscow, Arkhangel'sk, Kiev, and Simferopol. It sets about the ambitious task of evaluating what it meant to 'be Soviet' in the tumultuous years between 1939 and 1953. With so much scholarly attention focused on the importance of Russian and other nationalisms in the Stalin-era USSR, this book argues that Soviet identity was a vital and vibrant sphere of identity in that era. It goes on to explore how ordinary Soviet citizens responded to the shifting rhetoric of Sovietness between the Nazi–Soviet Pact and Stalin's death.

The current historiography of the Stalin years is often polarized around the debate over the relative prominence of 'resistance' versus the power of official discourse to shape all aspects of Soviet life. 'Being Soviet' takes a fresh approach. It argues that most Soviet citizens did not fit easily into either category. Their relationship with Soviet power was defined by a series of subtle 'tactics of the habitat' (Kotkin) that enabled them to stay fed, informed, and entertained in these difficult times. Those everyday strategies of getting by are explored via the rumours, jokes, hairstyles, musical tastes, sexual relationships, and political campaigning of the era. Each chapter finishes with an examination of what that 'tactical' behaviour tells us about the collective *mentalité* of the Stalin era.

Britain and America are at the heart of this book. The two great capitalist states provided a vital frame of reference for Soviet self-construction throughout the period. Their evolution from the betrayal at Munich to wartime allies and then Cold War antipathy played a vital role in shaping what it meant to be Soviet in these years. Nazi Germany, Communist China, and Eastern Europe are only touched on in brief in the interests of time and coherence. They all played a key role in defining what it meant to be Soviet, but the Anglo-Saxon states provided the most complex and contentious palette from which elements of Soviet identity could be constructed in this period.

It is my hope that *Being Soviet* will provide a provocative reference work for undergraduates, graduates, and scholars alike. The scope of the book is perhaps wider than some monographs. Whereas Soviet historiography has traditionally 'Balkanized' into a series of confined periods:

NEP; the Great Break; the 30s; the war; late-Stalinism; the Khrushchev years, this book deliberately traverses those boundaries. In doing so it explores some of the continuities and discontinuities that shaped the Soviet experience. It also grapples with a number of big themes about the nature and working of Soviet society, while hopefully shining some light into previously underexplored corners of the Stalin era. It offers the first book-length exploration of the place of rumour in Soviet society. Chapter 3 also offers the first archivally based English-language research concerning the life of the wartime Arctic convoys ashore in Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk. In the balancing act between breadth and depth I have often chosen breadth. I hope that that breadth makes *Being Soviet* a valuable and accessible resource at all levels of study.

Part I examines the under-discussed Pact Period from August 1939 to June 1941. Official Soviet Identity in this period boasted of the success of Stalin's 'peace' policy in these years, but the Soviet rumour network was alive with tales of invasion and future conflict.

Part II addresses the years of the Great Patriotic War. Chapter 2 examines the wartime diplomatic identity of the USSR and suggests that Soviet citizens often took a more negative view of the Grand Alliance partners than the official press encouraged. Chapter 3 looks at the place of culture, technology, and inter-allied personal relationships within wartime Soviet identity.

Part III moves on into the post-war years. Chapter 4 examines the war rumours and war panics of the post-1945 era and suggests that they provide the key to understanding the success of the post-1948 peace campaigns. Chapter 5 discusses the ideological campaigns against capitalist civilization and culture that began in 1946. It suggests that Soviet scientists, artists, and ordinary people skilfully deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' in order to negotiate the challenges presented by the new version of Cold War Sovietness.

<div align="right">Tim Johnston</div>

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List of Abbreviations

ARCHIVAL ABBREVIATIONS

GARF	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii
GAAO	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti
GAOPDiFAO	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Obshchestvenno-Politicheskikh Dvizhenii i Formirovanii Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti
GAARK	Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv v Avtonomnoi Respublike Krym
RGASPI	Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politihcheskoi Istorii
RGANI	Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii
RGALI	Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva
TsDAHOU	Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Hromads'kykh Ob'iednan' Ukrainy

SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

A system of abbreviations is used throughout the book to specify what kind of source is being cited.

Proc.	Case files of the State Prosecution Organ of the Soviet Union
Let.	Letters sent by Soviet citizens to political leaders in Moscow
Sv.	Reports on the mood of the Soviet population (*svodki*)
Inf.	Information reports created by party and state organizations
HIP	Interview transcripts collected during the Harvard Interview Project on the Soviet Social System
Mem.	Memoirs and diaries of individuals who lived in, or visited, the USSR in this period
Int.	Interviews conducted between November 2003 and September 2005 in the former USSR

TERMINOLOGY

Agitprop	Agitation and Propaganda
FZO	Fabrichno-Zavodskoe Obuchenie (Higher Technical School)
MGB	Ministerstvo Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (Ministry of State Security)

MOPR	Mezhdunarodnoe Obshchestvo Pomoshchi Revoliutsioneram (International Organization for Aid to Revolutionaries)
NKID	Narodnyi Kommisariat Inostrannykh Del (Foreign Ministry)
NKVD	Narodnyi Kommisariat Vnutrennykh Del (Interior Ministry)
Obkom	Oblastnyi Komitet (*Oblast'* Committee)
Raikom	Raionnyi Komitet (*Raion* Committee)
TASS	Telegrafnoe Agenstvo Sovetskogo Soiuza (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union)

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Introduction

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE STALIN ERA: WHERE HAVE WE GOT TO?

The collapse of the USSR in 1991 facilitated a double revolution in the historiography of the Stalin years. First, historians gained access to a wealth of previously inaccessible archival material. Secondly, the Cold War driven debates about the relationship between Stalinism and Leninism and the 'totalitarian' nature of the era became less pressing. As a result, the last twenty years have been a disorderly and highly creative time within Soviet historiography. The literature concerning the Stalin era has crystallized in three key areas: the logic and language of the Soviet government in the Stalin era; the mechanisms by which the Soviet government ruled in the Stalin era; and the experiences of ordinary people in the Stalin era, in particular how they related to Soviet power.

This book contributes to two of those three key areas of discussion. It describes the evolution of state-sponsored rhetoric concerning Sovietness (Official Soviet Identity) between the Nazi–Soviet Pact (1939), and Stalin's death (1953), and also how ordinary citizens interacted with that language. In terms of the logic and language of the Soviet regime, it challenges the current historiographical emphasis on Russian nationalism at the expense of other identities: Soviet patriotism was an important feature of the landscape in this period. It also offers a new approach to the question of the relationship between Soviet citizens and Soviet power. Ordinary members of the Soviet population deployed a number of 'tactics of the habitat' (Kotkin) in order to negotiate their relationship with the state that ruled them. Their behaviour was characterized by a careful creativity that belied the twin poles of support and resistance.

The logic and language of Soviet government in the Stalin era

The debate concerning the logic and language of Soviet government has largely focused on the pre-war 1930s. One aspect of that discussion has focused on the thinking and reasoning of the Soviet elites.

The political thought of Josef Stalin and the nature of Soviet high politics have been thoroughly re-evaluated since 1991.[1] There has also been a fresh attempt to take seriously the propaganda of the Stalin era. Recent work has moved beyond the narrow notion of propaganda as a mechanism for control, and paid more attention to the content of Soviet film, newsprint, literature, popular culture, and science policy.[2]

The most widely discussed feature of the Soviet linguistic landscape has been nationality policy. This flurry of interest in nationality policy reflects the, sometimes tacit, assumption that ultimately it was nationalism that pulled the Soviet state apart under Gorbachev. Slezkine's seminal article, describing the 'chronic ethnophilia' of the Stalin era, set the stage for others to follow.[3] Indeed nationalism has been so prominent in recent years that it has begun to eclipse class as the primary critical tool for evaluating the actions of the Soviet state. One of the key contributions of this book is to suggest that, whilst nationalist rhetoric was an important feature of the post-1939 landscape, the government also invested great efforts in formulating and promoting a version of Sovietness that was supposed to operate over and above the national identities that distinguished Soviet citizens from one another.

[1] R. Service, *Stalin: A Biography* (London, 2004); E. van Ree, *The Political Thought of Joseph Stalin: A Study in Twentieth-Century Revolutionary Patriotism* (London, 2002); J. A. Getty, and V. Naumov, *The Road to the Terror: Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks* (New Haven, 1996); Y. Gorlizki and O. Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945–1953* (Oxford, 2004); D. Priestland, *Stalin and the Politics of Mobilisation: Ideas, Power, and Terror in Inter-war Russia* (Oxford, 2007).

[2] J. von Geldern and R. Stites, ed., *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia: Tales, Poems, Songs, Movies, Plays and Folklore, 1917–1953* (Bloomington, 1995); J. Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, 2000); E. Pollock, *Stalin and the Soviet Science Wars* (Princeton, 2008); N. Krementsov, *Stalinist Science* (Princeton, 1997).

[3] Y. Slezkine, 'The Soviet Union as a Communal Appartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism', in S. Fitzpatrick, ed., *Stalinism New Directions* (London, 2000), 313–47; T. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union 1923–1939* (Ithaca, 2001); G. Hosking, *Rulers and Victims: The Russians in the Soviet Union* (London, 2006); S. Yekelchyk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto, 2004); D. Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity 1931–56* (Cambridge Mass., 2002).

The mechanisms by which the Soviet government ruled in the Stalin era

Nationality policy has also played a central role in the second question that has dominated post-1991 historiography: the mechanisms by which the Soviet state ruled in the Stalin era. Hirsch's work has led the way, arguing that Bolshevik nationalities policy was a new form of imperialism: it provided a mechanism for counting, controlling, and sponsoring the development of certain groups.[4] This approach is typical of a wider tendency to stress the similarities between the technologies of government employed by both the USSR and other 'modern' states in this era. Under the influence of Bauman, Mazower, and Foucault, Soviet historians have argued that state surveillance, mass communication, and 'weeding' of the citizenry were not unique to the USSR; instead they were common features of a wider Enlightenment project in the early twentieth century.[5] Weiner has been one of the most prominent proponents of this model in the Stalin era, arguing that Stalin-era state violence was typical of the wider Enlightenment aspiration to remake society along rational lines.[6] That 'impulse to remake and improve society' has also been identified in campaigns for sobriety, literacy, and cleanliness.[7]

This approach has not sought to justify but rather to contextualize the excesses of the Stalin era. However, its weakness lies in its incapacity to explain what was distinctive about the Bolshevik state. As Engelstein argues, it is unsatisfactory to describe the Purges as simply mainstream state violence.[8] At the very least, the Stalin-era government fashioned its citizenry with more vigour and more brutality than most. Whether

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[4] F. Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, 2005).

[5] Z. Bauman, *Modernity and The Holocaust* (Ithaca, 1989); M. Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London, 1998); M. Foucault, trans., A. Sheridan, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London, 1977); D. Beer, *Renovating Russia: The Human Sciences and the Fate of Liberal Modernity, 1880–1930* (Ithaca, 2008); Paul Hagenloh, '"Socially Harmful Elements" and the Great Terror', in S. Fitzpatrick, *Stalinism*, 286–308; P. Holquist, '"Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work": Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context', *The Journal of Modern History*, 69.3 (1997), 415–50.

[6] A. Weiner, ed., *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth Century Population Management in Perspective* (Stanford, 2003).

[7] D. Hoffman, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity. 1917–1941* (Ithaca, 2001).

[8] L. Engelstein, 'Weapon of the Weak (Apologies to James Scott): Violence in Russian History', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 4.3 (2003), 679–93.

Marxist-Leninism, Russian statism, or some other factor was the key, any account of the Stalin era must reveal what was distinctive as well as what was 'normal' about Soviet strategies of government in this period. After all, the Purges were not regarded as 'normal' in much of Europe in the late 1930s. This book makes little contribution to that wider debate. However, it is worth noting that the field is still awaiting a clear discussion of how the Bolshevik project deviated from, as well as reflected, the wider patterns of early twentieth-century government.

Ordinary people in the Stalin era: how did they relate to Soviet power?

The lives and experiences of ordinary people have been at the centre of Soviet historiography in recent years. Fitzpatrick's work, *Everyday Stalinism*, led the field with its wealth of detail about bribery, surveillance, shopping, and elections.[9] Other authors have drawn attention to the importance of patronage, and examined the sociology of trade, identity fraud, and public celebrations under Stalin.[10] This literature on 'everyday life' has greatly expanded our understanding of the experiences of ordinary citizens in the USSR. However, it has also been characterized by a largely descriptive, rather than theoretical, approach. *Everyday Stalinism* contains a wealth of data but lacks an organizing idea to hold it together. It has added colour to our picture of the Stalin era without providing a clear framework to explain how Soviet citizens related to Soviet power.[11]

The theoretical caution that has typified the 'everyday life' literature has not affected some of the other leading authors in the post-1991 era. The debate about the relationship between Soviet citizens and Soviet power has been dominated by two distinct paradigms. The first of these, the resistance paradigm, emerged largely in response to the model of the

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[9] S. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford, 1999).

[10] J. Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917–1953* (Princeton, 2004); G. Alexopoulos, 'Portrait of a Con Artist as a Soviet Man', *Slavic Review*, 57.4 (1998), 774–90; O. Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (London, 2007); K. Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington, 2000).

[11] See: C. Kelly, 'Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Chronicles of the Quotidian in Russia and the Soviet Union', *Kritika*, 3.4 (2002), 631–51.

USSR as a totalitarian society that had been so prominent during the Cold War. Those who wrote within the totalitarian tradition argued that Stalin-era Soviet society exhibited certain key characteristics in common with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, such as state-sponsored violence and mass propaganda. They also tended to argue that Soviet citizens were alienated from the regime but powerless to resist its coercive power.[12] Authors such as Viola have argued that Soviet citizens could, and did, resist the state. Viola draws on the anthropological methodology of Scott and others to describe how Soviet peasants deployed the 'weapons of the weak' during collectivization.[13] Unable to defeat the state in a physical confrontation, they resisted Soviet power by spreading apocalyptic rumours comparing Soviet power to the Antichrist.[14]

The literature on resistance has made a significant contribution to our understanding of life under Stalin. In particular, it has undermined the notion that Stalin-era citizens were brutalized into passivity by the violence of Soviet power. However, the weakness of the resistance literature, has been its tendency to use the term in order to describe such a wide range of behaviour that 'resistance' is in danger of losing meaning. Viola's recent collection of essays includes homosexuality, wearing traditional Muslim clothing, illegal food trading, and political uprisings, all together under the rubric of resistance.[15] As a consequence it does not distinguish between active and passive resistance, nor does it recognize the difference between resistance directed against factory managers, particular government policies, or the Bolshevik state. As David-Fox suggests, once our definition of resistance has '...expanded to include "passive" resistance, the boundaries can never be ascertained, why not sidestep the mounting number of pitfalls and find another framework?'[16]

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[12] H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd edn (New York, 1958). Perhaps the most compelling image of 'totalitarian' society came in Orwell's *1984*. G. Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London, 1949).

[13] L. Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivisation and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (Oxford, 1996); J. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, 1990), 160–72.

[14] Viola, *Peasant Rebels,* 60–1. See also: S. Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror Propaganda and Dissent, 1934–41* (Cambridge, 1997).

[15] L. Viola, ed., *Contending with Stalinism: Soviet Power and Popular Resistance in the 1930s* (Ithaca, 2002).

[16] M. David-Fox, 'Whiter Resistance?', *Kritika*, 1.1 (2000), 163.

Equally importantly, this broad definition of resistance does not recognize a distinction between behaviour that was directed against Soviet power itself and actions that were simply everyday strategies for 'getting by'. Within this approach, whatever the state regarded as resistance was resistance. However, this leaves both Soviet citizens and the historian unable to think or act outside of the categories of the regime.[17] Indeed within this definition, all Soviet citizens were resistors. As the historians of everyday life have shown, all Soviet citizens engaged in rumouring, bribery, joking, food speculation, and forgery. Stalin himself told 'subversive' political jokes about the Purges.[18] Resistance will be one of the recurrent themes of this book. However, it will be used in a much more tightly defined sense as 'action or speech that was consciously intended to undermine the practices or institutions of Soviet power'. This approach takes into account the possible meanings that Soviet citizens, as well as the Soviet state, invested in their words and actions. The coming chapters will repeatedly challenge the assumption of official sources, that certain types of behaviour constituted resistance.

Historians of resistance have come under attack from scholars who write about Stalin-era life from within a very different, 'discursive' paradigm. Authors such as Hellbeck and Halfin have argued that the language of the Soviet regime penetrated and dominated all areas of life in the USSR. Soviet citizens' thinking, behaviour, and identities were entirely shaped by the official discourse of the Soviet state.[19] Even those who sought to criticize the government were forced to do so within the language of the official press itself. Those authors who write within this 'discursive' paradigm argue that the historiography of resistance is founded on a misunderstanding of speech in the USSR. In a terse exchange with Davies, Hellbeck argued that there was no distinction between public and private speech in the USSR: both were dominated by the discourse and categories of the Soviet state.[20] First and foremost, Soviet citizens were agents of the language that ruled them. These authors

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[17] For a critique of judging resistance purely on the basis of what the state considers it to be, see: C. Koonz, 'Choice and Courage', in D. C. Large, ed., *Contending With Hitler: Varieties of German Resistance in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1991).

[18] B. Lewis, *Hammer And Tickle: A History Of Communism Told Through Communist Jokes* (London, 2008), 59.

[19] J. Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary Under Stalin* (Cambridge Mass., 2006); I. Halfin, *Terror in My Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial* (Cambridge Mass., 2003).

[20] J. Hellbeck and S. Davies, 'Letters to the Editor', *Kritika*, 1.3 (2000), 437–40.

differ from the totalitarian model in their emphasis on the discursive, rather than coercive, power of the Stalin-era state. Nonetheless the implications of their argument are very similar, that the official propaganda machine monopolized the thinking and behaviour of Soviet citizens.

The literature that has emerged from this 'discursive' paradigm has provoked a fresh awareness of the power of official propaganda. Hellbeck's diarists clearly struggled to articulate themselves in any other terms. However, it has also been demonstrated to be empirically wrong. Historians of resistance have shown that some Soviet citizens, such as Viola's apocalyptic rumourers, *did* find autonomous languages of protest, outside the rhetoric of the regime. The 'discursive' model also fails to recognize the gap between discourse and reality that was one of the defining aspects of Soviet society.[21] The Soviet system, despite its aspirations, was not able to remake all its citizens at will. Furthermore, authors such as Hellbeck and Halfin have tended to prioritize autobiographical sources, such as diaries, at the expense of all others: 'I am not sure whether we will attain a comprehensive understanding of Stalinist subjectivities merely by comparing as wide a variety of sources as possible' (Hellbeck).[22] This hierarchy of credibility in regard to sources assumes that 'authentic' Soviet citizens can be found only in their diaries. In reality, the citizens of the USSR have left no pure deposit of their thoughts, feelings, and subjectivities. If we desire to hear their voices we must critically listen for them in as many different contexts as they can be heard.[23]

The weakness of this debate between the resistance and discursive paradigms is that it tends to describe Soviet citizens in binary terms: they were either supporters or resistors of Bolshevik power.[24] This dichotomy between internalization and rejection is a product, to some extent, of the Soviet archival sources themselves. They tend to categorize all behaviour in terms of pro- or anti-revolutionary behaviour and consciousness. Much of the recent literature in this field has also been heavily influenced by Foucault's emphasis on competition between rival

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[21] M. Griesse, 'Soviet Subjectivities Discourse, Self-Criticism, Imposture', *Kritika*, 9.3 (2008), 619–20.

[22] Hellbeck and Davies, 'Letters to the Editor', 440.

[23] For an overview of the sources I will employ in this book see later in the Introduction.

[24] For a conceptualization of the Stalin era in these terms, see: T. Vihavainen, ed., *Sovetskaia vlast'—narodnaia vlast? Ocherki istorii narodnogo vospriiatiia sovetskoi vlasti v SSSR* (St Petersburg, 2003).

discourses.[25] The struggle for the means of production has been supplanted by the struggle between rival forms of language. As with a narrowly Marxist methodology, this approach has obscured as much as it reveals: most Soviet citizens neither supported or resisted Soviet power, they simply got by.

Recent work in a number of other historical eras has demonstrated that subjects often engage in a far more ambiguous manner with the states that rule them. Yurchak's work on the last years of Soviet power stresses that Soviet citizens, under Gorbachev at least, did not live lives defined by the dual poles of support or resistance.[26] New material on Nazi Germany has challenged the traditional separation between 'good resistors' and 'bad Nazis'. Peukert, in particular, has suggested that the majority of German citizens lived in a grey area in-between that was characterized by grumbling, and selective opposition to particular policies.[27] Gildea has taken the same approach to Vichy France, enquiring what the majority of the population, who neither collaborated nor resisted, were doing.[28]

The most successful attempt to ameliorate this dichotomy between support and resistance in the Stalin era is provided by Stephen Kotkin's description of daily life in 1930s' Magnitogorsk. Kotkin's most widely cited tool for describing the relationship between Soviet citizens and Soviet power is his notion of 'speaking Bolsehvik'. He argues that when workers identified themselves as shock workers or Stakhanovites they were performing the rhetoric of the state in order to 'get ahead' in Soviet society. However, he does not suggest that those who 'spoke Bolshevik' did not believe what they were saying. The act of performing embedded them within the discourse of the state, and there were few credible alternatives.[29] Soviet citizens neither believed nor disbelieved but lived in a state of 'half-belief' in relation to the language of the Stalin era.[30]

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[25] See: M. Foucault, trans., R. Hurley et al., *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984: Power* (London, 2002), 116–31.

[26] A. Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, 2006).

[27] D. J. K. Peukert, trans., R. Deveson, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life* (London, 1987).

[28] R. Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: In Search of the German Occupation, 1940–45* (Oxford, 2002). Collinson takes a similar approach to the illegal but 'Godly' act of 'sermon gadding' in 16th-century England: P. Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants: The Church in English Society 1559–1625* (Oxford, 1982), 248.

[29] S. Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilisation* (Princeton, 1994), 198–237.

[30] Ibid. 228–30.

OFFICIAL SOVIET IDENTITY AND
THE 'TACTICS OF THE HABITAT'

This book addresses two of the major post-1991 debates about Stalinism: what was the logic and language of the Stalin era and how did ordinary people relate to the Soviet regime? It examines how Soviet power and the behaviour of Soviet people evolved from the late 1930s through the chaos of the war years and into the early Cold War. By examining both official rhetoric and everyday living it aims to bridge a gap between these two literatures and examine how the two spheres interacted with one another in the last years of Stalin's life.

The recent historiography of the period from 1939 to 1953 has focused attention on the revival of Russian, Ukrainian, and other national identities.[31] This book shifts the emphasis onto Soviet identity. The various communities of the USSR lacked a shared past from which to create one common identity.[32] Stalin's attempts to commission a history of the peoples of the USSR always ended in failure. However, the contemporary global context provided a much more fruitful arena for the articulation of a shared sense of Sovietness. Unlike the rhetoric of ethno-nationalism, Official Soviet Identity was accessible to all citizens of the USSR.

Being Soviet mattered in the last years of Stalin's life. The experience of war, invasion, victory, and the threat of nuclear conflict made international affairs, and Official Soviet Identity, a matter of vital interest to every resident of the USSR.[33] Sovietness did not swallow up or destroy all other forms of identity in this period. Residents of the Soviet Union, like most individuals, embraced a number of simultaneous and different identities. They were not simply Soviet, or Russian, or Jewish. A Soviet citizen could define himself as a labourer at the Dinamo Factory, a Kievan, a member of the global proletariat, a Ukrainian, or a citizen of

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[31] Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*; G. Hosking, 'The Second World War and Russian National Consiousness', *Past and Present*, 175.1 (2002), 162–87.

[32] See: G. M. White, *Identity Through History: Living Stories in a Solomon Islands Society* (Cambridge, 1991).

[33] See Weber's description of how trans-local Frenchness became more prominent as citizens' awareness of war increased: E. Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernisation of Rural France 1870–1914* (London, 1977), 267–8. See also: T. Turville-Petre, *England the Nation: Language, Literature and National Identity 1290–1340* (1996), 8; L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*, 3rd edn (New Haven, 2005), 5.

the USSR.[34] These identities were not incompatible, and were often complementary. As Linda Colley suggests, identities are not like hats: we can wear more than one of them at a time.[35] Ethno-national or class identities were important in this period, but this book draws attention to the rarely examined supranational Soviet identity which coexisted alongside them.

Official Soviet Identity was 'official' in the sense that it was actively promoted by the Stalin-era government. It was propounded in government-sponsored newspapers such as *Pravda* (the newspaper of the Central Committee) and *Ogonëk* (a weekly journal containing a large number of photographs). Other influential outlets included *Krasnaia Zvezda* (the highly popular newspaper of the Red Army), and those after the war to *Krokodil* (a satirical journal). Official Soviet Identity was also communicated through plays, films, and other popular media, as well as lectures and speeches that were commissioned by the Agitprop section of the Central Committee. The Soviet mass media did not always sing in one harmonious voice. However, on the topic of Soviet identity it tended to have a very closely defined and coherent picture. The outside world mattered profoundly in this period and Soviet newsmen, artists, and musicians were extremely adept at conforming to the official line that emanated from the centre. What emerges from this body of sources is the official version of Soviet identity between 1939 and 1953. It was not necessarily opposed to vernacular or popular identities: the two could and did shape one another. Nonetheless it was official in the sense that it was the version of Soviet identity that was being promoted by the Stalin-era government.[36]

This book evaluates that rhetoric of Sovietness through the critical tools provided by the literature concerning identity. The historiography of identity has flourished in recent years, drawing on insights from anthropology and sociology.[37] However, the Soviet vision of the

[34] For a discussion of worker identities in the pre-war USSR see: Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*, 492–500; L. H. Siegelbaum and R. G. Suny, eds., *Making Workers Soviet: Power, Class and Identity* (Ithaca, 1994).

[35] Colley, *Britons*, 6.

[36] For the value of this distinction in the 19th century see: A. Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 2nd edn (London, 1991), 83–101; J. M. MacKenzie*, Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960* (Manchester, 1984), 4–7.

[37] L. E. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1985); E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, 1990); Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. For a brief list of those who have examined 'identity' in a Russo-Soviet context, see Iu. S. Borisov, A. V. Golubev, M. M. Kudoiukina, and V. A. Nevozhin, eds., *Rossiia i Zapad: Formirovanie vneshne-*

outside world has largely been assessed in terms of the respective roles of
Marxist-Leninism, Russian nationalism, or *realpolitik* within foreign
policy thinking. This approach has spawned a series of compound and
sometimes confusing terms such as: 'the revolutionary imperial para-
digm'; 'multiethnic imperialism and socialist messianism'; 'the hostile
isolationist tendency'; or 'a commingling Soviet Socialism and Russian
nationalism'.[38] This book takes a different approach, focusing on the
roles of status, hierarchy, and patronage within Official Soviet Identity.
Marxism and nationalism mattered in the later Stalin years but a
more anthropological approach offers a fresh perspective on the Soviet
experience.

Soviet identity was constructed in relation to a number of different
states in this era. Chapter 1 evaluates the place of Germany, the Western
powers, and the newly acquired borderlands within the Soviet imagina-
tion. From Chapter 2 (1941) onwards the focus is on the place of
Britain, America, and later China within official rhetoric. Between
1939 and 1953 Britain and America were first antagonists, then uncer-
tain allies, and later clear enemies of the USSR. As a result they provided
some of the most complex and interesting arenas for the articulation
of Official Soviet Identity. As case studies, they offer a valuable
starting point for any broader discussion of what it meant to be Soviet
in this era.

Official Soviet Identity was expressed in two different spheres in this
period. The first of these, the diplomatic identity of the USSR,
concerned the political and military posture of the USSR within the
international community. Foreign relations were always at the heart of
the Bolshevik political imagination.[39] In 1917 the USSR became a
socialist enclave surrounded by capitalist predators. However, there
was always another, more positive aspect to Soviet diplomatic identity.

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politicheskikh stereotipov v soznanii Rosiiskogo obshchestva pervoi polovini XX Veka (Moscow,
1998); E. Kingston-Mann, *In Search of the True West: Culture, Economics and the Problems
of Russian Development* (Princeton, 1999); I. B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe:
A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London, 1996); A. M. Ball, *Imagining
America: Influence and Images in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Oxford, 2003); Y. Slezkine,
Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North (Ithaca, 1994).

[38] V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to
Khrushchev* (Cambridge Mass., 1996), 4; G. Hosking, *Russia and the Russians: From
Earliest Times to 2001* (London, 2002), 521; D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West:
Gorbachev, Intellectuals and the End of the Cold War* (New York, 2000), 8–9; V. Dunham,
In Stalin's Time: Middle Class Values in Soviet Fiction (Cambridge, 1976), 84.

[39] J. Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics* (Berkeley, 1994), 7.

At successive disarmament conferences in the 1920s and 1930s, Soviet representatives adopted the guise of peace-loving defenders of international security.[40] Following the rise of Hitler in 1933, the USSR also postured itself as the leader of a progressive, Europe-wide anti-Hitler coalition that was embodied in the Popular Front.[41] Despite the turn inwards that took place during and after the Purges, Soviet diplomatic identity in 1939 still combined the dual notions of foreign threat with the idea of the USSR as a morally righteous actor on the world stage.

The second aspect of Official Soviet Identity in this period concerned the relationship between Soviet and non-Soviet civilization. The artistic and scientific achievements of the West are a long-standing reference point for Russian and Soviet identity formation.[42] In the nineteenth century the debate over the nature of Western civilization crystallized around the 'Westernizers', who sought to ape the West, and the 'Slavophiles', who argued that Russia must find a distinctive and spiritually whole road to the future.[43] In the years following the October Revolution, Soviet authors were consistent in their condemnation of the economic inequalities of Western capitalist society.[44] Writers such as Gorky excoriated the ruthless nature of the capitalist monopolies and drew attention to the ever-present threat of capitalist economic crisis.[45] Soviet citizens were informed that workers in the West suffered injustice and deprivation on a scale that was inconceivable in the USSR. In the 1930s the famous satirists, Ilf and Petrov, published a popular travelogue about their journey to the USA that also stressed the deep-seated inequalities of American life.[46]

[40] I. K. Kobliakov, *USSR: For Peace Against Aggression 1933–1941* (Moscow, 1976).

[41] Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*, 229–30.

[42] G. Belaia, 'Sick Ideas of a Sick Society: The "West-East" Theme in Soviet and Émigré Criticism', in. A. McMillin, *Under Eastern Eyes: The West as Reflected in Recent Russian Émigré Writing* (London, 1991), 1. See also: C. Avins, *Border Crossings: The West and Russian Identity in Soviet Literature 1917–1934* (London, 1983), 2.

[43] Kingston-Mann *In Search of the True West*, 112–17; H. Rogger, 'America in the Russian Mind—or Russian Discoveries of America', *Pacific Historical Review,* 47.1 (1978), 27–51.

[44] H. Rogger, 'How the Soviets See Us', in M. Garrison and A. Gleason eds., *Shared Destiny: Fifty Years of Soviet American Relations* (Boston, 1985)*,* 120.

[45] H. Rogger, 'America Enters the 20th Century: The View from Russia,' in I. Qverbach, A. Hillgruber, and G. Schramm, eds., *Felder und Vorfelder Russicher Geschichte: Studein zu Ehren von Peter Scheibert* (Rambach, 1985), 161–4; F. C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Image of the United States: A Study in Distortion* (New York, 1950), 20–2.

[46] I. Ilf and E. Petrov, trans., G. Malamuth, *Little Golden America: Two famous Soviet Humourists Survey the United States* (London, 1944).

However, this unanimity concerning the evils of capitalist exploitation did not extend to the cultural and technological products of Western society. In the utopian atmosphere of the Revolution, educationalists such as Stanislav Shatsky and playwrights such as Platon Kerzhentsev were allowed to draw upon ideas they had gathered from overseas and put them to the test in the USSR.[47] These early post-Revolutionary years were the high point of Soviet internationalism, when foreign research and innovations were most welcome in the USSR. Nonetheless, official attitudes towards foreign civilization did not decline in a steady and linear manner. As new entertainment media such as radio and cinema became increasingly prominent, the attitude of the Soviet government towards capitalist culture wandered uncertainly between the 'Slavophile' and 'Westernizer' poles within nineteenth-century thinking.

The fate of capitalist cinema reflects that uncertain journey. Of the films screened in the early 1920s in the USSR, 87 per cent were from overseas.[48] Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, and Mary Pickford were major stars in the Soviet Union.[49] However, the 'Cultural Revolution' of the late 1920s and early 1930s saw a shift away from foreign-produced entertainment.[50] By 1932 there was not a single overseas film showing in the USSR, and only a small number were shown between then and 1939.[51] Domestic fare dominated the screen in the 1930s including such light-hearted homemade hits as *The Happy Go Lucky Guys.*[52]

This model of importation and experimentation followed by rejection was mirrored to some extent in the fate of Soviet jazz. Jazz was always regarded as a non-domestic product in the pre-war USSR. During the 1920s Soviet musicians gathered sheet music overseas, and

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[47] W. Partlett, 'Breaching Cultural Worlds with the Village School: Educational Visions, Local Initiative, and Rural Experience at S. T. Shatskii's Kaluga School System, 1919–1932', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 82. 4 (2004), 847–85. On Kerzhentsev, who was adamantly anti-Western but inspired by some of the models of public theatre he had seen there, see: R. Russell, *Russian Drama of the Revolutionary Period* (New York, 1988), 29–30.

[48] J. Brooks, 'Official Xenophobia and Popular Cosmopolitanism in Early Soviet Russia', *American Historical Review,* 97.5 (1992), 1443.

[49] Ball, *Imagining America,* 79–81.

[50] On the concept of 'Cultural Revolution', see: M. David-Fox, 'What is Cultural Revolution?' and S. Fitzpatrick, 'Cultural Revolution Revisited', *Russian Review,* 58.1 (1999), 181–209.

[51] Ball, *Imagining America*, 104–5.

[52] P. Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society: From the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (London, 2001), 114–64.

jazz was performed as an example of African-American folk music. It was legitimate because it was the tunes and rhythms of an oppressed people.[53] Nonetheless, jazz always had its critics within the musical academy and amongst some Bolshevik ideologues, who regarded its Western provenance as a symptom of bourgeois degeneracy.[54] Gorky's 1928 *Pravda* article 'The Music of the Gross' was a sign of the changing times, and jazz, like foreign film, faded in the face of the 'Cultural Revolution' of the late 1920s.[55] Unlike foreign cinema, however, jazz returned in the mid 1930s, and achieved its greatest extent of pre-war popularity.[56] In 1936 Leonid Utesov, the USSR's leading jazzmaster played the lead in the hit film *The Happy Go Lucky Guys*, which also spawned the jazz-influenced hit song, *The March of the Happy Go Lucky Guys*. The same year saw the launch of his State Jazz Orchestra. By the late 1930s Leningrad radio stations were playing whole evenings of jazz from their collections of Whiteman, Hilton, Ellington, and others.[57]

The official attitude towards foreign science and the global scientific community evolved in a similar manner in the pre-war years. During the 1920s and early 1930s the Soviet leadership invested a great deal of effort acquiring equipment and expertise from Europe and the US: Fordism and Taylorism were watchwords for excellence.[58] The 15th Party Congress in 1928 called for the 'widest use of West European and American scientific and scientific-industrial experience' and between 1928 and 1932 over 3000 foreign engineers worked on high profile projects in the USSR, such as the Stalingrad Tractor Factory, Dnepr Dam, and the Nizhny Novgorod car factory.[59]

[53] See, for example, Iu. Dmitriev's introduction to Leonid Utesov's 1959 autobiography, *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Literatury i Iskusstva*, henceforth RGALI f. R3005, op. 1, d. 82, ll. 17–25. For a discussion of Soviet jazz in the pre-war era, see E. D. Uvarova, ed., *Russkaia sovetskaia Estrada 1930–1945: Ocherki istorii* (Moscow, 1977), 271–6.

[54] Uvarova, *Russkaia sovetskaia Estrada*, pp. 276–8; RGALI f. R3005, op. 1, d. 82, l. 187.

[55] Ball, *Imagining America,* 102.

[56] F. Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1980* (Oxford, 1983), 107–25; Uvarova, *Russkaia sovetskaia Estrada,* 290–301.

[57] Starr, *Red and Hot,* 111–14.

[58] J. Brooks, 'The Press and its Message: Images of America in the 1920s and 30s', in S. Fitzpatrick, A. Rabinowitch, and R. Stites, eds., *Russia in the Era of NEP: Explorations in Soviet Society and Culture* (Bloomington, 1991), 239–40; Ball, *Imagining America,* 24–5.

[59] D. Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy 1939–1956* (New Haven, 1994), 15; Rogger, 'How the Soviets See Us', 124.

However, Soviet imports of foreign technology and expertise were sharply curtailed after 1932. The 17th Party Congress in 1934 declared that domestic, rather than foreign, technology would make the USSR the most advanced nation in Europe, and the official press began to trumpet the achievements of Soviet science and technology.[60] As the *Moscow Daily News* announced in 1935, 'If foreign was always a synonym for the best in Russia, the situation has changed radically now. The Soviet Union has a powerful industry which is able to produce any machine, any metal or any chemical.'[61] The USSR had drawn whatever it might need from the West and would now forge ahead on a mixture of reverse engineered copies and domestically designed materials. Scientific links with the outside world were sharply curtailed. Having good connections inside the All Union Society for Cultural Connections (VOKS) had been an essential means of obtaining materials from abroad in the 1920s—by the 1930s it was a political liability.[62] Domestic achievements in aeronautics and Arctic exploration were touted as symbols of the strength of Soviet civilization. Heroic narratives such as the Cheliuskin Expedition, to rescue a group of sailors stranded on a polar ice flow, were celebrated from the capital cities to the GULAG.[63] As Avins argues, the key message of Kataev's *Time Forward*, one of the most popular novels of the decade, was that, 'Russia is figuratively becoming its own "West"—developing the industrial capacity and national image that will enable it to surpass the West of modern capitalism.'[64] These ideas about Western civilization, in combination with official narratives about international diplomacy defined what it meant to be Soviet in relation to the outside world before 1939.

This book offers a distinctive approach to the second key question within the post-1991 historiography of the USSR: how did ordinary people engage with Soviet power in Stalin's later years? It seeks to build on and clarify some of the ambiguities within Kotkin's work on 1930s' Magnitogorsk. Kotkin's concept of 'speaking Bolshevik' has proved enormously popular. However, his description of what it meant to

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[60] Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb,* 15.

[61] Ball, *Imagining America,* 157.

[62] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, 39–43; M. David-Fox, 'From Illusory "Society" to Intellectual "Public": VOKS, International Travel and Party: Intelligentsia Relations in the Interwar Period', *Contemporary European History*, 11.1 (2002), 7–32.

[63] Tatiana Poloz states that 'Pride in being a Soviet citizen was probably never as all-embracing and intense' as in the 1930s. Figes, *The Whisperers*, 221.

[64] Avins, *Border Crossings,* 179.

'speak Bolshevik' is unclear on the relative roles of performance and belief for ordinary citizens. A more potent concept, that has received far less attention, is his idea of the 'little tactics of the habitat'. Kotkin argues that Soviet power shaped the arena within which ordinary citizens lived, but that they deployed a number of strategic manoeuvres in order to negotiate their way through Stalin-era society. Unfortunately, the only 'tactic' he describes is 'speaking Bolshevik'. This book argues that the resistance and discursive paradigms explain the behaviour of a small, but significant, number of Soviet citizens. However, the behaviour of the majority of ordinary people is better understood via a whole range of different 'tactics of the habitat' such as 'reappropriation', *'bricolage'*, and 'avoidance'. Soviet power established the general parameters of life but these 'tactics' enabled Soviet citizens to get by and get on. I also refer to the 'tactic' of 'performance', rather than 'speaking Bolshevik', to remove any ambiguity over the meaning of Kotkin's term. Soviet citizens 'performed' the rhetoric of the state when they publicly mouthed it in order to ensure personal safety or advancement.

'Reappropriation' was the process whereby Soviet citizens subtly rewrote the rhetoric contained within Official Soviet Identity and used it in a manner that was not originally intended by the state. A non-Soviet example of reappropriation might be the behaviour of the indigenous peoples of Central America after their conquest by the Spanish in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Spanish *conquistadores* sought to convert their new subjects to Catholicism, and the indigenous peoples engaged enthusiastically with the rituals and structures of the new religion. However, they also reappropriated the symbols and rituals of European Catholicism by imbuing them with their own distinctive meanings derived from their pre-Conquest religious practices.[65] Reappropriation in the Soviet context is most obvious in connection with government-sponsored political campaigns to collect money, protest against the action of foreign powers, or celebrate Soviet holidays. Evaluating the public behaviour of Soviet citizens is often very difficult: we cannot be sure who is performing the rhetoric and who is speaking sincerely.[66] However, it is also clear that meetings, marches, and campaigns were often delicately transformed by their participants

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[65] M. de Certeau, trans., S. Rendall, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (London, 1988), 30–2.

[66] See Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*.

into an opportunity to socialize, drink, or settle scores with enemies.[67] Soviet scientists and musicians were experts at reappropriation, redirecting official campaigns against Western science in the post-war era in order to harm their rivals and secure their professional advancement. Ordinary citizens also deployed the 'tactic' of reappropriation when they transformed official calls to 'Struggle for Peace' into an opportunity to publicly express their grief connected to the Great Patriotic War.[68] This 'tactic of the habitat' was not necessarily deployed consciously, and it also embedded individuals within the mechanisms of Soviet power; in order to reappropriate a public campaign, they had to participate in it. However, their behaviour was 'tactical' rather than 'resisting' or 'supporting' the Bolshevik state.

'*Bricolage*' was the tactic employed by Soviet citizens when they fused material from both official and unofficial sources to create a composite product. Levi-Strauss popularized the term *bricolage* to describe how story tellers draw upon a pre-existing repertoire of images in order to construct a narrative.[69] De Certeau has extended the term in his description of the creativity of everyday life: *bricoleurs* 'make do' with the materials before them in order to create an innovative and novel product.[70] *Bricolage* is not a 'tactic' that was unique to Soviet society. However, a discussion of *bricolage* in the USSR is particularly important in the light of the current Foucauldian emphasis on the incapacity of Soviet citizens to interact creatively with the language of the state that ruled them.

Osokina's description of the illegal food trade reflects many of these characteristics of Soviet *bricolage*. Private speculation supplemented, rather than replaced, the official food supply. Almost all individuals relied on goods obtained via both sources.[71] *Bricolage* differed from

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[67] A number of authors have described how ordinary people used the Purges to obtain revenge in this manner: Y. Kang-Bohr, 'Appeals and Complaints: Popular Reactions to the Party Purges and the Great Terror in the Voronezh Region, 1935–1939', *Europe-Asia Studies,* 57.1 (2005), 135–54; S. Fitzpatrick, 'How the Mice Buried the Cat: Scenes from the Great Purges of 1937 in the Russian Provinces', *Russian Review,* 52.3 (1993), 299–320. See also: J. T. Gross, *Revolution From Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton, 2002), 232–5.

[68] See Chapters 5 and 4 respectively.

[69] C. Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago, 1968), 15–25.

[70] De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life,* xv–xvi. See also the work of Harel and Papert on *bricolage* within education: I. Harel and S. Papert, eds., *Constructionism: Research Reports and Essays, 1985–1990* (Norwood, 1991), 168–73.

[71] E. Osokina trans., K. Transchel and G. Bucher, *Our Daily Bread: Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–41* (Armonk, NY, 1999).

performance in that it was largely undertaken in relation to other Soviet citizens, rather than Soviet power. Performance often had a prescribed end: to obtain certain material or social ends that were dispensed by the government. When post-war Soviet musicians performed their sets in accordance with the dictates of government policy, they were 'performing' for the state. When they spiced up their repertoires with risqué jazz numbers, however, they were also employing *bricolage* and humouring their listeners.[72] They carefully melded sounds that would be acceptable to both audiences to create a composite product. *Bricolage* lacked the strategic nature of 'performance': there was no official reward to be obtained. If there was a benefit, it was the admiration and trust of fellow citizens. *Bricolage* also lacked the coherence of performance. Its products were more complex because they relied on a diversity of sources. Nonetheless, it also embedded Soviet citizens within the 'habitat' of Soviet life, rather than removing them from it. Soviet citizens deployed *bricolage* to supplement the official supply of information, food, and clothing, rather than stepping outside of the mechanisms of Soviet power and living independently of them.

The most important expression of the 'tactic' of *bricoalge* discussed in this book will be rumour. Historians rarely take rumours seriously as an object of study: this is the first book length study of rumouring in the USSR since the 1950s.[73] However, rumouring was an extremely widespread practice in the Stalin-era Soviet Union, and also a clear example of *bricolage* in action. When it came to gathering news, as with the process of gathering food, Soviet citizens supplemented information provided by the official press with information from unofficial sources that was obtained by word-of-mouth. This creative *bricolage* brought together material from two contexts in order to create a third product that did not depend exclusively on either source.

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[72] See Chapter 5.

[73] A. Inkeles and R. A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen: Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society* (Cambridge Mass., 1959) and R. A. Bauer, A. Inkeles, and C. Kluckhohn, *How the Soviet System Works: Cultural, Psychological and Social Themes* (Cambridge Mass., 1956). For some exceptions, see G. Lefebvre, trans., J. White, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Panic in Revolutionary France* (London, 1973); C. Wickham, 'Gossip and Resistance among the Medieval Peasantry', *Past and Present*, 160.1 (1998), 3–24; A. Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500–1700* (Oxford, 2000). In the Russo-Soviet context see: O. Figes and B. Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (London, 1999); S. Smith, 'Letters from Heaven and Tales of the Forest: "Superstition" against Bolshevism', *Antropologicheskii Forum*, 3 (2005), 280–306.

Rosnow and Fine, the leading sociologists of rumour, define a rumour as 'information neither substantiated nor refuted'.[74] Once its contents have been demonstrated to be true or false, then it ceases to be a rumour and becomes either a fact or an error. Until the point of authentication, rumours function as 'improvised news' and analysis transmitted by word-of-mouth from one person to another.[75] Rumours are distinct from other word-of-mouth media in the emphasis they place on communication rather than entertainment or scandal. Gossip is the transmission of often verified information about a third party for the purpose of passing comment on it. Rumours hypothesize about unverified realities.[76] The Stalin-era Soviet Union was also inundated with tips. Shortages of basic necessities, such as food, as well as luxury goods like cinema tickets, made oral information a vital medium through which Soviet citizens found out about where and when to buy goods. Tips are distinct from rumours because they are exclusively informative: they do not contain an element of explanation. Another element of oral communication, which was particular to the USSR, was the *anekdot*.[77] *Anekdoty* wryly observed the absurdities of Soviet life, puncturing the pomposity of official rhetoric. Unlike rumours, they did not transmit information but passively commented on the lived experience of Soviet citizens. The distinctions between these different categories of speech are not absolute. Nonetheless rumours are a distinctly informational and analytical form of unofficial oral dialogue.

The nature of the Soviet system, with its officially mandated propaganda machine, lent a particular character to rumours (*slukhi*). Rumours were defined by their origin outside of the official mass media. They could only be authenticated or disproved in that context. This distinction between 'official' and 'unofficial' has recently come under attack as an example of applying non-Soviet categories to the USSR.[78] However, in this case, the definition of a rumour as 'unofficial' was a

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[74] R. L. Rosnow, and G. A. Fine, *Rumour and Gossip: The Social Psychology of Hearsay* (Oxford, 1976), 4.

[75] See: T. P. Johnston, 'Subversive Tales? War Rumours in the Soviet Union 1945–1947' in J. Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia: Society Between Reconstruction and Reinvention* (London, 2006), 59–78; T. Shibutani, *Improvised News: A Sociological Study of Rumour* (New York, 1966), 62.

[76] G. W. Allport and L. Postman, *The Psychology of Rumor* (New York, 1965)*,* 165–7.

[77] For a discussion, see Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 238–81; S. B. Graham, 'A Cultural Analysis of the Russo-Soviet Anekdot' PhD thesis, Pittsburgh University, (2003).

[78] Holquist, '"Information is the Alpha"', 415–16.

peculiarity of the Soviet system itself. By propagating an authoritative narrative, the Soviet state made all rumour intrinsically non-authoritative, or 'unofficial'. This is not to suggest that the two rhetorical worlds, the unofficial world of rumour and the official world of the Soviet press, were entirely separate from one another. They intersected with, and even referred directly to, one another. The contents of the official press were clearly, on occasion, intended to suppress ideas and stories that were circulating within the word-of-mouth network.[79] The contents of the informal rumour matrix were also deeply influenced by the rhetoric and categories of the official press.[80] The two arenas were distinct by virtue of the source from which the information flowed, rather than the kinds of language and ideas which circulated within them.

Rumouring was an extremely widespread phenomenon in the Stalin-era Soviet Union. The prominence of rumouring within Soviet life was first pointed to by the researchers of the Harvard Interview Project on the Soviet Social System (HIP) in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The Project's authors conducted 329 interviews and 2,725 questionnaires amongst Soviet émigrés in West Germany and the United States.[81] One section of the interviews was devoted to 'Communication'. In the first question, the respondents were asked about sources of information in a general manner. Soviet newspapers were referred to by 85 per cent, whilst both radio and 'word-of-mouth' were mentioned by 47 per cent of the respondents.[82] When asked, in the next question, which sources were most important to them, 36 per cent said newspapers, 28 per cent said 'word of mouth', and only 10 per cent said radio.[83] When asked which source they considered most reliable, 61 per cent cited oral information, and only 13 per cent newspapers.[84] The researchers of

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[79] See Stalin's comments to King in late May 1943 which were clearly intended, in part, to address rumours circulating about the Comintern: *Pravda*, 30.05.1943, p. 1. For the capacity of 'folk' images to shape official narratives, see: S. M. Norris, *A War of Images: Russian Popular Prints, Wartime Culture, and National Identity 1812–1945* (DeKalb, 2006).

[80] See: Johnston, 'Subversive Tales', 71–2.

[81] The main findings are summarized in: Inkeles and Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen* and Bauer, Inkeles, and Kluckhohn, *How the Soviet System Works*.

[82] Harvard Interview Project on the Soviet Social System, Henceforth HIP. 'Code Book A', (Unpublished, Davis Centre Library, Harvard University), 57. The percentages relate to a total of 329 cases: 276 in Munich, 53 in New York.

[83] HIP. 'Code Book A', 57–8.

[84] HIP. 'Code Book A', 80.

HIP concluded that rumouring was a peculiarly prominent feature of life in the Stalin-era USSR.[85]

This oral information was transmitted along informal networks of close friends and family. When asked who told them rumours, 28 per cent of the interviewees cited family and 77 per cent friends.[86] As one respondent explained: '...people simply soaked up these unofficial rumours. People who heard it would tell it to others and they would tell it again to others and it increased in a geometric progression.'[87] The study of rumours offers important insights into the social networks that traversed Soviet society.[88]

Respondents to HIP described the process of rumouring in the USSR in a manner that illustrates the process of *bricolage* in action. Rumours supplemented, rather than replaced, the contents of the official press. Some respondents to HIP claimed that rumours were more reliable; others claimed that the official press was a better source of information.

The Soviet papers cannot be considered a source, because they are not truthful.[89]

You have to have a very careful attitude towards them [rumours] and check on them.[90]

However, they did not regard the two as intrinsically in competition with one another. Indeed, they often spoke of cross referencing material from one source against information from another: 'Even the members of the party among themselves don't believe everything that they read in the Soviet newspapers...Conversations with members of my family or with friends were very important.'[91]

The creative products of this rumour *bricolage* were not necessarily highly original, in the sense of demonstrating great inventiveness. Their creativity, in de Certeau's terms, was of an everyday kind and involved

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[85] Inkeles and Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen*, 164–5, 169.

[86] These are of the 272 (83%) who answered. Of those citing friends a third specified close friends. HIP. 'Code Book A', 60.

[87] HIP. A. 3, 25, 10 (A schedule interview, book 3, respondent 25, page 10. Now online).

[88] For a further discussion see: T. Johnston, 'Rumours in the Stalin-era USSR: A Theoretical Introduction', in *Slukhi v Rossii XX veka: neformal'naia kommunikatsiia i 'krutye povoroty' rossiiskoi istorii'/Rumors in the XX century Russia: Informal Communication and 'Steep Turns' of Russian History* (Moscow, 2010).

[89] HIP. A. 12, 153, 46.

[90] HIP. A. 1, 5, 47.

[91] HIP. A. 1, 8, 74.

the bringing together of information from two contexts to create a composite product.[92] It is comparable to Sawyer's description of jazz improvisation: the soloist does not seek to create something entirely new but draws upon well-established tropes, combining them in a novel configuration.[93] Soviet citizens drew upon previous incarnations of Official Soviet Identity as well as the current press, and pre-existing assumptions about the nature of international relations, to create a composite image of the world.

The historiography of the Soviet 1930s has largely treated rumour as an arena of subversion.[94] Viola describes them as an 'offstage social space for the articulation of peasant dissent'.[95] But rumouring was too widespread a pastime to be exclusively associated with resistance. If rumouring was an act of resistance, then all Soviet citizens were resisters. The authors of HIP drew the same conclusion. They found that respondents who had been most strongly opposed to the regime actually relied less on rumour as a source of information.[96] Respondents who were positively inclined towards the government used rumours as a means of staying up to date with what was going on.[97] They concluded, on the basis that they had an unusually anti-Soviet sample, that their results underestimated the ubiquity of rumour as a means of transmitting information in the Soviet Union.

The archival sources from the Stalin era also reveal a large number of what might be called 'loyal rumourers'. Rumours of invasion, price rises, or the abolition of the *kolkhozy* were often passed on by individuals who were depressed or frustrated by the information they transmitted. They wrote to warn the Soviet leadership of a forthcoming event, or bemoaned to their work colleagues that something was about to

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[92] De Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*.

[93] R. K. Sawyer, *Explaining Creativity: The Science of Human Innovation* (Oxford, 2006), 223–36. See also: J. Liep, 'Introduction', in J. Liep, ed., *Locating Cultural Creativity* (London, 2001), 7.

[94] S. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivisation* (Oxford, 1994), 5–6; *Everyday Stalinism,* 184–5.

[95] Viola, *Peasant Rebels,* 64–5.

[96] Bauer and Inkeles, *The Soviet Citizen,* 164, 169. C. Kluckhohn, A. Inkeles, and R. A. Bauer, 'Strategic Psychological and Sociological Strengths and Vulnerabilities of the Soviet Social System: A Final Report submitted to the Director Officer Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama', (Unpublished, Davis Centre Library, Harvard University).

[97] R. A. Bauer and D. B. Gleicher, 'Word of Mouth Communication in the Soviet Union', *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 17.3 (1953), 306.

happen. Rumours were an important expression of the tactic of *bricolage*. They embedded Soviet citizens within Soviet power, rather than removing them from it. Rumours straddled the boundaries between support and resistance, making them an ideal object for the study of the more ambiguous spaces between internalization and rejection, which were inhabited by the 'little tactics of the habitat'.

It might be objected that respondents to HIP could have exaggerated the prevalence of rumouring in the Stalin-era Soviet Union. The Project's respondents were atypically well educated and probably atypically curious about the world around them.[98] Nonetheless, respondents from all social groups stated that they had heard and passed on rumours.[99] It is also possible that the respondents to HIP exaggerated the prominence of rumours because they thought it was what the interviewers wanted to hear. However, the first questions in the Communication Section were straightforward and open without suggesting any particular sources.[100] The authors' conclusion, that rumouring was a widespread phenomenon in Soviet society, seems credible.

The sociological and psychological literature concerning rumours also lends weight to the idea that the USSR would have been a society rich in rumours. In their 1965 book, Allport and Postman suggested that the likelihood of a rumour spreading was related to its importance and ambiguity.[101] Press censorship in the Stalin years would have led to heightened levels of ambiguity. Many Soviet citizens were fully aware that they were not always being told the full story within the official press. That awareness drove many of them to seek out additional sources of information. In that sense the propaganda state bred the rumour network. Other studies of rumour have also suggested that rumours are more likely to spread if they are credible to their audience. Under conditions of stress and emotional tension, credibility thresholds are lowered and rumouring increases.[102] The upheavals and traumas experienced by the citizens of wartime and post-war Soviet society would have contributed to a lowering of credibility and a proliferation of rumouring.

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[98] Ibid. 300–5.
[99] See: H. Rossi, and R. A. Bauer, 'Some Patterns of Soviet Communications Behaviour', *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 16.4 (1952), 653–70.
[100] HIP. 'Code Book A', 57.
[101] Allport and Postman, *Psychology of Rumor,* 33–40.
[102] Rosnow and Fine, *Rumour and Gossip,* 51–2.

The opening of the archives of the former Soviet Union has also affirmed the notion that rumouring was widespread in this period. There is ample primary evidence of speculative stories and rumours passing by word-of-mouth between Soviet citizens.[103] Rumours were a powerful force within Soviet society, capable of inspiring full-scale panics and acts of civil disobedience at moments of unusual tension.[104] They even played a part in shaping the course of elite politics at the highest level. Stalin's humiliation of Molotov in late 1945 seems to have been motivated by anger about rumours that Molotov was about to replace him.[105] Rumouring touched on all areas of life in the USSR and was a widespread, everyday expression of the tactic of *bricolage* for the vast majority of the population of the Soviet Union.

The final 'tactic of the habitat' that is described in this book was 'avoidance'. In *Everyday Stalinism* Fitzpatrick describes how Soviet citizens sidestepped the levers of Soviet power and evaded punishment by the state.[106] This 'tactic' of avoidance was particularly widespread in relation to official campaigns and attempts at physical mobilization. It is less clear how it operated in relation to official information and rhetoric. Soviet citizens could not escape official ideas about the outside world in the way they could fail to turn up for an election rally. Despite the fact that avoidance involved the attempt to escape the coercive influence of Soviet power, it can still be considered a 'tactic of the habitat'. Creative avoidance strategies such as feigning illness, job changing, and *blat'*, were so endemic, that they became distinctive features of the Soviet environment. To describe them as resistance is to stretch that term beyond its usefulness. Even when they were dodging Soviet power, Stalin-era citizens often did so in a distinctively Soviet manner.

Performance, reappropriation, *bricolage*, and avoidance embedded Soviet citizens within the habitat of Soviet power. They differed from resistance, which involved stepping outside of the habitat of Soviet power and finding an external pattern of behaviour and speech in order to subvert the government.[107] They were everyday strategies of

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[103] Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, 286–95; Viola, *Peasant Rebels*, 48–63; Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia*, 92–100.

[104] See: Johnston, 'Subversive Tales'.

[105] Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace*, 20–3.

[106] Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*. See also: Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 112–17, 167–9.

[107] J. J. Rossman, *Worker Resistance under Stalin: Class and Revolution on the Shop Floor* (Cambridge Mass., 2005), 2–7.

living within the Stalin-era system. In his description of 'speaking Bolshevik', Kotkin cites de Certeau, Foucault, and Bourdieu as his sources of inspiration.[108] My 'tactics of the habitat' are less influenced by Foucault's notions of all-embracing discourse and owe rather more to de Certeau's notion of everyday creativity.

This account of everyday creativity is not a pious attempt to separate ordinary Soviet citizens from Soviet power and salvage their 'dignity'.[109] Official Soviet Identity played a key role in shaping the landscape within which these 'tactics' were deployed. Nonetheless there was not simply a view 'from above' and a subversive rival view 'from below' about the outside world in this period.[110] A binary model of ordinary people, subsumed by official discourse or rebelling against it, obscures the complexities of life in the Stalin-era USSR. Most Soviet citizens neither lived as automatons nor struggled against Soviet power. They innovatively negotiated their way through Soviet society, drawing on the 'tactics of the habitat' that were a key element of what it meant to be Soviet in this period.

The model of 'tactics of the habitat', rather than support or resistance, is particularly appropriate in relation to Official Soviet Identity in the post-1939 era. As Chapter 1 argues, the Soviet occupation of the Polish, Finnish, and Romanian borderlands in 1939–40 meant that Soviet citizens were no longer living in a closed informational system. During the pre-war 1930s Soviet citizens had very few alternative sources of information concerning the outside world. Few individuals travelled into or out of the USSR and the mental horizons of the Soviet population were firmly focused within the confines of the Soviet Union.[111]

The outbreak of conflict in Europe shattered this informational seal around the USSR. As one former Soviet citizen explained, 'For us "abroad" opened itself in 1939, after the occupation of Poland, Latvia etc. Here our attitudes changed drastically. The ones who were there

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[108] Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountnain,* 22–3, 237.

[109] L. Engelstein, 'New Thinking about the Old Empire: Post-Soviet Reflections', *Russian Review,* 60. 4 (2001), 489. See also: A. Krylova, 'The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies', *Kritika,* 1.1 (2000), 119–46.

[110] For this approach, see R. Magnusdottir, 'Keeping up Appearances: How the Soviet State failed to Control Popular Attitudes Towards the United States of America 1945–1959', PhD Diss. University of North Carolina (2006).

[111] C. Kelly, '"The Little Citizens of a Big Country": Childhood and International Relations in the Soviet Union', *Trondheim Studies on East European Cultures and Societies: Approaches to Globality,* 8 (2002), 20.

talked about it . . . '[112] The battles, displacements, and occupations of World War II offered millions of Soviet citizens an opportunity to interact personally with the outside world. The German occupation brought foreign soldiers and technology into the villages and homes of the USSR, and the Red Army's counter-attack across Europe carried large numbers of Soviet citizens beyond their own borders. For the first time, every collective farm had several members with personal experience of life beyond the USSR.[113] This contact with the outside world continued into the post-war period, with Soviet soldiers stationed in East Germany until the end of the Cold War.

The war also provided large numbers of Soviet citizens with direct experience of their wartime Allies. Between 1941 and 1945, Arkhangel'sk, Murmansk, and Odessa hosted thousands of Anglo-American sailors and military experts. British and US-made film, music, and literature were also popularized in an unprecedented manner between 1941 and 1945.[114] Personal interaction with foreign citizens was sharply curtailed during the late-Stalin years, but the launch of radio stations such as the Voice of America and BBC Russian language broadcasting and screening of American-made films such as the *Tarzan* series, offered new avenues for information. The large volume of personalized information about the outside world, and in particular about Britain and America after 1939, provided Soviet citizens with a rich vein of information that they could fuse with official sources to create a composite picture of the outside world.

The Official Soviet Identity of the USSR touched on the political campaigning, music tastes, movie watching, clothing styles, and rumour transmission of ordinary Soviet citizens in the period 1939–53. They engaged with Official Soviet Identity in a manner that traversed the binary poles of support and resistance. Personal responses to jazz music or foreign movies, were subtle and complex, resisting the simple categories of pro-Soviet or anti-Soviet. Most Soviet citizens deployed a whole array of 'tactical' behaviour in order to carefully negotiate their relationship with Soviet power. Those 'tactics of the habitat', along with

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[112] HIP. B9, 136, 43 (B schedule interview, subject 9, respondent 136, page 43. Davis Centre Library, Harvard University).

[113] For discussions of the impact of this process see: E. Zubkova, trans. H. Ragsdale, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957* (Armonk, NY, 1998), 25–6.

[114] R. Stites, ed., *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Indianapolis, 1995).

the rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity, shaped what it meant to be Soviet in Stalin's last years.

MENTALITÉ AND SOURCES

The manner in which these 'little tactics of the habitat' were deployed provides an opportunity to evaluate how ordinary Soviet citizens imagined the world around them. This is made possible by the study of 'successful' rumours and patterns of behaviour during this period. Successful rumours, dance tastes, or music styles are those that proliferated in time and space, rather than being isolated examples. They are collective phenomena. Rumours survive on the basis of 'natural selection'. Those rumours which are credible to those who transmit them are passed on and become successful; rumours which are not credible do not survive.[115] In the same way, the popularity of a particular film or haircut demonstrates that it resonated with the collective imagination of the society within which it succeeded. A haircut's success relied on a shared understanding of the symbolic and stylistic associations of that particular fashion.

Successful patterns of behaviour provide a window into the collective *mentalité* of the society within which they proliferated. I employ the term *mentalité* as described by Darnton to mean 'the attitudes, assumptions and implicit ideologies of specific social groups'.[116] These sometimes unconscious assumptions are revealed in the manner that ordinary citizens deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' in relation to Official Soviet Identity. For example, the successful proliferation of a rumour that the Allies had demanded the closure of the Comintern in 1943 provides an important insight into the ways in which Soviet citizens imagined the Grand Alliance relationship.[117]

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[115] Shibutani, *Improvised News,* 176–82; O. Figes and B. Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (London, 1999), 25.

[116] R. Darnton, 'The History of *Mentalité*s: Recent Writings on Revolution, Criminality, and Death in France', in R. Harvey Brown and S. M. Lyman eds., *Structure, Consciousness, and History* (Cambridge, 1978), 112. See also Darnton's critique of the historiography of *mentalité*: R. Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (London, 1984), 258–60. Said talks in similar terms about 'saturating hegemonic forms' that shape the way individuals interpret the world around them: Said, *Orientalism,* 6–14.

[117] See Chapter 2.

This attempt to 'read' collective behaviour as a window into a society's collective *mentalité* closely resembles what the anthropologist Geertz calls 'thick description'. Geertz suggests that myths and rituals provide insights into the 'webs of meaning' of a society: 'Culture is public because meaning is.'[118] The success of a particular rumour or style of dress was 'public' in the later Stalin years, in the sense that it was collectively understood. This book attempts to recover some elements of the 'public' framework of thinking that made that behaviour comprehensible to contemporaries.

The study of *mentalité* can also be compared to the attempt to understand a joke.[119] A joke is funny because it makes sense to the social group within which it circulates. If we are not familiar with the symbolic and rhetorical world of the joke then we don't get it, and don't laugh. Whether they approved of them or not, Soviet citizens understood the symbolic importance of the rumours, dance styles, political activism, and musical tastes of their contemporaries. The exploration of these collective understandings is necessarily impressionistic and runs the risk of simplifying the complex frameworks through which Soviet citizens imagined the outside world. Nonetheless, a careful reading of this behaviour makes it possible to begin to interpret the 'interworked systems of construable signs' that gave life meaning in the USSR.[120]

One potential danger of such an approach is to read too much into, or misread the meaning of, a particular action. The study of *mentalité* also runs the risk of positing homogeneity and unity when there was a diversity of complex views. This danger is alleviated to a significant degree by the study of only those rumours and styles that were peculiarly 'successful'. In terms of rumours, for example, I only discuss rumours to which I found at least a hundred references in three or more source groups. By studying successful, rather than marginal or occasional behaviour, it is possible to avoid the pitfalls of overinterpreting meaning on a narrow basis.

The examination of *mentalité* is not the same as the attempt to chart 'popular opinion' in the Stalin era. The study of 'popular opinion' in this period has been justifiably criticized in recent years. Much of the criticism has focused around the way in which historians of 'popular opinion' have made use of sources. Lomagin's study of 'popular

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[118] See, C. Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, 2000), 3–30.
[119] See Darnton for a similar comparison, Darnton, *Great Cat Massacre,* 3–5.
[120] Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures,* 14.

opinion' in wartime Leningrad, for example, relies heavily on secret police reports, *svodki*, and state prosecution files to measure the shifting mood in the besieged city. He concludes that the fall in prosecutions for anti-Soviet agitation in the summer of 1942 is evidence that the mood was improving. He does not even consider the possibility that what he is measuring is a decline in punishment and recording of anti-Soviet agitation, rather than the changing sentiments of the civilians themselves.[121]

The *svodki* that were central to Lomagin, and other authors', source bases did not simply record public opinion but were also intended to play a role in shaping the consciousness of the Soviet citizenry.[122] They almost certainly over-represented negative sentiments about the Soviet government. *Svodki* also routinely laid the blame for the circulation of negative ideas at the feet of sect members, nationalists, foreigners, and counter-revolutionaries.[123] Ascribing rumour to these 'suspect' groups provided a vehicle for describing negative comments circulating in the community whilst attaching them to groups who were expected to harbour dissent, within the logic of the regime.

The suspect nature of these categories is demonstrated by a comparison of two *svodki* concerning the reactions of the population of L'vov to the 1945 San Francisco conference. The original report, drafted on 19 May 1945, from L'vov to Kiev stated that, 'In connection with the spreading of provocative rumours at the Krakov market', some citizens had refused to receive payments in roubles. They believed that L'vov would soon be under American and British 'occupation' and roubles would be worthless.[124] A subsequent document, sent to Moscow six days later, concerning the mood in Western Ukraine stated that, ' ... in connection with the spreading by the agents of Polish reactionaries and Ukrainian German nationalists of various provocative rumours at the

[121] N. Lomagin, 'Soldiers at War: German Propaganda and Soviet Army Morale During the Battle of Leningrad, 1941–44', *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, 1306 (1998), 37–9. For similar criticism of Davies's approach see: Hellbeck and Davies, 'Letters to the Editor', 437–40. See also S. Kotkin, 'Review of S. Davies, 'Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 50.4 (1998), 739–42.

[122] Holquist, '"Information is the Alpha"'.

[123] Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politihceskoi Istorii, henceforth RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 289, l. 60; op. 125, d. 517, ll. 36–7; d. 289, l. 62; Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv v Avtonomnoi Respublike Krym, henceforth GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, l. 38, respectively.

[124] Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Hromads'kykh Obiednan' Ukrainy, henceforth TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 25.

Krakov Market in L'vov', some citizens had refused to receive payment in roubles.[125] A series of ideologized abuse categories had been added to the rumours that were entirely the invention of Litvin, the recipient of the first report and sender of the second report.

Nonetheless, *svodki* can play a role, as part of a constituent picture, in illustrating how ordinary Soviet citizens deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' in this period. This book draws on as wide a diversity of Stalin-era source groups as possible. These sources fall into three broad categories. First, the state generated sources, such as the *svodki*,[126] information reports generated by agitators at party gatherings,[127] and a sample of 250 case files of the State Prosecution Organ of the Soviet Union from 1939–53.[128] These sources tend to categorize all behaviour within the narrow framework of support or subversion, and the categories they use are often questionable. Nonetheless, to use the example above, it is by no means logical to infer, despite the meaningless nature of the language about 'Polish reactionaries', that rumours about an Anglo-American takeover never circulated at the Krakov market at all. The rumours and behaviour contained within the *svodki* and State Prosecution files provide, if nothing else, a window into what was imaginable, to a creative secret police officer under Stalin.

The second category of sources is those created by Soviet citizens themselves, such as letters sent to political leaders in Moscow;[129] and the memoirs and diaries of Soviet citizens living at the time.[130] These sources tend to provide a more 'loyal' image of the Soviet citizenry. Memoirs, like all sources, have their own particular pitfalls. They were subject to government censorship in the Soviet period, and some Soviet-era texts, such as the wartime diary of V. Vishnevskii, are clearly full of later interpolations.[131] The third source category consists of interview type-scripts generated by historians. These include the material of HIP,

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[125] TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449. l. 34.

[126] Henceforth Sv.

[127] Henceforth Inf. These party-generated sources did not rely on secret police material.

[128] Henceforth Proc. My thanks to V. A. Kozlov and others at the Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii, henceforth GARF, for access to the file database. The identities of prosecuted individuals are protected by only using their initials.

[129] Henceforth Let. The personal letter caches of: Kalinin, Molotov, Shvernik, Malenkov, Chadaev, and Stalin were examined. Copies were taken of nearly 450 letters.

[130] Henceforth Mem.

[131] V. S. Vishnevskii, *Leningrad: Dnevniki voennyx let. 2 Noiabria 1941 goda – 31 Dekabria 1942 goda* (Moscow, 2002).

and a total of twenty-seven interviews conducted by the author between November 2003 and September 2008.[132] Interviews, like memoirs, suffer from the danger of self-censorship: the narrator selectively omits elements from the narrative in order to justify, simplify, or valorize their experiences.[133] A 'semi-structured' interview style allows the interviewee to shape the dialogue but also provides an opportunity to question some of the details provided.[134]

None of these individual source groups provides a perfect picture of the ways in which Soviet citizens imagined the outside world between 1939 and 1953. However, when they are 'triangulated' together, they provide a constituent picture of the kinds of behaviour and attitudes that were prevalent in this era.[135] Just as hill walkers 'triangulate' their location by taking bearings from two known points, so this book 'triangulates' from a diversity of sources to locate the *mentalité* of the later Stalin era. In the pages that follow, individual sources will almost never be cited in isolation, and a system of abbreviations will also be used to make clear what kind of document is being referred to.[136]

CHRONOLOGY

This book examines how Soviet citizens engaged with Official Soviet Identity over an intentionally broad stretch of time. One of the weaknesses of current Soviet historiography is its 'Balkanization' into certain eras. We have often separate literatures on the Revolution, NEP, 'Great Break', 1930s, war, post-war, and Khrushchev periods. *Being Soviet* intentionally spans at least three of those conventional periods of the Stalin years in order to examine how Soviet citizens engaged with a number of different incarna-

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[132] Quotations from the HIP are from the notes made by the interviewers at the time not verbatim records of the interviews.

[133] P. Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 2000), 110–45.

[134] Henceforth Int. See Appendix. On interviewing former Soviet citizens, see: C. Merridale, *Ivan's War: The Red Army 1939–1945* (London, 2005), 341–2.

[135] The term 'triangulation' is widely used within the social sciences when data is compared from multiple sources or research methods. See C. Trosset and D. Caulkins, 'Triangulation and Confirmation in the Study of Welsh Concepts of Personhood', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 57.1 (2001), 62.

[136] Where the information contained is purely factual, the abbreviation system is not employed.

tions of Official Soviet Identity. Chapter 4 also offers some provisional observations that extend beyond Stalin's death.

1939–41: the pre-war years

Chapter 1 deals with the relatively underexamined period 1939–41. The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact of August 1939 that committed the Soviet Union to an alliance with Nazi Germany, marked a rupture in Soviet relations with the outside world. Over the following two years the USSR annexed a series of small states and territories along the Soviet border in Poland, Finland, the Baltic, and Romania. The digestion of these ex-capitalist states dramatically redefined both the diplomatic and civilizational aspects of Official Soviet Identity. The Pact Period, until the German invasion in 1941, was also a moment of transition in terms of how Soviet citizens engaged with the official mass media. Rumours of untold luxury in the newly conquered capitalist territories poured back into the USSR, providing a fresh body of information to contrast with the official press. Despite the fact they are so rarely studied, the last two pre-war years were an important turning point in terms of the relationship between Soviet power and Soviet citizens.

1941–45: the war

Chapters 2 and 3 deal with the war. They challenge the idea that wartime Soviet patriotism was simply a 'decked out' version of Russian nationalism.[137] Both ethnicity and Sovietness mattered in this period. Indeed there was a limit to how hard the Russian 'nationalist drum' could be beaten, because of the risk of offending the other peoples of the USSR.[138] Chapter 2 addresses Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic

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[137] S. K. Carter, *Russian Nationalism: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (London, 1991), 52; E. Iarskaia-Smirnova and P. Romanov, 'At the Margins of Memory: Provincial Identity and Soviet Power in Oral Histories, 1940–53', in D. Raleigh, ed., *Provincial Landscapes: Local Dimensions of Soviet Power, 1917–1953* (Pittsburgh, 2001), 309–14; Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, 475. Lieven, and to some extent Weiner, take a slightly different view—that they were unconsciously overlapping identities: D. Lieven, *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals* (London, 2000) 318; A. Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, 2001), 337.

[138] J. L. H. Keep, *A History of the Soviet Union 1945–1991: Last of the Empires* (Oxford, 1995), 26.

terms between the German invasion in June 1941 and the German capitulation in May 1945. Rather than examine the widely discussed image of Nazi Germany during the war, it fills a gap within the current historiography by focusing on the Soviet relationship with Britain and America.[139] Relations with America and Britain did not conform to the simple binary of good and evil that shaped Soviet interaction with the hated Germans.[140] The central argument of Chapter 2 is that many Soviet citizens experienced the Alliance relationship as an ongoing act of betrayal. In particular, the Allied failure to open the Second Front spawned a large number of rumours about Anglo-American perfidy in other areas.

Chapter 3 examines Official Soviet Identity and the behaviour of Soviet citizens in relation to Anglo-American civilization during the war. The popular experience of Lend Lease and the interactions of Soviet citizens with allied servicemen in wartime Arkhangel'sk form the heart of the chapter. By focusing on the Arctic Convoys, rather than the interaction between Red Army troops and allied soldiers in Germany, it sheds light on another understudied aspect of the wartime experience.[141]

Together, these two chapters offer a unique window into the behaviour of Soviet citizens on the Home Front. There has been remarkably little work produced in recent years on the Soviet Home Front during the war.[142] The strategic and military history of the war has been thoroughly described, as have the battlefield motivations of Soviet soldiers and the experience of occupation.[143] However, no major

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[139] See for example: N. M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge Mass., 1995); K. K. C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge Mass., 2004).

[140] Relationships on the ground with German troops and civilians did not always conform to these simplistic paradigms. See: Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 301–2; A. Dallin, *Odessa, 1941–1944: A Case Study of Soviet Territory under Foreign Rule* (Oxford, 1998), 91–3. Nonetheless, within official rhetoric at least, however, the Germans remained an almost unequivocably evil force.

[141] M. Scott and S. Krasilshchik, eds., *Yanks Meet Reds: Recollections of US and Soviet Vets from the Linkup in World War II* (Santa Barbara,1988). On Soviet fraternization with German civilians in post-war Germany see: Naimark, *The Russians in Germany*.

[142] The paucity of literature has been noted in various places: A. Weiner, 'Saving Private Ivan: From What, Why, and How?' *Kritika*, 1.2 (2000), 305–36; R. D. Markwick, 'Stalinism at War', *Kritika*, 3.3 (2002), 509–10.

[143] A. Beevor, *Stalingrad* (London, 1998); I. Kershaw and M. Lewin, eds., *Stalinism and Nazism: Dictatorships in Comparison* (Cambridge, 1997); R. Overy, *Russia's War* (London, 1997); D. R. Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya* (London, 2006), 191–217; Merridale, *Ivan's War*; B. Bonwetsch and R. Thurston, eds., *The People's War: Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union*

work in English has examined the Home Front as a whole since Barber and Harrison's book in 1991, which offers a valuable but limited introduction.[144] In many ways, the most significant text remains the *Sunday Times* correspondent, Alexander Werth's, 1964 memoir of his experiences in the wartime USSR.[145]

What has been published in recent years about the Soviet Home Front has tended to argue that the war was a time of increased personal freedom.[146] The Soviet police 'liberalized' their approach to illegal food trading, the mass media became increasingly personalized, and anti-religious campaigns were tempered.[147] However, the literature on this 'relaxation' is still confined to fairly narrow fields. Furthermore, it is rarely connected with the literature that describes the struggle to carve out 'private' space after 1945.[148] This book offers one of the first attempts to examine the continuities between wartime 'relaxation' and post-war life. One of its core arguments is that the 'tactics of the habitat' were highly flexible and could be adapted to suit the conditions of the 1930s, wartime 'relaxation', or the more stringent post-war years.

1945–53: the post-war years

Chapters 4 and 5 address the post-war years. Historians of the post-war Stalin-era have traditionally focused their attention on foreign policy and high politics.[149] For some time, the field of domestic politics was

(Chicago, 2000); J. A. Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison, 1964); Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*; A. Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945: A Study of Occupation Policies*, 2nd edn (London, 1981).

[144] J. Barber and M. Harrison, *The Soviet Home Front, 1941–1945: A Social and Economic History of the USSR in World War II* (London, 1991).

[145] A. Werth, *Russia At War 1941–45* (London, 1964). This book draws on some of Werth's material but uses a far wider body of sources than were available to Werth at the time.

[146] B. Bonwetsch, 'War as a "Breathing Space": Soviet Intellectuals and the "Great Patiotic War"', in Thurston and Bonwetsch, *The People's War*, 137–53.

[147] Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade*, 271–5; Stites, *Culture and Entertainment,* 4–5; S. Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War: Religion, Nationalism, and Alliance Politics, 1941–1945* (London, 2003).

[148] J. Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish: Youth, Culture and Identity in Late Stalinism,' in Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia*, 225; Zubkova, *Russia After the War*, 27–8.

[149] T. Dunmore, *Soviet Politics, 1945–53* (London, 1984); W. O. McCagg, *Stalin Embattled: 1943–48* (Michigan, 1978); W. G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation 1946–1953* (London, 1982). For a summary of recent research see: Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia*. Recent monographs include:

dominated by Vera Dunham's description of a 'Big Deal' between the Soviet leadership and the middle classes to shore up support after the war.[150] Dunham's work reinforced the general conception that this was the era of 'High Stalinism' and that reconstruction was simply a matter of reanimating the tired models of the pre-war era.[151] However, Zubkova and others have begun to offer a different interpretation of these years as an era defined by stolen hopes and disappointed expectations. They argue that the populace did not accept the reversion to statism but struggled, with varying degrees of success, to achieve some degree of autonomy and individual freedom.[152] Weiner has provided a different and distinctive viewpoint, arguing that the years 1945–53 were driven by an 'undiminished impetus for revolutionary transformation' rather than stultification.[153]

Chapters 4 and 5 argue that in the arena of Official Soviet Identity, at least, there was no reversion to the pre-war era. Chapter 4 describes the evolution of Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic terms from war's end to Stalin's death. It argues that the Soviet regime continued to posture itself as an ally of the other, progressive Great Powers until the summer of 1947. By the summer of 1948, however, the USSR had realigned itself as a patron of the oppressed peoples and a defender of peace. Asia, and China in particular, assumed a new prominence within Soviet self-understanding in the last years of Stalin's life. This new form of Soviet identity found its clearest expression in the 'Struggle for Peace'. I argue

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N. Ganson, *The Soviet Famine of 1946–7 in Global and Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2009); M Edele, *Soviet Veterans of World War II* (Oxford, 2009). See also J. Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation; Post-war Soviet Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (Oxford, 2010). For some notable dissertations, see Magnusdottir, 'Keeping up Appearances', J. Smith, 'The Soviet Farm Complex: Industrial Agriculture in a Socialist Context, 1945–65', PhD Diss. MIT (2006).

[150]   Dunham, *In Stalin's Time*. See also: J. E. Duskin, *Stalinist Reconstruction and the Confirmation of a New Elite, 1945–53* (Basingstoke, 2001).

[151]   S. Fitzpatrick, 'Postwar Soviet Society: The "Return to Normalcy" 1945–53', in S. J. Linz, ed., *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Totowa, 1985), 129–56; K. Boterbloem, *Life and Death Under Stalin: Kalinin Province 1945–1953* (Montreal, 1999); Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*

[152]   E. Zubkova, *Poslevoennoe sovetskoe Obshchestvo: Politicka i Povsednevnost' 1945–53* (Moscow, 2000), 3–14; *Russia After the War*. See also: D. Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Late-Stalinism: Labour and the Restoration of the Stalinist System After World War II* (Cambridge, 2002), 157; A. A. Danilov and A.V. Pyzhikov, *Rozhdenie sverxderzhavy: SSSR v pervye poslevoennye gody* (Moscow, 2001), 10; Fürst, 'Importance of Being Stylish.'

[153]   Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 17. See also: Danilov and Pyzhikov, *Rozhdenie sverxderzhavy*, 10.

that the Peace Campaigns were enormously successful at mobilizing their participants, but that the participants also reappropriated the campaigns as platforms for the articulation of their personal sentiments and private grief.

Chapter 5 tracks the shifting official posture towards Anglo-American civilization, and in particular its cultural and scientific products, after 1945. It argues that Soviet scientists deployed a whole array of 'tactics of the habitat' in order to circumvent the new dictates against Western science or use the shifts within official policy to discredit their rivals. It also suggests that, despite official denunciation, capitalist cultural products, such as film and music, enjoyed widespread popularity in the post-war years. It closes with an examination of how Western films and clothing became markers of counter-cultural, though not necessarily anti-Soviet, identity in the final years of Stalin's life.

By the end of Stalin's life a new, self-confident, and assertive Soviet identity had emerged that sought to project power and patronage across the globe. That self-confidence was also reflected in the turn away from reliance on capitalist technology and culture. The Stalinist state of the 1950s understood its place within the global community in completely different terms from the Stalinist state in the 1930s. Cold War Official Soviet Identity was not simply a reanimation of the pre-war era. It was a fresh version of Sovietness that was shaped by the early Cold War and continued to influence the Soviet project until its demise in 1991.

These two chapters also challenge the standard chronology of the post-war years. The disorder, criminality, and starvation of the first post-war months ensured that wartime conditions did not come to an end until 1947.[154] The Soviet government also fought a running 'civil war' in the western borderlands against Ukrainian and Baltic partisans until the summer of 1947. The turning point within Official Soviet Identity in both diplomatic and cultural terms also came in 1947. The image of the post-war period as a monolithic bloc is, therefore, challenged in favour of a more subtle picture. Many of the defining features of the war experience continued long after the guns had stopped firing.

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[154] For a similar argument see: J. Fürst, 'Introduction—Late Stalinist Society: History, Policies and People', in Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia*, 1–3.

PART I

BEING SOVIET IN
THE PRE-WAR ERA

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1

The Liberator State? The Crisis of Official Soviet Identity during the Pact Period 1939–1941

The Nazi–Soviet Pact, signed on 24 August 1939 in Moscow, defined the next two years of Soviet diplomacy. It opened the door for Hitler's invasion of Poland on 1 September that prompted Britain and France to declare war on Germany. Between August 1939 and June 1941 the USSR was a nervous bystander looking in on the European war that seemed increasingly likely to result in a German victory. Whilst the battle raged elsewhere, the Soviet Union began 'nibbling' territory from Poland, Finland, the Baltic States, and Romania in order to shore up its defences. This territorial expansionism, and the de facto alliance with Germany, led to a breakdown of relations with Britain and France who regarded the USSR as an unofficial enemy. The Anglo-French Joint Chiefs-of-Staff discussed a pre-emptive attack on the USSR several times in 1939–41.[1]

The Nazi–Soviet Pact that initiated this period came as a shock to many people both inside and outside the USSR. Even senior members of the Politburo, such as Beria, had no warning of what was coming.[2] The Soviet Union had spent the 1930s positioning itself as the leading light of the anti-fascist coalition. European communist parties led the way in building anti-fascist Popular Front coalitions, whilst Soviet weapons and expertise fought to keep the Italian and German-backed nationalists at bay in Spain. The precise reasons behind the USSR's sudden shift from head of the anti-fascist alliance to de facto German ally remain under debate.[3]

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[1] P. R. Osborn, 'Operation Pike: Britain Versus the Soviet Union, 1939–1941', *Contributions in Military Studies,* 190 (2001).

[2] S. Beria, ed., F. Thom, trans, B. Pearce, *Beria: My Father* (London, 2001), 51–2.

[3] For a summary of the debate, see: G. Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion: Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia* (New Haven, 1999), 1–10.

British and French timidity at Munich in the face of German demands had certainly raised question marks about collective security. Nonetheless, the Soviet press continued to write in hopeful tones about anti-fascist cooperation after Munich, and a fresh round of talks with Britain and France was launched in the summer of 1939.[4] Even Stalin and Molotov seem to have regarded an alliance with Germany as an unlikely prospect until a couple of weeks before the Pact was signed.

Global events moved at great speed during the Pact Period, and Official Soviet Identity was forced to evolve in order to keep pace. It was an era defined by German military success. Norway, Belgium, Holland, and France fell in the spring of 1940; Yugoslavia and Greece followed in 1941. After years of anti-fascist propaganda, Soviet newspapers were forced into cautious approval of the expansionist Third Reich. They also needed to find a narrative to explain the new Soviet policy of land acquisition. Eastern Poland became part of the USSR in September 1939 and was followed by bloodless takeovers of the Baltic States and the Romanian provinces of Bessarabia and Bukovina in June–July 1940. In Finland the process was much less simple. The government in Helsinki refused to buckle under diplomatic pressure, and between December 1939 and March 1940 the Red Army fought a costly war to force the Finnish frontier northwards and away from Leningrad. The rapprochement with Germany and the occupations of the borderlands radically reshaped Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic and cultural terms. Many of the narratives that emerged in this era became staples of Official Soviet Identity in later years and shaped what it meant to be Soviet beyond Stalin's death.

This brief period of turmoil offers an ideal window within which to begin an examination of how Soviet citizens engaged with Official Soviet Identity. The relationship between the USSR and the outside world mattered to ordinary people at this time. With the army at war, or in an advanced state of readiness, and industry fully mobilized, Soviet citizens read the papers and listened to lectures on international affairs with great enthusiasm. What they read and heard offered little assurance: official explanations of the diplomatic identity of the USSR became increasingly confusing and incoherent as the months passed. *Pravda* insisted that the Soviet policy of peace was paying dividends. However, ordinary people could see that the state was engaged in

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[4] *Pravda,* 21.03.1949, p. 12; *Ogonëk,* 1939: 10 (undated), 5–6.

headlong rearmament and preparation for war. The occupation of the borderlands also flooded the oral news network with fresh information about the outside world. As a result, the gap between official rhetoric and observed reality began to widen. As the Pact Period went on, Soviet citizens were forced to rely more than ever on the 'tactics of the habitat' in order to make sense of the rapidly shifting events in the world around them.

OFFICIAL SOVIET IDENTITY IN THE PACT PERIOD

The Soviet press provided little or no warning that an agreement might be signed with Hitler's Germany in the summer of 1939. On 19 August, only five days before the Pact was agreed, the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS) issued a statement denying Polish stories that the negotiations with Britain and France were failing and on 14 August *Pravda* declared that 'A war of the Soviet Union against fascism would be a most just and legal war'.[5] In July there were vague mentions of trade talks in Berlin that culminated in the Soviet–German trade agreement on 21 August.[6] However, beyond this, the official press did nothing to prepare its audience for the fact that the policy of anti-fascist cooperation was about to be abandoned and an effective alliance signed with the USSR's sworn enemy.

Official Soviet Identity changed overnight on 24 August 1939. The new version of Soviet identity that emerged out of the Pact centred on the wisdom of the Stalinist peace policy that had kept the USSR out of the European war. *Pravda* explained that the agreement with the previously reviled fascists 'reflected the long term peace policy of the Soviet Union' and provided for 'good neighbourly relations between the two countries'.[7] On 27 August Voroshilov, who had chaired the failed negotiations with Britain and France, offered an interview to *Izvestiia* in which he explained that the Pact had been necessary because the Western powers had refused to take Soviet security concerns seriously.[8] Molotov emphasized these themes a few days later in a speech to the Supreme Soviet: the USSR did not want enemies if it could avoid having them, and the Pact had secured peace for the Soviet people.[9]

[5] *Pravda*, 14.08.1939, p. 4.   [6] *Pravda*, 21.08.1939, p. 1.
[7] *Pravda*, 24.08.1939, p. 1.   [8] *Pravda*, 27.08.1939, p. 1.
[9] *Pravda*, 01.09.1939, p. 1.

Throughout September 1939, the Soviet press engaged in a vocal bout of Germanophilia. Previously reviled papers, such as *Volkishcher Beobachter*, were cited with approval and Hitler's speeches were printed at length.[10] German military successes in Poland were not trumpeted, but their technological and organizational excellence was compared favourably to the 'laughable mouselike fuss' of Anglo-French operations in Western Europe.[11] When Ribbentrop visited Moscow in September to sign a Friendship and Border Agreement, his visit was hailed as a symptom of the new accord between the two powers and 'another glorious confirmation of the policy of peace'. The 'agitators for war' in the Western governments now bore the 'responsibility for continuing the conflict'.[12] The USSR had abandoned collective security and repostured itself as a friend of Germany and a state outside of the growing international conflict. In the process it had adopted an entirely new diplomatic identity.

The events that followed the Pact also transformed the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a civilization. The Soviet relationship with foreign technology and cultural products was largely unchanged. However, the posture of the USSR in relation to the suffering workers of the capitalist West evolved significantly in September 1939. The arrival of the Red Army in the former capitalist territories of Eastern Poland was justified, in part, on the basis that the residents of the newly occupied territories were fellow Ukrainians and Belorussians. As Molotov explained on 17 September 'the Soviet government can hardly be expected to have a careless attitude towards the case of the consanguineous Ukrainians and Belorussians.' However, it was also justified on the basis that the Red Army troops were bringing the progressive beacon of Soviet civilization with them. The USSR was morally obliged to 'extend the hand of friendship' to them and 'take them under our protection'.[13] As the Red Army embarked on its largely unopposed takeover of Eastern Poland, the official press published pictures of local children with smiles on their faces and gifts in their hands welcoming the arriving troops who brought with them the Soviet way of life.[14] The Red Army had become a liberating force that could set the oppressed capitalist

[10] *Pravda*, 02.09.1939, p. 5; 21.09.1939, p. 5.
[11] Werth exaggerates the extent to which the invasion was marginalized within the press: Werth, *Russia at War*, 54. See: *Ogonëk,* 1939: 24, p. 3; *Pravda,* 11.09.1939, p. 4.
[12] *Pravda,* 29.09.1939, p. 1.   [13] *Pravda*, 18.09.1939, p. 1.
[14] *Ogonëk*, 1939: 24, pp. 1–3.

peoples free. The end of collective security and the realities of border expansion precipitated a double shift in the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR. These twin narratives of peace and liberation remained the organizing principles of Soviet identity until the Nazi invasion in 1941.

THE DIPLOMATIC IDENTITY OF THE USSR

Up to June 1940: the anti-imperial peace maker

Between October 1939 and mid 1940, the Soviet press professed total neutrality in international relations, whilst clearly privileging the German interpretation of events. The foremost greeting to Stalin on his sixtieth birthday in December came from Hitler, and *Pravda* continued to offer ample coverage of the Fuhrer's speeches.[15] However, the orgy of Germanophilia only lasted a few weeks past the signing of the Pact. The Production Agreement between the USSR and Germany in February 1940 was greeted in rather muted tones, and the Soviet press settled down to a sympathetic but circumspect narrative concerning the USSR's new ally.[16]

The negative narrative concerning the Western powers was much more consistent. *Pravda*'s cartoon department went into attack mode, publishing twelve images in late October and November that accused the capitalists of fostering war to increase their profits and suppressing freedom at home.[17] As *Ogonëk* explained, the war in Western Europe had been 'begun by the imperialists against the will and interests of the people'.[18] Molotov went even further at the Supreme Soviet in October 1939, dubbing the calls to continue the struggle against Germany 'meaningless and criminal'.[19] Meanwhile *Pravda* kept up a barrage of accusations that the imperialist powers were seeking to expand the war by dragging in neutral powers, including the USSR.[20]

This anti-Allied narrative peaked during the Finnish War that broke out on 30 November 1939. As diplomatic pressure failed to produce a result in mid November, the Soviet press began to denounce the Finns

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[15] Werth, *Russia at War,* 62–71; *Pravda,* 11.11.1939, p. 5; 01.02.1940, p. 5.
[16] *Pravda,* 18.02.1940, p. 1.
[17] e.g. *Pravda,* 25.10.1939, p. 5; 26.10.1939, p. 5; 12.11.1939, p. 5.
[18] *Ogonëk,* (undated) 1939: 29–30, p. 28.
[19] *Pravda,* 01.11.1939, p. 1.   [20] *Pravda,* 06.10.1939, p. 1; 20.11.1939, p. 5.

for turning their country into an 'armed camp' directed against the USSR.[21] The war was presented as a prophylactic measure to preserve peace, reaffirming the official diplomatic identity of the USSR as a peace-loving state. However, the fiercest anger of the Soviet press was not directed at the 'White Finnish bandits' but the Western powers who had supposedly incited them to attack the USSR.[22] British imperialists and Scandinavian millionaires had whipped up Finland's antagonism against the USSR and were seeking to get others 'to do their dirty work' in order to protect their commercial interests.[23]

The end of the Finnish War did not bring about a softening of this line. Molotov's 29 March 1940 speech to the Supreme Soviet denounced Britain and France as strongly as any from this period. He reiterated that the USSR would not become 'a weapon of the Anglo-French imperialists in their struggle for world hegemony' and warned that the British build-up in the Levant might reflect 'objectives antagonistic towards the Soviet Union'.[24] This anti-Allied narrative was particularly vehement in relation to Britain, who was regarded as the prime mover in the warmongering camp. D. Zaslavskii's summary of international affairs for *Pravda* in April 1941 warned darkly of British intentions directed towards 'the oil wells of Baku, the colourful hills of Georgia and the valleys of Armenia'.[25] N. Nikitin's *Eto Nachalos v Kokande*, a spy novel about a British agent living in Central Asia and plotting to murder Soviet officials was released in 1940.[26] Meanwhile in March 1940 the International Organization for Aid to Revolutionaries (MOPR) began offering lectures on the 'Offensive of reaction in the capitalist countries in connection with the imperialist war'.[27]

The expansion of the war into Norway, the Low Countries, and France in April–June 1940 was heralded, in similar terms, as a sign of Anglo-French malfeasance. Hitler's claim, that the Wehrmacht had been forced to invade Norway in order to protect it from the Allied violations of its neutrality, was given a broad airing in the Soviet press. This argument was repeated in relation to Holland and Belgium, which Britain and France had regarded as 'petty change . . . in their dangerous

[21] *Pravda*, 13.11.1939, p. 5; 16.11.1939, p. 5.
[22] *Ogonëk*, (undated) 1939: 33, pp. 2–3.
[23] *Ogonëk*, 02.1940: 4, p. 10; *Pravda*, 04.02.1940, p. 5.
[24] *Pravda*, 30.03.1940, pp. 1–2.
[25] *Pravda*, 24.04.1940, p. 5.
[26] V. Kiparsky, *English and American Characters in Russian Fiction* (Berlin, 1964), 65.
[27] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 8, l. 4.

political game'. When Paris fell in June 1940, *Pravda* offered prominent coverage of Hitler's triumphant address.[28]

Throughout this period, the primary identity of the USSR as a diplomatic force was as a peacemaker. Stalin's wise policy had shielded Soviet women and children from the terrible burden of war.[29] Hence the October 1939 agreements with the Baltic powers were 'a witness to the peace policy of the USSR', and the end of the Finnish War was a 'glorious victory of the Stalinist peace policy'.[30] The official press also stressed the global nature of the peace movement that looked to Moscow for leadership and support.[31] A simple piece of Red Army propaganda from this period presented a triangle with London at the apex and Moscow and Berlin at the bottom two corners under the heading, 'What did Chamberlain want?' A second triangle with Moscow at the top and London and Berlin at the bottom was captioned, 'What did Comrade Stalin do?'[32] The USSR had risen above the conflict and preserved the security of its people.

June 1940 to April 1941: cautious neutrality

The Soviet press was scathing in its criticism of the Western powers when they capitulated before the Wehrmacht in 1940. However, from the summer of 1940 onwards, it became noticeably less keen to pour praise on the Germans. German military successes were reported with cool objectivity, particularly after the British evacuation from Dunkirk.[33] Between June 1940 and April 1941, explicitly pro-German stories received a pitiful average of 0.02 pages per day in *Pravda*'s international section.[34] The significance of the September 1940 Triple Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan was carefully downplayed. It merely 'formalized' the conflict between two camps and demonstrated the importance of the Soviet 'position of neutrality'.[35] The official press

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[28] *Pravda*, 10.04.1940, p. 5; 16.05.1940, p. 1; 16.06.1940, p. 5.

[29] *Pravda*, 08.03.1940, p. 5.

[30] *Ogonëk*, 03.1940: 7–8, p. 1; *Pravda*, 06.10.1939, p. 1.

[31] *Pravda*, 12.03.1940, p. 4.

[32] Overy, *Russia's War*, 54.

[33] See: Werth, *Russia At War*, 84–5; Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion*, 24–5.

[34] *Pravda* carried as many positive stories about the Western powers as it did about the Germans in this period (an average of 0.02 pages per day).

[35] *Pravda*, 28.09.1940, p. 5; 30.09.1940, p. 1.

provided almost no coverage of life inside Germany itself and showed
little enthusiasm for German culture. On occasion it even adopted a
combative tone in relation to German foreign policy. In September
1940 the paper published Foreign Ministry (NKID) and TASS declara-
tions criticizing Germany for applying pressure on Romania and deny-
ing that the USSR had offered to make Romania its protectorate.[36] As
one respondent to HIP remembered, 'We were forbidden in school to
use the word "fascist" . . . Yet at the same time friendliness towards the
Germans was not encouraged.'[37]

    The Soviet press continued to publish anti-Anglo-French articles
after June 1940 but their vitriolic tone waned. Molotov repeated his
warning about British designs on Baku, and British imperialism or
American militarism remained objects of denunciation and derision.[38]
April 1941 also saw the release of the film *The Girl from the Other Side*,
in which an Iranian girl helped Soviet authorities unmask a British agent
attempting to engage in anti-Soviet subversion.[39] However, anti-Anglo-
French stories took up only 0.04 pages per edition of *Pravda*, from June
1940 onwards compared with a previous average of 0.33. Indeed, on
some occasions, the Soviet press adopted an almost positive view of the
Western Allies. Churchill's speeches, promising to fight on against the
odds, were given up to half a page of newsprint, and British claims to
be winning the Battle of Britain were published alongside German
accounts.[40] In February 1941 TASS went even further, publishing a
journalist's account of his night in a London anti-aircraft battery. The
article offered a sympathetic and intimate portrait of the young men,
many of them Trade Union members, who were fighting for British
survival.[41] Meanwhile *Ogonëk* published dreamy pieces about London
as a historic fortress city on the Thames.[42] Such articles were rare,
however, and the Soviet posture of studied neutrality was typified
by the launch of a new *Ogonëk* feature in January 1941 entitled 'War
Diary'. The first five articles, by I. Ermashev, assessed the tactical

    [36] *Pravda*, 13.09.1940, p. 2; 14.09.1940, p. 2.
    [37] HIP. A. 34, 494, 30.
    [38] *Pravda*, 02.08.1940, p. 1; 10.10.1940, p. 4; *Ogonëk*, 06.1940: 16, p. 8; 07.1940: 20,
p. 22.
    [39] S. Drobashenko and P. Kenez, 'Film Propaganda in the Soviet Union, 1941–1945:
Two Views', in K. Short, ed., *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II*
(London, 1983), 112.
    [40] *Pravda*, 05.06.1940, p. 8; 26.06.1940, p. 5; 12.09.1940, p. 6.
    [41] *Pravda* 11.02.1941, p. 5.
    [42] *Ogonëk*, 10.1940: 28.

situation in Albania, North Africa, Abyssinia, the Mediterranean, and at sea.[43] These professional reviews of the global tactical situation expressed an air of interested detachment that reflected the USSR's position outside of the ongoing conflict.

The wisdom of the Soviet Union in remaining outside of the European carnage remained at the heart of Official Soviet Identity in this period. *Ogonëk* regularly carried dramatic photographs of battle-field destruction and urban bombing to remind its readers of the horrors of war and the virtues of the Stalinist peace policy.[44] As *Pravda*'s annual review on New Year's Eve 1940 explained, the policy of 'neutrality and peace' had preserved the physical integrity of the USSR and bolstered its moral authority within the international community.[45]

However beyond this peaceful posture, the content of Official Soviet Identity began to lose its shape in this period. Between June 1940 and the end of March 1941 *Pravda* published twenty-nine separate de-nials—nearly three a month—from TASS, rebutting allegations made in the foreign press. Of these statements fourteen denied that the USSR had acted to undermine Germany and German foreign policy; eight of them denied that the USSR had colluded with Germany and German foreign policy. For example, on 15 October 1940 TASS denied that the USSR was negotiating with Greece, Turkey, and Britain to halt German expansion into the Balkans. The following day, however, it rebutted the allegation that the Soviet Union had colluded in German plans to move troops into Romania.[46] This cycle of two-way denial was symptomatic of a wider fragmentation of Official Soviet Identity in this period.[47] The slogans for the November 1940 anniversary of the Revolution had little to say about the relationship between the USSR and the outside world other than to appeal to proletarian solidarity and class brotherhood.[48] When Molotov visited Berlin in November 1940, the press could point to no concrete outcomes other than the dinners and meetings he attended.[49] It was unclear whether he had travelled in order to heal a

[43] *Ogonëk*, 01–02.1941: 1–5, pp. 10–13.
[44] *Ogonëk*, 09.1940: 27, p. 3; 01.1941: 1, pp. 10–11.
[45] *Pravda*, 31.12.1940, p. 1.
[46] *Pravda*, 15.10.1940, p. 2; 16.10.1940, p. 2.
[47] It also reflected some of the tensions generated by the dual audience of the Soviet press, domestic and international.
[48] *Pravda*, 04.11.1940, p. 1.
[49] *Pravda*, 13–16.11.1940, p. 1.

rift or build an alliance.[50] Having abandoned collective security in August 1939, and with the German relationship cooling, the USSR began to look increasingly isolated within the international community by the start of 1941.

The period after 1940 also saw a rise in boasting about the military might of the Red Army. The Pact Period witnessed the pre-war peak of the militarization of Soviet public life. May Day, Navy Day, Air Force Day, and Red Army Day were marked by ostentatious parades that were intended to reassure their audience about the capacity of Soviet forces.[51] A reorganization of the highest ranks of the Red Army and Navy during 1940 provided the pretext for page after page of portraits of senior Soviet generals.[52] Meanwhile the press extolled the rich history of Russian military success culminating in the recent Finnish War.[53]

However, these reassuring tones sat uneasily alongside a number of other stories from this era. First, the operative *svodki* during the first couple of months of the Finnish War were notable for their brevity, often amounting to nothing more than a couple of lines of text.[54] Pre-war cartoons had depicted the tiny Finns being crushed by the Soviet boot, but once the war began *Pravda* was forced to publish official denials that the Red Army was facing defeat. Second, the official mass media began to warn elliptically of the danger that the European war might spill over into the USSR. For example, none of the thirty-five films produced during 1940 featured a domestic traitor: the threat to the USSR always appeared in the form of a foreign spy.[55] As a Red Army Political Education Manual produced in early 1941 explained, the soldiers must have at the centre of their understanding 'the thought about the inevitability of a conflict of the USSR with the capitalist world'.[56] Third, in the summer of 1940, the Red Army began a major and widely publicized tactical review, the necessity for which cast doubt on its current abilities.[57] Fourth, a harsh new labour law was issued in June 1940 lengthening the work day and ordering custodial sentences for workers who arrived late

[50] See: Werth, *Russia At War*, 106–9.

[51] *Ogonëk*, 02.1940: 4, p. 1; *Pravda*, 18.08.1940, p. 1.

[52] e.g. *Pravda*, 05.06.1940, pp. 1–3; 06.06.1940, pp. 2, 3, 5.

[53] *Ogonëk*, 09.1940: 26, p. 13.

[54] *Pravda*, 02.03.1940, p. 1; 03.03.1940, p. 1.

[55] P. Kenez, 'The Image of the Enemy in Stalinist Films', in, S. M. Norris and Z. M. Torlone, ed., *Insiders and Outsiders in Russian Cinema* (Bloomington, 2008), 104.

[56] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 27, ll. 1–54.

[57] *Pravda*, 22.08.1940, p. 1; 22.09.1940, p. 1–3; 20.03.1940, p. 3.

or attempted to move jobs without permission.[58] Finally, three days after the publication of the labour law, the news broke about the Soviet occupation of Bessarabia and Bukovina, two Romanian provinces at the mouth of the Danube. Tactical retraining, the occupation of new territories and worker mobilization were intended to reassure readers that the USSR was properly prepared for any future conflict. However, when set against the blanket of silence surrounding the Finnish front and the dark threats of coming war, they created an impression of official anxiety rather than confidence. The tensions between calls for productivity and boasts of might were sometimes recognized by Soviet propagandists who complained that 'hurrah patriotism' and talk of the Red Army as a 'shattering force' weakened the 'fighting spirit' of the soldiers.[59] Just as the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a diplomatic force became increasingly unclear, so the balance between reassuring might and war preparation became ever more uneasy.

By the spring of 1941, Official Soviet Identity was becoming confused: it boasted of might and peace whilst warning of war and criticized the Western powers without demonstrating much enthusiasm for the Germans. This uncertainty was reinforced by the tentative leakage of counter-messages that, in reality, fascism remained the USSR's true enemy. After August 1939, anti-German films such as Minkin and Rappoport's *Professor Mamlock*, and Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* were taken off the screen and the word 'fascist' disappeared from the official press.[60] However, when Simonov's play *A Young Man from Our Town* first aired in March 1941, one observer noted that some actors were 'adding more emotion to any lines that had anti-German implications'.[61] More significantly a wave of rumours circulated that senior leaders were saying in closed auditoriums that 'we married the Germans out of expediency not love'.[62] Several respondents to HIP claimed that they had heard 'off stage' anti-German rhetoric during this period: 'There was no anti-German propaganda in the newspapers but anti-German propaganda was spread amongst the officers who spread it amongst the men (after the spring of 1940).'[63] A. Lobachev argued

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[58] *Pravda*, 26.06.1940, pp. 1–4. See: R. Thurston, *Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934–1941* (1996).
[59] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 28, ll. 1–17.
[60] T. Dickinson and C. De la Roche, *Soviet Cinema* (London, 1948), 59.
[61] Figes, *The Whisperers*, 374.
[62] L. Fischer, *Thirteen Who Fled* (New York, 1949), 36.
[63] HIP. B4, 139, 8.

with his fellow agitators over the fact that they should take a more negative line against the Germans, 'diplomacy is one thing and political work in the army is another'. Not all of his colleagues agreed.[64] Their debates reflected some of the growing tensions at the heart of Official Soviet Identity as the Pact Period drew to a close.

April 1941 to June 1941: uncertain times

This growing confusion about the diplomatic identity of the USSR within the international community became even more pronounced after April 1941. The contents of the various official narratives did not change in the final months before war, but the tensions between the different strands became more marked. The decisive event, in terms of relations with Germany, came in early April when the Wehrmacht moved to support the Italian forces in the Balkans. On 5 April the USSR signed a Friendship and Non-Intervention Agreement with Yugoslavia. The Agreement guaranteed nothing other than friendly relations in the event of war.[65] However, its timing was choreographed to give the Germans a bloody nose when they invaded Yugoslavia the next day. This cautious negativity about Germany expanded gradually throughout the spring of 1941. Sergei Eisenstein was awarded the Stalin Prize for cinematography in April 1941 despite not having produced anything since the now banned *Nevsky* in 1938. A thematic plan for propaganda produced in June 1941 required, amongst other things, that TASS publish material about the 'imperialist character of the [German] New Order in Europe'.[66] However, this negativity about German activities did not signal an abandonment of anti-British narratives. *Pravda* offered a distinctly pro-Iraqi view of the Anglo-Iraqi crisis in April 1941, claiming that the British capitalist lords were attempting to extend their influence over the region.[67]

The central narrative through these final months remained that the USSR was demonstrating its wisdom and greatness by staying out of the European conflict. The key message of the Iraqi crisis was that it

[64] A. A. Lobachev, *Trudnymi Dorogami* (Moscow, 1960), 120. Such claims of foresight must be treated with some caution but seem possible in the light of the wider ongoing conversation about the international situation.

[65] *Pravda*, 05.04.1941, p. 1.

[66] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 28, ll. 34–8.

[67] *Pravda*, 18.05.1941, p. 5.

demonstrated the evils of war and the 'unenviable lot of the small countries upon whom both warring camps look as current or future bridgeheads'.[68] Meanwhile, the Soviet Pact of Neutrality with Japan in April 1941 was held up as yet another symbol of the wisdom of Soviet peace policy whilst *Ogonëk* continued to print dramatic pictures of the destruction produced by the Anglo-German air war.[69]

However, this confident talk of peace and security jarred against the ongoing discussion of, and preparation for, war. Every major city in the USSR underwent blackout and bombing rehearsals in early 1941.[70] At the same time, a June 1941 review of political propaganda in the Red Army warned of the 'danger of unexpected incidents' in the international arena and called for 'constant preparedness to go onto a shattering offensive against the enemy'.[71] When Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, flew to Scotland in May 1941, the story received only scanty coverage, reflecting the growing unease about the international situation.[72] Meanwhile the behind-the-scenes anti-German campaign grew in intensity. A model lecture for the Red Army, produced in late May warned that it was an error to conclude that the 'German National Socialists have abandoned their anti-Soviet plans'. This language was echoed in a June 1941 report that criticized German imperialism and described the Wehrmacht as 'enforcers and enslavers'.[73]

Official Soviet Identity, with its emphasis on peace but warnings of war, became increasingly incoherent as the summer of 1941 approached. In May 1941 a local agitator wrote to Moscow to report a 'very strange' propaganda method being deployed in Rostov-on-Don. In Budeenyi Prospekt a large map had been erected in a window that was covered with National Socialist flags to 'daily mark the advance of the German armies'. The display had become a popular feature and was surrounded 'day and night' by crowds discussing the international situation.[74] This largely positive image of Germany as a friend of the USSR contrasted sharply with I. Azarov's experience in June 1941 when he was sent to Odessa with specific instructions to warn the sailors of the

[68] Ibid.
[69] *Pravda*, 19.04.1941, p. 5; 22.05.1941, p. 5; *Ogonëk*, 05.1941: 15, p. 10.
[70] Iu. M. Luzhkov and B. V. Gromov, eds., *Moskva Prifrontovaia, 1941–1942* (Moscow, 2001), 31, 46, 51–2; J. Scott, *Duel for Europe: Stalin versus Hitler* (Boston, 1942), 244–5.
[71] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 27, ll. 72–82.
[72] *Pravda*, 14–15.05.1941, p. 5.
[73] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 27, ll. 72–82, 84–121.
[74] Ibid. d. 29, l. 29.

threat of German aggression. However, the credibility of his message was seriously undermined shortly after he arrived, on 14 June, when TASS issued a statement denying that relations with the Germans had deteriorated or that an invasion was imminent. Azarov was left uncertain what to say.[75] The Central Committee's slogans in celebration of May Day captured this sense of uncertainty. The global proletariat was appealed to but their oppressors were not named: Britain and France were not the enemy, but neither was Germany an ally.[76] The diplomatic identity of the USSR within the global community had become faltering and incoherent.

THE IDENTITY OF THE USSR AS A CIVILIZATION

The new Soviet identity as a liberator state, extending the gift of Soviet civilization to the residents of the former Polish state, remained a central feature of Official Soviet Identity until the outbreak of World War II. *Pravda*'s cartoons continued to excoriate the British, French, and American governments for making their citizens' lives unbearable.[77] As Theodore Draizer explained in a November 1940 article, entitled 'What does the USSR represent in the current world?', workers in the capitalist sphere faced inequality and poverty, but life in the USSR offered freedom, opportunity, and bounty.[78]

Meanwhile, the improvements in living conditions and freedom experienced in Western Ukraine and Belorus remained a constant feature of the official press. The first Soviet elections in the region were celebrated as a 'holiday of the liberated peoples' when the 'sun of the Stalinist constitution' had begun to shine on them.[79] Mikhail Romm's 1943 film *Mechta*, was originally written during the Pact Period. It told the story of a girl whose aspirations could only be fulfilled once the USSR had expanded to her region of Poland.[80] In later years, Molotov confessed to signing hundreds of death warrants, but never admitted that the Secret Protocols of the Nazi–Soviet Pact had allowed

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[75] I. I. Azarov, *Osazhdennaia Odessa* (Moscow, 1962), 9–11.

[76] *Pravda*, 29.04.1941, p. 1.

[77] *Pravda*, 20.10.1939, p. 5; 08.11.1939, p. 5; *Ogonëk*, 09.1940: 26, p. 3.

[78] *Pravda*, 07.11.1940, p. 5.

[79] *Pravda*, 24.03.1940, p. 1.

[80] V. A. Nevezhin, *Sindrom Nastupatel'noi Voiny: Sovetskaia Propaganda v Predverii 'Sviashchennykh Boev', 1939–1941 gg.* (Moscow, 1997), 60–1, 95–7.

for the division of Poland.[81] The identity of the USSR as a liberating force was too important to be damaged by this revelation.

The Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a benefactor bringing freedom was constantly reaffirmed as the ex-capitalist residents of Finland, the Baltic, Bessarabia, and Bukovina were brought into the Soviet family. *Ogonëk* dubbed the Red Army the 'Great Liberator' during the Finnish War.[82] The liberation narrative was most dramatically embodied in the government of the Finnish Democratic Republic, headed by the Communist Kuusinen, that was established on the day Soviet troops crossed into Finnish territory. This democratic government then called on the USSR to overthrow the oppressors in their country.[83] The fiction of the Terijoki government—so called because it was created at the Finnish border town of Terijoki—was quietly abandoned once the Red Army failed to overrun Finland. Despite this setback, the liberation narrative was run once again when the Baltic population were brought into the Soviet family in June 1940. Soviet citizenship brought economic, cultural, political, and constitutional liberation, and the local peoples played their role by expressing their warm thanks to the USSR.[84] The same motifs were deployed when *Ogonëk* printed images of former Romanian citizens greeting the incoming Red Army with flowers in their hands and smiles on their faces a few weeks later.[85] The liberating power of the Soviet armed forces became a central feature of Official Soviet Identity in this period.

Capitalist science and culture in the Pact Period

This positivity about Soviet civilization went hand in hand with the deepening of restrictions over access to, and use of, capitalist science and technology. Political tensions between the USSR and the Western powers had destroyed any hopes of renewed contact after the Purges. During the Pact Period, the isolation deepened Soviet institutions received 70 per cent fewer books from Britain, 75 per cent fewer from the USA, and 90 per cent fewer from France. German imports also fell

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[81] A. Resis, ed., *Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics. Conversations with Felix Chuev* (Chicago, 1993), 13.

[82] *Ogonëk*, 02.1940: 4, p. 1.

[83] *Pravda*, 01.12.1939, pp. 1, 2, 5; 02.12.1939, p. 2.

[84] *Pravda*, 05.08.1940, p. 2.   [85] *Ogonëk*, 08.1940: 23, pp. 10–11.

by 10 per cent.[86] However, despite the fact that they enjoyed limited personal contact with foreign science and its products, Soviet researchers and ordinary citizens were still encouraged to admire certain advances made overseas. *Ogonëk* ran a regular feature on innovations in science and technology that covered progress made in Britain, Germany, France, and above all the USA. Automobiles and aeroplanes were particularly popular topics, but medical and chemical innovations were also detailed.[87] *Pravda* also occasionally ran similar stories, such as its October 1940 report on the forty-first automobile exhibition in New York that waxed lyrical about advances in comfort, window size, and chassis design.[88]

However, whenever the official press discussed foreign science in detail, the emphasis was on competition. Government publications regularly stressed how Soviet scientists outperformed their overseas equivalents in areas such as wheat production or construction.[89] As *Pravda* proclaimed in January 1941, 'The Soviet Union stands at the head of the educated world dispensing law, science and art.'[90] The successes of Soviet science were sometimes presented as the continuation of the great Russian historical tradition. Pre-Revolutionary heroes such as Lomonosov, who did not 'grovel before western culture' were hailed as the fathers of contemporary Soviet science.[91] However, the primary cause of the success of Soviet science was that it was Soviet. An October 1939 story about economizing on raw materials stressed there was much that could be learned from the Americans and British. However, it concluded by stating that Soviet scientists would not just match but surpass the West because of the superiority of the Bolshevik system.[92] As *Pravda*'s editorial explained in March 1941, the Revolution had liberated the talented people of the Soviet world in a manner that capitalism never could. It had 'created completely different conditions for the development of science than in the capitalist world'.[93] Soviet scientists were also inspired by the knowledge that their results were used to serve the people, rather than the capitalist exploiters. Capitalist science was not entirely to be ignored, but Soviet scientists were to find their own domestic and superior Soviet road ahead.

[86] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 65, l. 61.
[87] *Ogonëk*, 01.1940: 2, p. 17; 08.1940: 24, p. 21.
[88] *Pravda*, 20.10.1940, p. 5.
[89] *Pravda*, 09.01.1940, p. 2; 31.01.1940, p. 3.
[90] *Pravda*, 04.01.1941, p. 1.   [91] *Pravda*, 15.04.1940, p. 4.
[92] *Pravda*, 17.10.1939, p. 4.   [93] *Pravda*, 15.03.1941, p. 1; 02.09.1940, p. 4.

As with capitalist science, official receptivity to the cultural products of the Western world went even further into decline during the Pact Period. The shift in diplomatic relations with Germany had little impact on attitudes towards German music and art. Apart from Eisenstein's famous staging of Wagner's *Die Walküre* at the Bolshoi Theatre, National Socialist and German historical culture was held at arm's length.[94] At the same time, the decline in relations with Britain, France, and America furthered the already negative trajectory of attitudes towards capitalist films and jazz music. A British visitor to the USSR in 1940 described Leonid Utesov as 'Russia's richest man and the king of Soviet jazz'. However, his continued public profile was a consequence of his willingness to adopt what Starr calls the 'Slavophile' position: Utesov adapted jazz music to Soviet conditions by toning down the swing in his performances. Others, such as Tsfasman, who took the 'Westernizer' approach and directly imported hotter styles were already on the defensive by 1939. International events confirmed his unorthodoxy.[95] Officially sanctioned 'jazz' persisted but only in the toned down and tame sounds of the State Jazz Orchestras. In August 1940 *Ogonëk* gave a double page spread to the coming *Estrada* season, enquiring 'What will Utesov delight us with this year?' The article praised his comedic and musical abilities but made no mention of jazz.[96] The mass song, rather than jazz, cemented its position as the dominant form of popular music during the Pact Period. Several of the tunes that later achieved success during the war, such as *My Beloved* and *Little Blue Kerchief,* were first aired in these years.[97] Their style varied from folksy to military, but they were never jazzy and therefore comfortably Soviet.

Cinema, like the mass song, continued to play a vital role within the cultural life of the Soviet community. However, no new foreign films were aired the Soviet screen during the Pact Period. Soviet citizens were served up a diet of home-grown works, the most successful of which was the light-hearted production musical *Shining Path*.[98] The most explicit

[94] A. Weeks, *Stalin's Other War: Soviet Grand Strategy, 1939–1941* (Maryland, 2002).

[95] Starr, *Red and Hot*, 132.

[96] *Ogonëk*, 08.1940: 23, pp. 20–1.

[97] R. Stites, *Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society since 1900* (Cambridge, 1992), 76–7.

[98] von Geldern and Stites, *Mass Culture in Soviet Russia*, 327–8.

examination of Soviet cultural identity was provided by Iudin's *Four
Hearts*, produced in 1941. The film centres around two sisters: Galina
who is serious, studious, and dresses cautiously; and Shura who is
relaxed, frivolous, and dresses in a more casual manner. Both girls fall
in love with a Red Army soldier who is the exact opposite of themselves
in terms of taste and style. The film's message is that both relaxed and
formal styles are acceptable forms of Sovietness: both girls can be
heroines. However, their Moscow landlady provides a counter-point
for what is not allowed. Her affected manner and elaborate clothing
provided 'a clear parody of bourgeois "high fashion"' and stood in stark
contrast to the simplicity of the heroines.[99] Soviet citizens could be an
individual and have good taste without becoming intoxicated with
capitalist, bourgeois luxury. The film was not completed at the outbreak
of war and, being judged not serious enough, was not released until
1944. However, it presented a perfect distillation of what could and
could not be Soviet in the Pact Period. Capitalist culture, like capitalist
science, was an alien entity within Soviet civilization. The citizens of the
USSR were to find entertainment and stimulation from the home-
grown products of Bolshevik life, rather than looking beyond their
borders for inspiration.

BEING SOVIET IN THE 'PACT PERIOD': ORDINARY CITIZENS AND THE 'LITTLE TACTICS OF THE HABITAT' 1939–41

Engaging with the diplomatic identity of the USSR

The historiography of the Stalin period has emphasized the dichotomy
between believing or disbelieving the contents of the official press and
supporting or resisting the Soviet state. However, the manner in which
ordinary people engaged with Official Soviet Identity during the Pact
Period was far more complex than this model suggests. Soviet citizens
deployed all the 'tactics of the habitat' in relation to the narratives of the
official press. They reappropriated Official Soviet Identity in order to
further their own interests; avoided the implications of the harsh labour

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[99] E. Widdis, 'Dressing the Part: Clothing Otherness in Soviet Cinema before 1953',
in Norris and Torlone, *Insiders and Outsiders*, 58–60.

laws; and engaged in *bricolage*, fusing the contents of the official press with information obtained via alternative sources. Such behaviour was typical of the way in which ordinary citizens related to Soviet power under Stalin.

It is not possible, with the sources currently available, to describe 'popular opinion' in response to the Nazi–Soviet Pact. The sources that survive from the period are non-quantitative, offering snapshots of various viewpoints but little statistical sense of how widespread such views were. However, it is possible, and more interesting, to evaluate the collective *mentalité* of Soviet citizens during these years. Certain rumours about the outside world were particularly successful in this period. These thriving collective narratives offer important insights into the way Soviet citizens imagined the world around them. Like jokes from another era, these rumours are windows into Soviet citizens' shared consciousness and frames of meaning in the Pact Period.

The broad range of sources available reveals that there was a broad range of responses to the Nazi–Soviet Pact. A significant number of Soviet citizens interpreted the Pact within the framework provided by the Soviet press, as a mechanism for bringing peace and security to the USSR. Alexander Werth describes the 'rather reassuring impression' created by the rapprochement with Germany and the sense, after the bloodless takeover of Eastern Poland, that 'neutrality paid'.[100] A worker at the Stalingrad Factory in Leningrad stated that 'the conclusion of a pact with Germany is more correct than with England and France. It has been clear for a long time that England is a country with a two-faced policy.' Others voiced similar opinions that 'events will show how England and France lost out in these events'.[101] Various respondents to HIP also remembered that they had 'real faith in the Nazi–Soviet non-aggression Pact', and 'believed it was completely honest'.[102] Metalworker V. I. Motorin wrote in November 1939 to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in related terms, praising the 'wisdom' of Soviet foreign policy that had secured peace and expanded its borders.[103]

[100] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 61, 65.
[101] Sv. V. S. Gusev, N. A. Lomagin, O. N. Stepanov, K. K. Khudolei, and S. V. Chernov, eds., *Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie glazami Leningradtsev 1941–45* (St Petersburg, 1996), 4–5.
[102] HIP A. 23, 468, 6; 3, 25, 38.
[103] Let. A. Ia. Livshin and I. B. Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost' i massovoe soznanie 1939–1945* (Moscow, 2003), 15.

However, a large number of Soviet citizens also seem to have doubted the capacity of the Pact to rescue the USSR from the threat of war. Army commissar Oreshin, confided his anxieties to his diary, 'with regard to the enemy we must be most careful when he swears his loyalty'.[104] A *svodka* produced in Leningrad immediately after the Pact also noted that some people still had a 'lack of faith in the German government'. Others even dubbed it a 'joke', saying it was a victory for German, rather than Soviet, foreign policy: 'Germany in this agreement has freed its hands in relation to Poland and the Baltic countries.'[105]

What united both those who embraced and those who were critical of the official line was their surprise at the decision itself. Scott notes how there were 'huge queues' for copies of the next day's papers and that 'most people registered astonishment. "What the hell! Pact with the Fascists?"'[106] This account was echoed by respondents to HIP who compared the news to an exploding bomb.[107] Agitators were bombarded with questions such as 'How can we conclude that the basic source of war and the centre of aggression has suddenly concluded an agreement about non-intervention?'[108] As one propagandist candidly admitted in a letter to Zhdanov, many agitators struggled to respond clearly.[109] Some of those who expressed surprise were quite negative about the new posture of the USSR. Engineer D. asked, 'How are our historians going to feel about themselves now? They shouted about Alexander Nevsky, now they will have to shout about centuries of friendship.' Others struggled to comprehend how 'suddenly Stalin has become a friend of the pogromites'.[110] However, for some individuals, the shock of the Pact was a sign of the greatness of Soviet foreign policy. V. I. Motorin wrote to the Supreme Soviet in November 1939 and exclaimed: 'Ask yourself who truly could have read the articles in the newspapers and not been surprised and not had a smile on their face and not laughed . . . and said "This is excellent!"'[111] Whether it shocked their Bolshevik principles or simply their previous expectations, the events of

[104] Mem. M. Carlow, *Politruk Oreshinin Päiväkirja*, Дневник политрука Орешина: *The Diary of Politruk Oreshin* (Helsinki, 1941), 116.

[105] Sv. Gusev et al., *Mezdunarodnoe polozhenia*, 6–8.

[106] Mem. J. Scott, *Duel for Europe: Stalin versus Hitler* (Boston, 1942), 28.

[107] HIP. A. 3, 26, 61.

[108] Sv. Gusev et al, *Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie*, 3.

[109] Let. Nevezhin, *Sindrom Nastupatel'noi Voiny*, 58.

[110] Sv. Gusev et al, *Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie*, 8–11.

[111] Let. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 15.

August and September 1939 generated surprise and some confusion amongst all sectors of the Soviet population.

September 1939–June 1941

The confusion generated by the Nazi–Soviet Pact deepened in the following months. The fragmentation of Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic terms exacerbated the lack of clarity generated by the Pact and produced an almost limitless variety of interpretations of the relationship between the USSR and the outside world. George Gushin, the *News Chronicle* Correspondent in Moscow, noted in early 1940 that the 'average Soviet citizen feels that Britain is now determined to launch an anti-Soviet crusade' against the USSR.[112] Others were convinced that Germany remained the real enemy. In January 1941 a Red Army agitator, Eremeev, wrote to the journal *Sputnik Agitator* to ask for help. At the same meeting his audiences were asking 'Won't Germany attack the USSR from the West and Japan from the East in the spring of 1941?' and 'Why has the USSR not declared war on Britain and France?'[113] Respondents to HIP also reflected this diversity of viewpoints. One remembered that he 'thought that there must be a war with England and America',[114] another that 'In 1940 the talk went about that war with Germany was inevitable'.[115] Werth claims that the intelligentsia were peculiarly pro-British whilst Scott argues that many ordinary citizens hoped for long-term cooperation with Germany.[116] The fluidity and uncertainty of official rhetoric made a variety of different interpretations feasible.

Faced with an inconclusive official narrative, Soviet citizens deployed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* in order to understand the international situation better. As one respondent to HIP explained, 'Before 1939 the Germans were the greatest enemy of the Soviet Union. In 1939 the Germans became the best friends of the Soviet Union. It was not said why. But I tried to think why.'[117] The most persistent and successful rumour of the Pact Period, that went far beyond the dark hints provided by the

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[112] Osborn, 'Operation Pike', 82–3.
[113] Inf. A.Ia. Livshin and I. B. Orlov, *Sovetskaia Propaganda v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny: 'Kommunikatsiia Ubezhdeniia' i mobilizatsionnye mekhanizmy* (Moscow, 2007), 76.
[114] HIP. A. 6, 84, 54.
[115] HIP. A. 6, 6, 54.
[116] Mem. Werth, *Russia At War*, 99–100; Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 61.
[117] HIP. A. 32, 1460, 46.

official press, was that a war was coming. These rumours were particularly widespread in August–September 1939. John Scott remembered that the movement of Red Army troops towards Poland generated a range of rival theories about who they might fight: 'Some said they were going to fight the Germans. Some said it was the British. Some ventured that they were going to invade Poland.'[118] A number of individuals faced prosecution for making comments such as 'Hitler is following a peace policy with us whilst he is busy, but when he has dealt with the other countries he will turn against us' in the immediate aftermath of the Pact.[119]

Rather than declining after August 1939, war rumours remained a consistent feature of the word-of-mouth network during the Pact Period. I. Azarov, a naval agitator, remembered that in early 1941 almost all conversations on trains and amongst work colleagues concerned the possibility that the USSR might get dragged into the European conflict.[120] Respondents to HIP also remembered that 'although the radio spoke of peace ... people said that there would be a war'.[121] The Milewski family, Poles deported to Arkhangel'sk after the occupation, excitedly recorded false outbreaks of war three times in their diary between June 1940 and June 1941.[122] A large number of people were prosecuted for passing on war rumours in this period, such as S.L.L., who concluded in early 1940 that the Western powers would 'free their hands and move against the USSR'.[123] Such stories were taken seriously enough for people to act on them, buying up sugar, salt, flour, and fish in preparation for the forthcoming shortages.[124] War rumours were so widespread during the Pact Period that the Soviet press was forced into a series of denials that conflict was imminent, most famously in June 1941.[125]

Soviet citizens drew upon the stories and ideas from the official press, fused them with information obtained by word-of-mouth or personal

[118] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 40.

[119] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 45534, l. 3; d. 12794, l. 5.

[120] Mem. Azarov, *Osazhdennaia Odessa*, 3–5, 7.

[121] HIP. A. 25, 284, 48.

[122] T. Pitrowski, *The Polish Deportees of World War II: Recollection of Removal to the Soviet Union and Dispersal Throughout the World* (London, 2004), 40–50.

[123] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 13026, ll. 3–4.

[124] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 37–8, 107. Such invasion preparations were common in the 1920s. See: A. V. Golubev, *'Esli Mir Obrushitsia na nashu Respubliku ...' Sovetskoe Obshchestvo i Vneshniaia Groza v 1920–1940-e gg.* (Moscow, 2008), 118–22.

[125] Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion*, 216.

observation and inferred, via the process of *bricolage*, that war was imminent. A whole variety of events were capable of sparking war rumours in this period. Troop movements remained a common cause.[126] However, political events such as the Axis Agreement of January 1941, Stalin's appointment as head of the Council of People's Commissars in May 1941, and the departure of German embassy staff in June 1941 were also capable of fuelling another round of stories that conflict was coming.[127]

The process of creative *bricolage* was particularly evident in the various rumours concerning the relationship between the USSR and Nazi Germany. One species of rumour suggested that the USSR and Germany were moving closer together and that perhaps the National Socialist and Bolshevik parties were about to unite. K.K.M. speculated that the Soviet Union and Germany were 'dividing the whole world into two parts; Germany will take Europe and the Soviet Union will take Asia'.[128] Others suggested the exact opposite, that the Germans were exploiting the USSR and taking advantage of them. The Milewski family recorded in their diary that the Germans were applying pressure on Russia to return the deported Poles, whilst A.I.R. was arrested for speculating that the peace treaty with Finland had been forced on the USSR by German pressure.[129] The vague coverage of Molotov's trip to Berlin resulted in a double wave of conjecture: some suggested that he had been browbeaten by the Germans and others that he had 'begun to cooperate with the Germans as a deserter!'[130] The confusing coverage of the Hess affair also sparked speculation that the Germans were about to betray the USSR and sign an agreement with Britain.[131]

Many of these war rumours are described within the official documents as acts of resistance intended to subvert Official Soviet Identity. There is no doubt that a portion of the comments, as recorded, contain explicitly anti-Soviet sentiments. Some individuals clearly harboured the hope that a conflict might lead to the collapse of Bolshevik

[126] HIP. B4, 193, 8; Mem. G. Temkin, *My Just War: The Memoir of a Jewish Red Army Soldier in World War II* (Novato, Calif., 1998), 31.

[127] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 46, l. 4; Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 123; Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion*, 306–9.

[128] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 12902, l. 2: d. 64008, l. 26.

[129] Inf. For similar ideas also see: RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 46, ll. 4–7; Proc. GARF, f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 10284, l. 2; Mem. Pitrowski, *Polish Deportees*, 42.

[130] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 79817, l. 7; d. 90262, l. 16.

[131] Mem. Azarov, *Osazhdennaia Odessa*, 7; Beria, *Beria: My Father*, 67.

power.[132] The idea that war might bring liberation was particularly powerful amongst the newly integrated Polish and Baltic minorities. In February 1940, collective farmers in Avgustskii *raion,* Belostock *oblast',* were spreading rumours 'about the rapid arrival of England and France who will restore the Polish state'.[133] In Latvia, local groups also 'looked to the western front, to England and France' for liberation and dreamed of a time when they could 'evict the Soviet army into the sea'.[134] Anti-Soviet underground groups in the borderlands gathered weapons, disrupted elections, and refused to pay taxes during the Pact Period. Such activities lend credibility to the idea that at least some individuals passed on war rumours in order to undermine the Soviet state.[135]

War rumours might also have served as a rhetoric of subversion for religious groups that were at odds with Soviet power. The cult leader Iakov in Astrakhan is alleged to have predicted that England, Turkey, and Bulgaria would 'carry out an invasion of the USSR directly through the Caucases and as soon as the war begins then one can expect an uprising from the people'.[136] Others were driven by a dislike of the economic realities of Soviet life. A.N.E. hoped an invasion would bring capitalist government and liberation from the harsh labour regulations of June 1940.[137] A whole range of state generated and non-state generated sources suggest that war rumours could, and did, function as a rhetoric of resistance for some individuals in this period. Those passing them on had stepped outside of the Soviet 'habitat' and invoked an alternative order, as a means of opposing Soviet power.

However, war rumours were simply too widespread to be explained solely as acts of resistance. They flourished in a context where official narratives about the relationship between the USSR and the outside world had begun to fragment. The struggle to understand sometimes led to public disagreements at official meetings, hardly the place to engage in 'subversive' speech. In November 1939 a Red Army political

[132] HIP. A. 3, 26, 49. At least some respondents may have exaggerated their hopes of liberation to the largely American interviewers in the late 1940s.

[133] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 2, l. 16, 27.

[134] Inf. V. G. Komplektov, *Polpredy Soobshchaiut . . . Sbornik Dokumentov ob otnosheniiakh SSSR s Latviei, Litvoi i Estoniei Avgust 1939 g. – Avgust 1940 g.* (1999, Moscow), 185, 207.

[135] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 2, l. 114; d. 27, l. 2; op. 122, d. 12, l. 17; V. I. Pasat, *Trudnye Straintsy Istorii Moldovy. 1940–1950-e gg.* (Moscow, 1994), 146–8.

[136] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 44, ll. 75–80.

[137] Proc. GARF f. R 8131, op. 31a, d. 88089, ll. 41–2.

meeting ended with an argument over whether Poland had 'induced Germany to invade' or Germany had acted aggressively.[138] One respondent to HIP remembered that the conceptual volte-face required by the Pact was too much for some party members who 'did not have sufficient intellectual ability to follow the latest move' and had to be purged.[139] Il'ia Ehrenburg confided to his diary that he could not change his views: 'fascism remained for me the chief enemy.'[140] As argued in the Introduction, these individuals were not resisters in any meaningful sense of the term.

The social upheavals of this period also made many Soviet citizens more susceptible to war rumours. The harsh labour laws of June 1940 and the new drive for production placed unprecedented pressure on ordinary Soviet citizens. These stressful conditions were particularly notable in the newly occupied borderlands. Tens of thousands of politically 'suspect' new subjects were deported to the remote internal regions of the USSR and the German-speaking population was voluntarily resettled to Germany.[141] This social turmoil lowered the credibility thresholds of Soviet citizens, making them more likely to pass on speculative rumours.[142] The success of war rumours in this period was not a symptom of widespread subversion, but rather a product of the incoherence of official narratives and the tensions under which ordinary citizens were living.

A significant number of people who speculated about war in this period were also 'loyal rumourers'. Vselevod Vishnevskii, a fierce Soviet patriot, noted in his diary in 1940: 'Germany and the USSR are going to have to fight to the death—this is not a European joke war any longer.'[143] An anonymous author wrote to Vishnevskii in March 1940 to warn him that the Germans were cooperating with nationalists and religious sects to 'stab the Soviet Union in the back', whilst M. Krivstov wrote in July 1940 warning the government of an imminent Anglo-Turkish attack on

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[138] Let. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 19, 17.
[139] HIP. A. 37, 1745, 49.
[140] Mem. Nevezhin, *Sindrom Nastupatel'noi Voiny*, 53–4.
[141] Gross, *Revolution From Abroad*, 197–212; D. Crowe, *The Baltic States and the Great Powers: Foreign Relations, 1938–1940* (Oxford, 1993), 121–40.
[142] Rosnow and Fine, *Rumour and Gossip*, 51–2.
[143] Mem. Cited in: Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*, 108.

the USSR.[144] The memoirs of the Soviet leaders themselves demonstrate
that they expected an attack on the USSR. Khrushchev claims that he
moved to Kiev in June 1941 so as to be there when the war began, and
Molotov asserts that he knew that the war was coming but not when.[145]
One common form of 'loyal rumourer', who faced prosecution in this
period, was the convinced Marxist who believed that the Soviet Union
had abandoned its principles by allying with Germany. A.I.R. was con-
victed of counter-revolutionary agitation for suggesting that the Pact was
a 'betrayal of the democratic countries on behalf of fascism'. He and
others believed that the policy of friendship with Germany had blinded
the leadership to the reality of forthcoming war.[146] Despite their critical
posture, these rumourers were not seeking to subvert the Soviet state but
rather to rescue the Stalinist leadership from its foreign policy blunders.

The prominence of war rumours and *bricolage* should not mask the
extent to which some individuals understood the world around them
largely or even completely within the framework of Official Soviet
Identity. The most compelling evidence for this during the Pact Period
comes from a collection of over 250 letters, both to and from the front,
retrieved from the corpses of Red Army soldiers during the Finnish
War. As might be expected, the letters contain little negative sentiment.
However, the terms in which many of the authors wrote demonstrated
not just compliance with but enthusiastic engagement with the official
language of the Soviet state. A number of the authors echoed official
denunciations of the Finnish 'bandits' and encouraged their loved ones
to, 'give a Bolshevik answer to the enemy who is trying to cross our
border'.[147] Several of the letters also echo press denunciations of the
British and French, who had driven the Finns against the USSR.[148] The
rhetoric of settling scores with the bandits and defending the children of
the motherland clearly resonated with a large number of Soviet citizens.
Particularly where it coincided with the emotions and anxieties of its
target audience, Official Soviet Identity could play a powerful role in
shaping the *mentalité* of the Soviet population.

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[144] Let. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 20, 31.

[145] Mem. N. Khrushchev, trans., J. L. Schecter and V. V. Luchkov, *Khrushchev Remembers: The Glasnost' Tapes* (Boston, 1990), 56; Resis, *Molotov Remembers*, 22–3.

[146] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 10284, l. 2; d. 12976, l. 25.

[147] Let. V. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei: Kak i Chem Zhivut v Sovetskom Soiuze. Pis'ma v Krasnuiu Armiiu 1939–40* (New York, 1944), 498–9, 356, 321, 511.

[148] Let. Ibid. 524, 545.

However, the overwhelming impression from the available documents is that Soviet citizens routinely went beyond the official press in order to make sense of the world around them. The spectacular volte-face of August 1939 caught many of them by surprise, and the later fragmentation of Official Soviet Identity made it necessary for ordinary individuals to turn to *bricolage* as a means of piecing together a composite picture of international affairs. The key message that circulated within the word-of-mouth network, despite press protestations to the contrary, was that war was imminent. Which war, and with which countries was unclear, but many Soviet citizens were convinced that it was just around the corner.

Official Soviet Identity as a mighty state

The process of creative *bricolage* also characterized the manner in which Soviet citizens engaged with official claims that the USSR was a mighty state. This was particularly evident in relation to the Finnish debacle which did more than anything to shake notions of Soviet military power in this period. *Pravda*'s confidence that this was going to be a one-sided contest was clearly infectious. Frontline journalists parted with 'see you in Helsinki in three days', and the first troops into battle were warned not to violate the Swedish frontier.[149] Political commissar Oreshin wrote in his diary in late October that, 'the Finns strut around, rattle their weapons and say threateningly, "The life of one Finn will cost 10 Russians." Stupid fools—what do they really think will happen?'[150] The same expectation of crushing victory clearly coursed through a young Muscovite who requested that the Komsomol 'send me to any echelon to destroy the enemy'.[151] This bullish confidence was reinforced by the tiny number of casualties suffered (1,475) when the Polish borderlands had been overrun in September 1939.[152]

The harsh reality of a winter war in which well over 100,000 troops died came as a shock to many Red Army troops. The bombast evaporated from Commissar Oreshin's diary. Ten days into the conflict he

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[149] Mem. C. Mannerheim, trans., E. Lewehaupt, *The Memoirs of Marshal Mannerheim* (London, 1953), 328–9; Nevezhin, *Sindrom Nastupatel'noi Voiny*, 93.

[150] Mem. Carlow, *Politruk Oreshinin*, 126.

[151] Let. RGASPI f. M1, op. 23, d. 1439, ll. 50–60.

[152] Int. Fischer, *Thirteen who Fled*, 215; A. Weiner, 'Something to Die for, A Lot to Kill for: The Soviet System and the Barbarisation of Warfare, 1939–1945', in G. Kassimeris, ed., *The Barbarisation of Warfare* (London, 2006), 104.

wrote, 'The men have lain in the snow for three days and didn't dare to lift their heads. Several of them are frost-bitten. . . . We are bloody well fed up!'[153] Some of the soldiers' letters reflected similar shock. Just seven days into the conflict one wrote that 'The majority of us have lost the hope of returning home alive.' Another wrote in February, 'Our leaders promise that we will have won the whole of Finland by the 23rd February. But we will see.'[154] Similar sentiments also appeared in the frontline *svodki* and the reminiscences of HIP respondents who remembered tales of soldiers injuring themselves to escape the fighting.[155] A Red Army commander was later prosecuted for telling his wife that many soldiers 'did not want to fight with the enemy'.[156] The dark mood of the soldiers was tacitly recognized in a series of short lived cartoons in the army newspaper *Boevaia Krasnoarmeiskaia*. Pasha Berzhuntsov (Pasha the Liar) marvelled at the Finnish supermen and mocked the failures of the Red Army supply chain. Pasha was swiftly cut by the censor but even his more acceptable replacement, Vasia Terkin, had to struggle with gossips who told tales of Finnish troops who crossed the forests barefoot and hid in pill boxes that 'make our shells look like crumbs'.[157]

Inside the USSR, the almost total silence of the official press about the progress of the war forced Soviet citizens to rely on information obtained by word-of-mouth about the front. One mother described to her son at the frontline how 'Everyone is talking in houses and in trams, in buses and in the street, in theatres and even in the laundry—only about the Red Army.'[158] The rumours they heard were not always positive. John Scott heard stories of divisional commanders being executed for retreating under sniper fire.[159] Meanwhile, the dark humour of the front line spread to the rear. E.N.P. was prosecuted for constantly referring to Red Army soldiers as 'cannon fodder'.[160] A joke from the time mocked the liberation corps of supposedly Finnish Soviet troops: 'A Soviet soldier asked his friend whether he had seen the

[153] Mem. Carlow, *Politruk Oreshinin*, 128–31.
[154] Let. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 164, 160.
[155] HIP. B7, 15, 6. See: Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 49; Davies, *Popular Opinion*, 49.
[156] Proc. GARF f. 8131, op. 31a, d. 13536, ll. 12–13.
[157] C. Van Dyke, *The Soviet Invasion of Finland* (London, 1997), 121–3.
[158] Let. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 513.
[159] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 105.
[160] Proc. GARF f. 8131, op. 31a, d. 97492, l. 3.

Finnish mines (Finnskiye miny). "No", replied his friend, "I didn't see them but I did see the Finns from Minsk" (Minskiye Finny), that's a greater wonder.'[161] Rumours about the frontline were particularly widespread in Leningrad, which was close to the battle. The steady stream of wounded soldiers provided a rich seam of information.[162] Tales of frostbite and amputation circulated widely and generated a particularly strong sense of revulsion.[163]

Even after the war was over, stories continued to circulate concerning the Finnish disaster. A very large number of those prosecuted for counter-revolutionary agitation in this period were supposed to have criticized Sovinformburo for underestimating the losses at the front. Returning soldiers told those at home how 'many thousands and thousands of soldiers had to be sent there, even though it was such a small country'.[164] Soviet citizens searched around for explanations of the Red Army's difficulties. Some blamed supply lines, others the quality of armaments, others the lack of basic necessities in the country, and still others the poor clothing of the soldiers.[165] The silence of the state propaganda machine fed this process of inference. In the absence of a credible official narrative, Soviet citizens turned to *bricolage,* fusing snippets of news obtained by word-of-mouth with personal observations and what official news there was, to create a composite picture of events at the front line.

This consciousness that the Finnish War had gone badly shaped the reactions of some Soviet citizens to official claims about the might of the USSR. The May Day demonstration of military hardware in 1941 was regarded by some as a sign that war was coming, rather than a symbol of Soviet power.[166] The first elections in the former Polish territories were bedevilled by rumours that 'In the forthcoming elections at the election points there will be two urns: on one will be written Germany and on the other Soviet.' Apparently the Red Army could be forced out by democratic vote. The success of this rumour reflected the uncertainty

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[161] HIP. B7, 135, 12.

[162] Let. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei,* 159; Sv. Davies, *Popular Opinion*, 100–1.

[163] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 108–9; Let. Livshin and Orlov, *Sovetskaia Povsednevnost'*, 337–8; Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 537.

[164] HIP. A. 1, 9, 91.

[165] Let. Livshin and Orlov, *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 337–8; Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 45534, l. 3; d. 8837, l. 7; d. 10368, l. 11; d. 10122, l. 24.

[166] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 122.

generated by forced population transfers in the borderlands but it also
suggests that many of the new residents of the USSR were not convinced
that the Soviets were strong enough to enforce their desire to stay.[167]
The June 1940 labour laws were also widely interpreted as a sign of
weakness.[168] The reaction to the laws themselves provides a perfect case
study in the tactics of the Soviet habitat in operation. Over the coming
months, Soviet report writers railed against the ways the legislation had
been enforced. Managers and judges deployed the tactic of avoidance
when they shielded workers from harsh punishment.[169] Some managers
also reappropriated the new legislation in order to pursue personal
vendettas against staff. In Kalinin *oblast'* there were several cases of
managers moving unpopular employees to work that did not suit
their specialities and then forwarding their cases for prosecution when
they refused to work.[170]

   The broader interpretation, that these laws were a sign of vulnerabil-
ity, demonstrated the extent to which the Winter War had shaped
popular thinking. However, rumours of military weakness and tales of
losses at the front were not a symptom of widespread resistance within
Soviet society. Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic terms during the
Pact Period, more than any other covered in this book, was just as likely
to confuse its audience as it was to impose a vision of Sovietness
on them. Under those circumstances, it was inevitable that ordinary
citizens would turn to the word-of-mouth network and the tactic of
bricolage in order to make sense of the world around them.

Engaging with the cultural identity of the USSR

Official Soviet Identity in relation to the cultural and artistic products of
the outside world did not evolve significantly in this period. The major
theoretical scientific debate of the Pact Period, an October 1939 con-
ference on genetics organized by the journal *Under the Banner of
Marxism*, did little other than affirm the direction of current policy.
However, the manner in which the debate was conducted demonstrates
the extent to which Soviet scientists needed to deploy the 'tactics of the

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[167] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 2, ll. 90–1, 111, 122–9, 130, 133.
[168] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 13026, l. 14.
[169] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 2, ll. 33–71; d. 7, l. 38.
[170] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 15, ll. 56–8.

habitat' in order to survive and succeed. In April 1939, two Soviet geneticists, V. Kirpichnikov and A Malinovskii, wrote a long letter to P. S. Zhemchuzhina, the Commissar of Fisheries and Molotov's wife, complaining about the behaviour of the agrobiologist Trofim Lysenko.[171] Lysenko had risen to prominence in the 1930s by attacking the idea of chromosomal inheritance; Lysenko argued instead that species adapted within their lifetime. Throughout his battles with the geneticists, Lysenko depicted his methodology as 'Marxist', 'Darwinist', and 'materialist' in contrast to the capitalist influenced 'Mendel-Morganism' of his rivals.

The turn against foreign influence in the late 1930s reinforced Lysenko's claims that genetics was capitalist and degenerate, and by 1938 his followers had secured a stranglehold over institutional positions of power. The genetics community had been at the forefront of international scientific cooperation and so suffered particularly badly during the Purges.[172] However, Lysenko had never been able to fully drive home his advantage and a number of prominent Soviet geneticists remained in positions of influence. Kirpichnikov and Malinovskii's letter was one of a number written in 1939 when an alliance with Britain and France looked likely. It attempted to turn Lysenko's arguments on their head by arguing that the USSR was in danger of falling behind the capitalist world in this key arena.[173] By the time of the October 1939 debate, however, Official Soviet Identity had shifted, and the Lysenkoists were able to exploit the recent turn against Britain, France, and America to argue that imperialist genetics did not belong inside the USSR. The debate merely reaffirmed the status quo, but in the summer of 1940 Vavilov, the head of the Academy of Sciences Institute of Genetics, was arrested as a British spy. The Lysenkoists attacked him over his continued correspondence with British researchers and his attempts to get work published overseas.[174] Their success demonstrated the tactical advantages that could be secured from reappropriating the power of the state and directing it against one's rivals. Their victory was not secured in the scientific but the political arena,

[171] A. Ia. Livshin, I. B. Orlov, and O.V. Khlevniuk, *Pis'ma vo vlast', 1928–1939: Zaiavleniia, zhaloby, donosy, pis'ma v gosudarstvennye struktury i sovetskim vozhdiam* (Moscow, 2002), 449–54.

[172] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, 55–63.

[173] Livshin, Orlov and Khlevniuk, *Pis'ma vo vlast'*, 449–54.

[174] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, 78–80.

where they had deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' more effectively than their rivals.

The scant availability of non-Soviet cultural products meant that they were not a vital arena of identity construction for ordinary citizens during the Pact Period. Whilst American films starring Clark Gable were packing out the theatres in Berlin, the USSR showed almost no foreign movies in this period.[175] That is not to say that Soviet citizens had entirely forgotten the glamour of Hollywood. In January 1941 an agitator reported that he had been asked,'Tell us why in the USSR are there such boring and dull films that are all about how the Reds beat the Whites? Why don't they make films like "The Great Waltz?"' (an American-made musical about Johann Strauss).[176] Utesov's more moderate, almost swingless, style continued to be performed, but Soviet citizens were more isolated than ever before from the cultural products of the outside world.

Soviet citizens' primary sphere of interaction with the outside world was with material goods and people from the newly occupied border-lands during the Pact Period. The USSR arrived in the borderlands as a self-proclaimed liberator and this rhetoric of freedom resonated power-fully with some Soviet citizens. In October 1939 three students wrote to Stalin and Molotov to celebrate the arrival of Soviet civilization in these regions. 'The deep seated dream not only of the workers of Western Ukraine but all the leading Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia' had been fulfilled.[177] Similar sentiments were expressed in relation to the Baltic States; one soldier was even moved to poetry to celebrate this extension of the Soviet way of life.[178] The rhetoric of liberation also appears in the letters of some of those who wanted to volunteer during the Winter War. In January 1940 a Komsomol member wrote that he wanted to go into battle against 'all those who don't want the happiness of being a liberated people'. Others expressed the desire to bring the Finns a 'happy, joyful life under the sun of the Stalin constitution'.[179] Some Red Army soldiers also expressed similar sentiments. A. I. Azarov boasted to his brother that he had already 'participated in the liberation of the Polish people' and was now fighting to 'liberate the Finnish

[175] Mem. W.L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934–1941* (New York, 2002), 240.
[176] Inf. Livshin and Orlov, *Sovetskaia Propaganda*, 77.
[177] Let. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 401–2.
[178] Let. Ibid. 34–5, 25–6, 33.
[179] Let. RGASPI f. M1, op. 23, d. 1439, ll. 50–60.

people from the Finnish white bandits'. Another wrote of the 'happiness of giving help to these people' in what had been Poland.[180] The identity of the USSR as a liberator state made Soviet citizens liberator citizens. Even those who were prosecuted for criticizing the takeovers seem to have assumed that the residents of the borderlands were willing participants in the great Soviet family. N.N.P. noted that although the Baltic peoples were 'glad of their unification' they would soon live to regret it.[181]

However, the process of actually interacting with these liberated peoples often challenged the vision of the USSR as a liberator state. The Red Army attempted, at least initially, to limit contact between soldiers and local residents in the borderlands. Embassy insiders in the Baltic were particularly worried about sexual relationships between soldiers and local women.[182] However, the reality on the ground was that the two groups could not be kept apart, and the occupation forces went on spectacular spending sprees, buying watches, clothes, bicycles, and food.[183] The comparative abundance of these recently ex-capitalist states provided a sharp contrast with the USSR and presented a once in a lifetime opportunity. P. Gonev remembered that 'upon entering a town, our troops descended upon the stores and bought up everything in sight'. One respondent to HIP remembered similarly that 'all of us went on a buying spree . . . Some officers bought as many as six of the cheap watches.'[184] The orgy of acquisition was repeated after the occupations of Finland, the Baltic, and Bessarabia. Soviet soldiers stripped watches off the dead bodies of Finnish combatants, and 'officers and non were buying consumer goods like mad since there was so much more of it in Bessarabia than in Ukraine'.[185] The Estonian ambassador himself admitted that 'the diversity of goods in the shops of Tallinn and the low prices on objects of consumer goods (shoes, suits, and so on) is inflaming the appetites of the rank and file staff.'[186]

On their return to the USSR, these soldiers brought tales of the unexpected material wonders of the capitalist world that circulated

[180] Let. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 525, 330.
[181] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 8837, l. 6.
[182] Inf. Komplektov, *Polpredy Soobshchaiut*, 196–206.
[183] Gross, *Revolution From Abroad*, 28–48.
[184] Int. Fischer, *Thirteen who Fled*, 36; HIP. B4, 193, 4; Mem. L. Heiman, *I Was a Soviet Guerilla* (London, 1959), 17–18.
[185] Mem. Carlow, *Politruk Oreshinin*, 132; HIP. A. 21, 431, 28; B9, 497, 5.
[186] Inf. Komplektov, *Polpredy Soobshchaiut*, 196–7.

rapidly within the word-of-mouth network. John Scott heard stories of
'mountains of eggs, tubs of butter, clothes, wristwatches, and good
woollen material' in Tallinn.'[187] Several individuals were prosecuted
during the Pact Period for passing on rumours about the luxuries of life
in the borderlands. V.I.K. praised the life in the former Poland saying
that 'there there were beautiful bicycles, motorcycles, cars, lacquered
shoes, especially boots ... these "slaves" were better dressed and better
fed than us in the USSR'.[188] More important than the stories they told,
were the material goods the Red Army soldiers began shipping home to
family and friends. One respondent to HIP did not believe the claims of
a lieutenant who had visited Poland until he saw his 'wonderful
boots'.[189] Bicycles, suits, and watches from the Baltic flooded the
Moscow department stores in the autumn of 1940 sending prices into
a downward spiral.[190] Those individuals who posted or brought goods
back were not doing anything new. Artists and diplomats often brought
large quantities of foreign merchandise into the USSR during the 1930s.[191]
What changed during the Pact Period was the number of people who
were involved in and benefited from this semi-licit contraband.

    The final mechanism via which information and goods flowed was
the rapid migration of hundreds of thousands of ex-capitalist citizens
into the USSR. A significant number of new Soviet citizens were either
deported to the heartland as politically suspect groups or travelled there
for training and work.[192] A group of Poles working in Drogobych
oblast' spread 'all kinds of scandalous rumours about the life and order
in the USSR, praising the order and life in the former Poland and
Germany'. Others complained of the lack of freedom in the USSR and
ridiculed the 'untruths' of the Soviet press.[193] The personal luxuries
enjoyed by these internal migrants often created tensions amongst
receiver communities. As the head of the NKVD in Gorky *oblast'*
explained to a destitute newly arrived Estonian, 'You have a watch on
your arm, so I won't help you.'[194]

    [187] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe,* 70.
    [188] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 20485, l. 8.
    [189] HIP. A. 11, 143, 31.
    [190] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 87.
    [191] HIP. A. 31, 1953, 27; B11, 64, 35.
    [192] HIP. A. 34, 1434, 31.
    [193] Sv. Iu. Slivka, *Deportatsii: Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy Kintsia 30-kh – Pochatku 50-kh
rr. Dokumenty, Materialy, spozady. T. 1, 1939–1945 rr.* (L'vov, 1996), 87, 104.
    [194] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 8, l. 147.

As tales of opportunity percolated back into the USSR, some Soviet citizens tried to find a pretext to visit the newly acquired borderlands. *Komandirovki* (travel authorization documents) to the newly occupied territories became highly sought-after documents.[195] The Belorussian Komsomol received an avalanche of 'requests to go and work in Western Belorussia'. Not all these requests were motivated by patriotism. Some of those sent as agitators spent 'the majority of their time in the markets and bazaars turning themselves into carpetbaggers'. The Brest *oblast'* committee wrote more elliptically of staff who had 'yielded to petty bourgeois influences and entangled themselves in connections with suspicious elements'.[196] In the spring of 1941 a letter writer to *Pravda*, from previously Finnish Vyborg, complained that the city was overrun with 'adventurist cheats' or 'trophyists' looking for foreign-made property.[197] This kind of behaviour passed into popular humour via jokes poking fun at the spurious pretexts some people found to go on official 'missions' to the newly occupied territories.[198]

Poland, despite its comparative poverty, acquired a reputation as a land of luxury in this period. Respondents to HIP referred to the lavishness of Polish living more than any other newly occupied territory.[199] An army lieutenant, who wound up in prison, later claimed that he would return to prison gladly if he could live for a short while as he had in the former Polish borderlands.[200] A number of individuals, such as P.A.B. were prosecuted for making comments such as 'in the former Poland before the arrival of Soviet power, it was better than now'.[201] After his liberation by the Red Army during the war, Gabriel Temkin was quizzed by his interviewer about life in capitalist Poland: '"It was good in capitalist Poland wasn't it? There was plenty of food and everything in the stores? Each family in the cities had its own apartment?" All questions, not a single statement on his part.'[202] Countries such as America or Germany, as well as the other newly occupied regions, also occasionally cropped up as places where the good life

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[195] Gross, *Revolution From Abroad*, 48.
[196] Inf. RGASPI f. M1, op. 23, d. 1399, ll. 24–54.
[197] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 8, ll. 16–19.
[198] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 95.
[199] e.g., HIP. A. 34, 1398, 30.
[200] Gross, *Revolution From Abroad*, 46.
[201] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 70429, l. 14.
[202] Mem. Temkin, *My Just War*, 89.

could be enjoyed.[203] However, Eastern Poland became a watchword for affluence and economic opportunity in this period.

The headlong rush to buy goods in the newly acquired borderlands became an object of mockery amongst those portions of the newly acquired border population who resented the Red Army's presence. Kalniete tells an oft-repeated story about some Soviet officers' wives who went to the theatre in silk underwear, thinking they were wearing evening dresses.[204] Such condescending stories infuriated Soviet administrators on the ground who fumed against their implicit rejection of the cultural hierarchy within Official Soviet Identity. 'Absurd' rumours that the 'Red Army was badly fed and clothed and dirty and uncultured', or that the soldiers were 'surprised by the volume of goods in the stores' were a common target within the ambassadorial dispatches.[205] Red Army soldiers also responded harshly when mocked by local citizens, pointing out that they had tanks, guns, and aeroplanes, not luxury goods.[206] Others rushed their wives and children indoors when they first arrived so that their poor quality clothing would not be seen.[207] The reality of capitalist living made many Red Army soldiers aware of their comparative poverty, but did not necessarily shake their pride in their Soviet identity.

However, as news about the reality of life in the ex-capitalist borderlands percolated through the oral news network, it contributed to an increasingly pragmatic view of the means by which these territories had been acquired. Ordinary people often fused the high-powered official rhetoric of liberation with a no-nonsense, almost realpolitik, vision of the relationship between the USSR and the outside world. The Pact itself bred a certain hard-headed view of affairs. A number of intellectuals later told Werth that they had been happy with it from a national perspective but aware that it made them 'disreputable' in the West.[208] This kind of reaction typified the growing gap between the claims of the official press and the realities of international affairs as Soviet citizens

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[203] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 3, l. 35; Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 67393, l. 9; HIP. A. 18, 342, 35.

[204] Mem. S. Kalniete, trans., M. Gailitis, *With Dance Shoes in Siberian Snows* (Riga, 2006), 48.

[205] Inf. Komplektov, *Polpredy Soobshchaiut*, 183, 190.

[206] Gross, *Revolution From Abroad*, 48. See also: Weiner, 'Something to Die for', 103–5.

[207] HIP. B7, 135, 14.

[208] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 60.

knew them to be. For some people an awareness of the pragmatic methods of the regime bred a sense of embarassment. Scott describes the 'shame' some Muscovites felt at the partitioning of Poland, whilst Mikhail Solov'ev, a senior army political officer, wrote in his memoirs that 'there was not a feeling of hatred for the Finns. Only a sense of shame and degradation.'[209] N.G.K. spoke in similar terms when he described the Finnish War as 'sticking our noses in where it was not necessary'.[210] Others reacted with ironic humour, rather than guilt; even 'communist loyalists' told jokes about the Pact.[211] During the Finnish War a joke circulated that the USSR was 'extending the hand of friendship' to the Finns, and they were 'extending their feet' [dying].[212] John Scott recalled that the Terijoki government was widely mocked: 'the simplest Muscovites were sceptical, even amused . . . It was the only instance I can remember in nearly a decade in Russia when large numbers of average Soviet citizens actually laughed at Stalin's government.'[213]

As the divide between official claims and the unofficial information circulating within the word-of-mouth network grew, some individuals adopted a more cynical and negative view of both international affairs and the official press itself. A Soviet soldier on the Finnish front confided in his diary that, 'We were told that we must fight for the Finnish people and for their liberation. Now we see that the Finnish are burning their own homes and meeting the "liberators" with fire and shells.'[214] One respondent to HIP claimed that 'The Polish War, the occupation of the Baltic countries, and Bessarabia showed that Stalin was lying.'[215] Several individuals were prosecuted for branding Soviet foreign policy 'predatory', rather than liberating, in this period.[216]

However, the vast majority of Soviet citizens did not adopt such a negative view of government policy. Where their views diverged from the official press, it was often a symptom of confusion or the ongoing attempt to reconcile information obtained via various mechanisms.

[209] Mem. Scott, *Duel For Europe*, 99; cited in: Van Dyke, *Soviet Invasion*, 127. See also: Davies, *Popular Opinion*, 97–8.

[210] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 63543, l. 54.

[211] Sv. Davies, *Popular Opinion*, 98.

[212] HIP A. 30, 642, 58.

[213] Mem. Scott, *Duel for Europe*, 101.

[214] Mem. Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 164.

[215] HIP. A. 35, 1493, 60.

[216] Proc. GARF f. 8131, op. 31a, d. 69730, l. 8; d. 64009, l. 9; d. 82681, l. 6.

When listeners at agitational meetings asked, 'Why has the USSR not taken Kars from Turkey?' or commented that 'it is necessary to give Turkey and ultimatum: if you don't give it back then we will have it by force', they were not expressing themselves within the language of Official Soviet Identity. However, they were trying to make sense of what seemed to them to be the current trajectory of government policy.[217] This *bricolage* driven attempt to make sense of the world characterized the comments of a number of individuals prosecuted for anti-Soviet agitation during the Pact Period. A.A.S. defended himself in court that he had made 'critical statements on various political questions but I did not consider them anti-Soviet'. He had struggled to reconcile the discrepancy between official claims that the USSR did not want foreign land and the reality of current policy.[218] E.N.E. did not deny in court that she had expressed disbelief in the claims that the Red Army had occupied Bessarabia without a shot. Her defence was that 'in the period of the war with the White Finns they also did not report about the losses but her husband was at the front'.[219] Several respondents to HIP also noted that, 'Purely logical arguments were against the propaganda. Everybody thought: "How could such a country as small as Finland invade the Soviet Union?"'[220] P. Gonev describes his chauffeur's attempt to reconcile official rhetoric with his personal observations of life in Poland: 'Comrade Colonel, didn't we come to Poland to liberate our brothers? . . . But I have seen no class brothers of mine . . . A peasant has three or four horses, five or six cows; there is a bicycle in front of every house . . . There is something here that I don't understand.'[221]

As new information became available and as Official Soviet Identity fragmented, Soviet citizens were forced to engage in *bricolage* in order to make sense of the world around them. They were not stepping outside of the Soviet habitat nor, in the main, were they engaging in acts of resistance. There remained large numbers of people who thought and articulated themselves within the categories of the official press. However, the gap between Official Soviet Identity and unofficially obtained information became wider than ever before during the Pact Period. The exalted rhetoric of liberation sat uncomfortably alongside the cold

[217] Inf. Livshin and Orlov, *Sovetskaia Propaganda*, 76.
[218] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 12737, l. 5.
[219] Proc. Ibid. d. 92227, ll. 22–4.
[220] HIP. A. 36, 1582, 32; A. 4, 33, 19.
[221] Fischer, *Thirteen Who Fled*, 37.

pragmatism of the Finnish and Baltic occupations. Most Soviet citizens responded to this situation creatively, deploying the tactics of the habitat to piece together a composite image of global affairs.

CONCLUSION

Official Soviet Identity played a powerful role in shaping the mentality of Soviet citizens in this period. The bravery with which Soviet divisions fought in the Finnish War—in one case only 58 men survived from 2,000 that were surrounded—is symptomatic of the pride many residents of the USSR felt in their state.[222] Official Soviet Identity resonated most powerfully with its audience at the points where it intersected with other identities. The most passionate letters from the Finnish War brought together calls to defend Leningrad, mothers and children with the rhetoric of Soviet liberation. In these situations the official press provided a powerful avenue for citizens to articulate their anger and anxiety.

However, the official press lost its near monopoly on information about the outside world in this period. The experience of war after 1941 only exaggerated some of these tensions as Soviet citizens interacted in far greater numbers with regions beyond their borders. However, the process of 'opening up' began before 1941. This significant shift occurred at the same time as Official Soviet Identity began to fragment to some degree. Many respondents to HIP later identified the Pact Period as a moment of awakening, when they lost faith in the Soviet system. Some claimed that they lost their innocence after the 'comedy' of August 1939; others spoke of how 'after the war with Finland people no longer trusted the government as they had previously'; and still others said that 'After [seeing] Poland we said that it was all lies'.[223] This narrative of travelling from unconsciousness to consciousness was a common trope of Soviet literature and it is unsurprising that many of those who had since left the USSR spoke in these terms.[224] However, there is no doubt that the Pact Period was a time when 'tactics' such as *bricolage*, became increasingly necessary if ordinary citizens wanted to

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[222] Zenzinov, *Vstrecha s Rossiei*, 40.
[223] HIP. A. 4, 34, 25; A. 30, 642, 58; A. 30, 642, 40.
[224] K. Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Bloomington, 2000), 6–22.

piece together a coherent picture of the Soviet relationship with the outside world.

The rumours and behaviour of Soviet citizens expose certain aspects of the collective *mentalité* of this period. First, despite the reassuring promises about the wisdom of Stalin's peaceful foreign policy, Soviet citizens regarded war rumours as credible and passed them on during the Pact Period. This anxiety reflected, to some extent, the success of the official press which had cultivated a bunker mentality during the 1920s. The threat of invasion had become a structural feature of the Soviet mindset and ordinary citizens routinely interpreted domestic and international events as harbingers of war.[225] Second, the behaviour of Soviet citizens in the borderlands demonstrated that they were not impervious to the lure of foreign goods and capitalist luxury.

The following chapters examine how the diplomatic and cultural aspects of Official Soviet Identity, and the dual images of the outside world as a threat and a land of opportunity evolved during the Great Patriotic War and the last years of Stalin's life.

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[225] Golubev, '*Esli Mir*'.

PART II

BEING SOVIET DURING THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

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Perfidious Allies? Britain, America, and Official Soviet Diplomatic Identity 1941–1945

The Wehrmacht invaded the USSR on the morning of 22 June 1941. Within a few hours, German assault units penetrated up to 50 kilometres into Soviet territory. The Soviet leadership, completely unaware of the reality of the situation, ordered the troops to go on the offensive late on the evening of June 22.[1] In reality, the beleaguered Soviet troops were already scrambling into retreat, and by 27 June the German flag flew in Minsk, 300 kilometres from the border and a third of the way to Moscow. Over the coming weeks, hundreds of thousands of troops were encircled in Wehrmacht pincer movements, and on 2 October Operation Typhoon, the drive for Moscow, began.

By December the offensive was exhausted and the capital was saved. Nonetheless, the early weeks of the war came as a huge shock to many Soviet citizens. After years of boisterous talk about smashing the enemy, the Red Army was cut to pieces and the very fabric of Soviet society seemed ready to fall apart. The summer of 1942 was an equally traumatic time as the German forces rallied and drove deep into the Soviet southern flank towards the oil-rich Caucases. In order to stem the panic, Stalin issued the infamous Order 227, 'Not a Step Back', on 28 July 1942 in a desperate attempt to stop the retreat. As the front stabilized, once again, the Soviet forces amassed themselves in the area around Stalingrad where the German 6th Army was exposed. By late November the ring had closed around the 300,000 Wehrmacht troops and only a handful survived.

After the decisive battle at Stalingrad, the Red Army forces began their slow and costly drive to Berlin. The tank battle at Kursk in the

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[1] J. Erickson, *The Road to Stalingrad: Stalin's War with Germany, Volume 1* (1983), 130–5.

summer of 1943 reiterated the newfound dominance of the Soviet forces, and Operation Bagration in the summer of 1944 drove the German forces out of Belorus and cleared much of Eastern Poland. By early 1945 Red Army troops were in Eastern Prussia, and Berlin itself surrendered after a month-long battle in early May. On 9 May, the population of the USSR broke into delirious celebration at the news that the Germans had unconditionally surrendered.

The following two chapters examine how Soviet citizens engaged with Official Soviet Identity between the German invasion and the fall of Berlin. This chapter focuses on the diplomatic identity of the USSR in relation to their wartime allies. The Great Patriotic War transformed what it meant to be Soviet. In 1941 the Soviet Union was an isolated state, reliant on a fragile alliance with Nazi Germany. By 1945 it had become the military driving force within the anti-Hitler coalition. The new version of Sovietness that emerged in the war was most clearly expressed in hatred of the Germans. The official press lacerated the Wehrmacht as a 'robber horde' of voracious, blood-thirsty savages, whilst government cartoonists created image after image of physically and morally subhuman Germans.[2] This unremitting hatred of Germany burnished the official identity of the Soviet Union as a moral beacon within the international community. The war was, quite simply, a struggle of darkness against light.

The recent literature of Soviet wartime identity has largely focused on this simple, antithetical relationship with Nazi Germany.[3] The following two chapters examine Soviet self-creation in relation to their Anglo-Saxon allies after 1941. The historiography of the Grand Alliance has tended to focus on the relative contributions of the Great Powers to the defeat of Nazi Germany.[4] This book focuses instead on how the Alliance was experienced at the time. It examines how Britain and America, the centres of world capitalism and the inspiration behind the 'Finnish threat' of 1940, suddenly became brothers-in-arms in the

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[2] A. K. Pisiotis, 'Images of Hate in the Art of War', in D. Stites, ed., *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Indianapolis, 1995)', 142–9.

[3] A. V. Fateev, *Obraz vraga v sovetskoi propagande: 1945–54* (Moscow, 1999); Kenez, 'The Image of the Enemy in Stalinist Films', in Norris and Torlone, ed., *Insiders and Outsiders*, 106–7.

[4] M. von Hagen, 'From "Great Fatherland War" to the Second World War: New Perspectives and Future Prospects', in I. Kershaw and M. Lewin, eds., *Stalinism and Nazism: Dictatorships in Comparison* (Cambridge, 1997), 237–5; R. Overy, *Why The Allies Won* (London, 1985).

struggle against the fascist foe. The Soviet relationship with the Allies was much more complex than that with the Germans. It had to conform to the delicacies of wartime diplomacy but also buttress the growing emphasis on Soviet honour within the international community. After a brief era of alliance enthusiasm that roughly coincided with the German advance on Moscow, the Soviet press spent much of the war carefully chiding the Allies for their passivity and pointing out that the USSR was doing the vast majority of the real fighting. This criticism of the Western powers played a key role in the construction of an image of the USSR as the leading moral and military force in the international community that emerged in the months after Stalingrad.

This chapter focuses on the diplomatic identity of the USSR in wartime. It argues that certain aspects of Official Soviet Identity were extremely successful in shaping the thinking and behaviour of ordinary citizens in this period. Many Soviet citizens clearly identified with the rhetoric of Soviet moral authority and might. However, the war years were also plagued with rumours of allied diplomatic and military bad faith. In the absence of a clear official explanation for the allied failure to launch the Second Front in 1942–3, Soviet citizens deployed the tactic of *bricolage* and concluded that Britain and American were 'perfidious allies'. The image of the Allies that circulated within the word-of-mouth network placed less credence in Soviet power and more credence in the idea that Britain and America were, in some sense, defrauding the USSR

OFFICIAL SOVIET IDENTITY AND THE IMAGE OF THE ALLIES 1941–45

From the Invasion to December 1941

The outbreak of World War II threw the Soviet Union into an alliance with the two greatest capitalist states in the world. Within hours of the German invasion, Winston Churchill expressed Britain's support for the Soviet struggle against Nazi Germany. The relatively low profile accorded to Churchill's declaration may well reflect the Soviet government's discomfort at finding itself associated with such an unusual bedfellow.[5] Churchill had, after all, been a consistent opponent of the USSR. By July 1941, however, a new tone had been set. Stalin's first

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[5] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 24.06.1941, p. 1; *Pravda*, 24.06.1941, p. 1.

statement of the war expressed his sincere thanks to the United Kingdom and the USA for their offers of support.[6] From June to December 1941, the blossoming alliance between the USSR and Great Britain and the United States was the primary focus of Soviet international news.[7] Public lectures about the strength and unity of the Grand Alliance provided much needed reassurance as the Red Army scrambled to defend Moscow.[8] The visits of British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, and Roosevelt's advisor, Harry Hopkins, received front-page coverage. Meanwhile Aleksei Toltoi and Il'ia Ehrenburg waxed lyrical about the 'beautiful cities' of Britain and the iron 'will of the English people'.[9] Meanwhile press acquired a studied interest in the activities of British bombers who were razing German cities to the ground.[10] The Soviet film industry also captured the new wartime enthusiasm for their British allies. The wartime news films (*kinosborniki*) 3, 4, 5, 6, and 12 all included British reports from the Western Front in 1941–2.[11] As *Pravda* noted on December 30, the German strategy of isolating the USSR had failed: 'The USSR has not only ended up not isolated, but on the contrary has obtained new allies in the character of Great Britain and the USA...'[12]

This rapid transformation of circumstances led to an abandonment of almost all references to the capitalism of the USSR's alliance partners. An Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* lecturer was rebuked in March 1942 for speaking about class warfare in Britain and America.[13] The alliance had brought together a group of progressive states pursuing Enlightenment values such as justice, civilization, and liberation.[14] The 'freedom loving peoples' were of 'different social situations and different political outlooks', but were united in their common task to extinguish Hitler-

[6] *Pravda*, 03.07.41, p. 1.

[7] It was the top international news story in *Pravda* between July and December 1941. This data, as elsewhere, is based on a sampling of every 5th newspaper. July average of 0.37 pages, August 0.21, September 0.14, October 0.25.

[8] Inf. Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Obshchestvenno-Politicheskikh Dvizhenii i Formirovanii Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti, henceforth, GAOPDiFAO f. 834, op. 2, d. 69, l. 36.

[9] *Pravda*, 01.08.41, p. 1; 29.12.41, p. 1; *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 09.07.1941, p. 3; 07.11.1941, p. 4.

[10] *Ogonëk*, 09.1941: 8–9, p. 8.

[11] Drobashenko and Kenez, 'Film Propaganda in the Soviet Union, 1941–1945: Two Views', in Short, ed., *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II* (London, 1983), 106.

[12] *Pravda*, 30.12.41, p. 1.

[13] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, l, d. 308, l. 8.

[14] *Pravda*, 30.12.41 p, 1; 14.07.41 p, 1.

ism.[15] This new narrative harked back to Official Soviet Identity during the Popular Front era. However, what was distinctive was the importance that Britain and, after December 1941, America played in this version of Sovietness. This image of the USSR, at the heart of an alliance of progressive states, remained a central plank of Official Soviet Identity until late 1947.

From January 1942 to Tehran (November 1943)

In late 1941 the USSR was on the brink of defeat. By the Tehran Conference it was on the road to victory. The Soviet counter-attack at Moscow marked a turning point in the Great Patriotic War. Although the German forces advanced deep into their southern flank in the summer of 1942, the Red Army was never again in danger of collapse, as it had been in November 1941. The official image of Soviet identity, in relation to the Allies, underwent a significant transformation during the shift from potential collapse to successful advance. In 1941 the Allies had been a source of affirmation and security to the USSR. By late 1943 they provided the foil for official claims that the Soviet Union was the moral and military leader within the anti-Hitler coalition.

The Anglo-Soviet-American Alliance remained, above all, a union of progressive forces. As Stalin's November 1942 speech in celebration of the Revolution stated, the fascist programme of 'racial hatred, leadership of the chosen nation, and slavery . . .' stood in stark contrast to the Anglo-Soviet-American vision of 'destruction of racial exclusivity, equality of the nations . . . restoration of their sovereign rights . . . and reestablishment of democratic freedoms'. There were differences amongst the Allies but they were not insurmountable. As Stalin himself admitted, 'It would be laughable to deny the differences in ideology and in social construction . . . But does this preclude the possibility and the usefulness of the collaboration of the members of this coalition against the common enemy? . . . No.'[16]

The progressive nature of the Alliance did not, however, preclude the possibility of tensions between the freedom-loving states. The question of a Second Front in Continental Europe dominated the Soviet relationship with the Western powers in this period. As *Ogonëk* pointed out

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[15] *Pravda*, 31.10.41, p. 4.
[16] *Pravda*, 07.11.42, p. 1. See also his May Day speech: *Pravda*, 01.05.42, p. 1.

in September 1941 the 'problem of two fronts' would eventually lead to the 'exhaustion' of the German armies.[17] During the early months of the war, the Soviet press merely stated this fact, without explicitly exhorting the Allies to action. However, the various drafts of a speech to the First Antifascist Meeting of Youth, in September 1941, demonstrate that even at this stage, the Second Front was moving to the centre of the Soviet–Allied relationship. Successive drafts of the section addressed to British youth placed greater and greater emphasis on the importance of a Second Front in mainland Europe for the final defeat of Germany.[18]

Over the course of 1942–3 the Soviet press turned the Second Front into the defining issue within the Grand Alliance relationship. The call in 1942 for the total defeat of Germany that year was based on the assumption that the Allies would play their part and invade Europe in the next twelve months. In February 1942 Stalin addressed the question of Anglo-American inactivity directly for the first time stating that, 'At the moment the Red Army and the German Fascist Army are fighting one on one.'[19] By April *Pravda*'s international section regularly included details of demands within the allied countries for the commencement of operations in Europe.[20] The need for a Second Front also appeared within other popular media such as Korneichuk's 1942 play *Guerillas of the Ukrainian Steppes.*[21] Molotov arrived in London and Washington in May–June 1942 speaking only four words of English: 'yes', 'no', and 'Second Front'.[22] When Churchill and Roosevelt signed agreements committing them to a European invasion that year, they were greeted with rapturous enthusiasm inside the USSR. The arrival of American troops in Britain was cited as a 'clear demonstration of the forthcoming Second Front', whilst the urgency of its creation was repeated ad infinitum in the Soviet press.[23]

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[17] *Ogonëk*, 07.09.1941: 28, pp. 8–9.

[18] RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 32, d. 1, ll. 1–17.

[19] *Pravda*, 23.02.42, p. 1.

[20] *Pravda*, 01.04.4, p. 4; 22.05.42, p. 4; and 08.06.42, p. 4. April is also the point at which Soviet press reportage of Allied military actions fell by about 50% and remained low until November.

[21] A. Korneichuk, 'Guerrillas of the Ukrainian Steppes', in, *Four Soviet War Plays* (London, 1944), 184.

[22] M. A. Stoler, 'The Politics of the Second Front: American Military Planning and Diplomacy in Coalition Warfare, 1941–1943', *Contributions in Military History,* 12, (1977), 43.

[23] *Ogonëk*, 14.06.1942: 23–4, p. 3; *Pravda*, 12.06.42, p. 1.

August to November 1942 was the high point of Soviet coverage of the Second Front issue, as the Germans drove into the Soviet southern flank and the battle of Stalingrad drew near.[24] *Krasnaia Zvezda* and *Ogonëk* lamented the fact that the Allies' inactivity had allowed the Germans to 'direct all of its forces and the forces of its vassals against the Soviet Union'.[25] This imbalance made it easy for the Allies to advance on the 'secondary level' front in Africa but left the USSR carrying the vast majority of the military burden.[26] In October 1942 *Pravda* ran a cartoon depicting the British generals as 'blimps' failing to act even at the eleventh hour.[27] As a draft thesis for *kolkhoz* chairmen in November 1942 stated baldly, 'Until the present time, the participation of England and America in the war has not been active enough.'[28] The message was clear: England and America could open the Second Front and ensure German defeat; the question remained whether they would.

The Second Front remained the decisive issue within the Anglo-Soviet-American Alliance until the Tehran Conference in November 1943. Allied advances in North Africa and bombing raids were sometimes afforded a high profile.[29] However, these reports were always associated with demands for more action.[30] As Stalin explained, the North African offensive, 'Creates the conditions necessary for the organisation of the Second Front in Europe…that will have decisive significance.'[31] The Anglo-American landing in Italy did not constitute a Second Front. In November 1942, however, Stalin hinted at a shift in the official narrative concerning the invasion of Europe. He stated that the Second Front would be opened, '…sooner or later. And it will not only be because we need it, but above all because our Allies need it no less than us.'[32] During 1943, with the Germans defeated at Stalingrad, the Second Front was increasingly treated as a mechanism for shortening the war, rather than a precondition of victory. It would

[24] *Pravda* averaged around a third of a column (0.06 pages) every day for this story—the same space as it devoted to Allied military actions.

[25] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 27.09.1942, p. 4; *Ogonëk*, 02.08.1942: 31, pp. 8–9.

[26] *Ogonëk*, 18.10.1942: 42, pp. 8–9.

[27] *Pravda*, 06.10.42, p. 4.

[28] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 82, l. 55.

[29] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 18.12.1942, p. 4; *Pravda*, 03.06.42, p. 4; 11.11.42, p. 4. Coverage peaked at half a page per day in November 1942 and May 1943; the average was around one fifth of a page a day.

[30] *Ogonëk*, 20.12.1942: 51, p. 8; *Pravda*, 01.06.42, p. 4; 11.06.43, p. 4.

[31] *Pravda*, 14.11.42, p. 1. He reiterated this claim in May: 08.05.43, p. 4.

[32] *Pravda*, 07.11.42, p. 1.

decide 'Whether the war will be drawn out longer and whether new colossal sacrifices will be necessary.'[33] The first anniversary of the Soviet-American Agreement was greeted with admiration for the great modern army of the United States, but also a warning that, 'The matter of war is decided by people, who are able to put military technology into practice . . . bravely looking in the face of danger.'[34] Whether it was militarily essential or not, the Second Front remained, until Tehran, the benchmark by which the authenticity of the Allies' intents was to be judged. It represented the consummation of the union of progressive states and the Allies' failure to act cast doubt on the entire enterprise of the shared battle against fascism.

What is striking about this constant focus on the absent Second Front is that the Soviet press provided very little explanation as to why the Allies were failing to fulfil their responsibilities. Stalin devoted a whole section of his November 1942 speech to the thorny question of the Second Front. He argued that the German 'successes on our front this year' had been a result of the 'absence of the Second Front in Europe' which allowed them to concentrate their forces in the East. In the light of this Anglo-American failure to carry out their most pressing task, Stalin even felt the need to assure the Soviet people that the progressive alliance was still a reality. What the Supreme Commander did not provide was a clear explanation for the failure of that alliance to fulfil its central function.[35]

This failure to clearly account for the absence of the Second Front was typical of the Soviet press in the pre-Tehran era. Agitational material occasionally made dark hints about reactionary groups opposed to the invasion within the allied states.[36] In America they were isolationists; in Britain they were reactionary 'Munichites' who favoured rapprochement with Germany over military action.[37] The aggressive new journal *War and the Working Class* attacked American isolationists for 'throwing sticks and stones' at the government, or industrialists who had a vested interest in a long war.[38] Occasionally the Soviet press suggested that Anglo-American passivity might be a result of their fear

[33] *Pravda*, 06.08.43, p. 2. See also: 31.08.43, p. 4.
[34] *Pravda*, 11.06.43, p. 1.
[35] *Pravda*, 07.11.42, p. 1. See also: *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 18.12.1942, p. 3.
[36] RGASPI f 17, op 125, d, 82, l. 25.
[37] Britain: *Ogonëk*, 17.08.1943: 32, p. 15; *Pravda*, 08.09.43, p. 4; RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 43, l. 57. America: *Pravda*, 13.10.42, p. 4.
[38] *Pravda*, 04.07.43, p. 2; 06.08.43, p. 2.

of engagement: 'War is not won by people whose thoughts are fully occupied with the cost of war.'[39] But these explanations for inaction were not presented systematically. The Soviet press focused the vast majority of its attention on what the Allies were not doing, rather than on why they were not doing it.

As well as demanding that the Allies do more, the Soviet press also began to emphasize the centrality of the Soviet contribution to the overall victory. Soviet newspapers might be expected to prioritize the Eastern Front. However, their reportage increasingly made clear that the other fronts were mere appendages to the action in the East. As *Pravda* explained in 1942, 'The victory of the English in Egypt would have been impossible without the advance of the Guards of General Rodishev, and the successes of the Americans in Algeria are closely connected with the losses of the German–Italian army in Russia.'[40] A gathering of Party activists in Arkhangel'sk, in December 1942, was informed that the Red Army's courage and victories had 'secured for the Allies success in their military operations'.[41] An August 1943 cartoon depicted a Russian soldier thumping Hitler 'We strike the blow in Russia'.[42] In the picture below Mussolini was blown out of a chimney 'The response is seen in Italy'. The Red Army was credited for allied successes on all fronts.

This focus on the primacy of the Red Army was a key element of Official Soviet Identity in relation to the Allies in the pre-Tehran era. The Soviet press carried almost no stories of individual heroism within the Anglo-American forces.[43] There was no space for non-domestic heroes within Soviet popular culture. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter 3, they were more likely to appear as ambivalent, or even antagonistic characters. In sharp contrast, the heroes of the Red Army were showered in a tumult of praise. A draft thesis for gatherings of *kolkhoz* chairmen in November 1942 stated that, 'The people of the mighty USA and the rest of the world see in the USSR the nation with the might to rescue the world from the fascist hordes.'[44] A 1943 VOKS exhibition entitled 'Soviet Culture Overseas in the Great Fatherland War' opened with General Macarthur's statement that, 'The hopes of civilisation rest on

[39] *Pravda*, 05.08.42, p. 4, quoting the British *Sunday Express*.
[40] *Pravda*, 12.11.42, p. 3.
[41] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1183, l. 5.
[42] *Ogonëk*, 10.08.1943: 31, p. 16.
[43] The only exceptions I found were: *Pravda*, 01.05.42, p. 4, and 22.04.43 p. 4.
[44] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 82, l. 43.

the glorious banners of the valiant Red Army.'[45] The Soviet press repeatedly reassured its readers, particular during the siege of Stalingrad, that the Soviet Union had become a beacon of hope for all humanity.[46] The Red Army was filling the void created by the allied failure to carry their share of the military burden. By late 1943 the image of the USSR had been transformed from a member of the progressive anti-Hitler alliance into its leader. The Soviet Union's wartime allies were partners in the struggle with Germany, but they were also duly grateful for the overwhelming Soviet contribution to the war effort. The USSR was not just a Great Power, but the most active and heroic of the 'Big Three' states.

From Tehran to Normandy

The Soviet relationship with their Anglo-American Allies was irrevocably transformed by the Tehran Conference. From late 1943 onwards, the Second Front ceased to be the defining issue within the Alliance. The Council of Foreign Ministers, and the main conference itself, were held to discuss the 'most speedy destruction of Hitler's Germany and its allies in Europe'.[47] The three Great Powers left the meeting 'true friends in spirit and action'.[48] It was a transparent code for the fact that the Allies had finally agreed to open the Second Front. The point was not lost on the Soviet population, one of whom was quoted in *Pravda* saying, 'The mutual understanding achieved here guarantees our victory.'[49] The new, more positive, tone was symbolized in Stalin's observation in November 1943 that the 'current activities of the allied armies in the South of Europe [Italy] could not be regarded as a Second Front. But it is something like a Second Front.'[50] The defining arena of distinction and definition within the Grand Alliance ceased to be an issue.

On 28 November 1943, the day the conference began, *Krasnaia Zvezda* published a cartoon entitled 'Berlin Meeting'. It showed Ribbentrop and Goering meeting in the streets of Berlin because both of their ministries have been destroyed by bombing.[51] The Soviet press

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[45] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 93.
[46] *Ogonëk*, 11.1942: 44, pp. 8–9. Stalingrad: *Pravda*, 25.12.42, p. 4; 27, 12, 42, p. 4. See also: *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 03.02.1943, p. 4.
[47] *Pravda*, 02.11.43, p. 1.   [48] *Ogonëk*, 12.1943: 49, p. 1.
[49] *Pravda*, 07.12.43, p. 2.   [50] *Pravda*, 07.11.43, p. 1.
[51] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 28.11.1943, p. 4.

even began to publish details about British battlefield losses for the first time.[52] The eulogic tone took a dip in early 1944: allied military operations received just over a column per day between January and April. Stalin's May Day statement, however, reasserted that relations were healthy within the allied camp. He stated that the Soviet successes 'have been assisted to a significant degree by our great Allies, the USA and Great Britain . . . deflecting from us a significant part of the German army'.[53] A cartoon on 2 May depicted three guns, Soviet, American, and British blowing apart the fascist beast in his lair, and the fall of Rome was greeted as a 'Great victory of the Allies' with 'great political and strategic significance'.[54] The imminence of the Second Front dissipated the uncertainty within the allied relationship after Tehran.

The removal of the Second Front as the defining source of tension did not, however, precipitate a total reworking of Soviet identity within the Grand Alliance. The image of the USSR as the military driving force and moral leader of the anti-Hitler front remained at the centre of the official Soviet image of self after Tehran, and the Soviet press continued to belittle the efforts of the allied forces. This minimization is particularly notable in the context of the extremely positive reportage afforded to the USSR by the British and American press. Anglo-American filmmakers, journalists, and academics rallied around the call to praise the Soviet Union and 'Uncle Joe Stalin' during World War II.[55] Within Official Soviet Identity, the distinctions between the Great Powers remained as important as the similarities. The centralization, valorization and glorification of the Red Army accelerated. In January 1944 Agitprop circulated a lecture, 'About the military political and International Situation' to its propaganda groups. The first thirty-six pages of the report only mentioned the Allies to report on the German withdrawal from the Italian Front to transfer troops to the East. The three pages that did discuss the alliance focused on the weakness of the German military forces in Western Europe.[56] As *Krasnaia Zvezda*

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[52] *Pravda*, 23.03.44, p. 4. See also 15.03.44, p. 4, for civilian deaths from bombing.

[53] *Pravda*, 01.05.44, p. 1.

[54] *Pravda*, 02.05.44, p. 4. This kind of imagery was the focus of 11 of the 12 *Pravda* wartime cartoons depicting the Allies: K. J. McKenna, *All the Views Fit to Print: Changing Images of the U.S. in Pravda, Political Cartoons, 1917–1991* (New York, 2001), 54–6. *Pravda*, 05.06.44, p. 4.

[55] See A. Perlmutter, *FDR and Stalin: A Not So Grand Alliance, 1943–1945* (Columbia, 1993), 102–8, 157.

[56] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 237, ll. 7–46.

explained in May 1944, the USSR was a 'country of titans' that enjoyed 'the esteem and love of all the freedom loving peoples'.[57] *Ogonëk*'s front-page photograph of the Tehran conference subtly demonstrated this dynamic. Stalin sits, flanked by Roosevelt and Churchill, both of whom seem to be seated a couple of feet below him and so look up to the Soviet leader as he addresses the crowd (see Figure 2.1).[58] This image encapsulated the moral and military authority of the USSR that was further enhanced as the Red Army began its slow march to Berlin in the winter of 1943–4.[59]

After Tehran, the Soviet press also began to identify more clearly those individuals within the allied states who were enemies of the USSR. Isolationist senators, such as Willer and Chandler, were the object of particular wrath.[60] Roosevelt's withering attack on 'cocktail hall dwellers', who were using the war for social and political profit, was also reported.[61] In April 1944 *Krasnaia Zvezda* reported in quite negative terms about the ambitious expansion of the Rockerfeller oil 'monopoly', *Standard Oil*.[62] Meanwhile *Pravda* took up cudgels against the *Daily Mail* and *New York Journal* that were dubbed the 'audible echo of Goebbels'.[63] January 1944 also witnessed the revival of the assault on the Polish émigré government in London. The Soviet Union had severed its ties with the Sikorskii administration in the spring of 1943. The attack on the 'pro-Hitler elements in the Polish Emigration' returned to prominence in early 1944, and became a major international news story for the rest of the war.[64] The image of the enemy, within the alliance camp, was much clearer after Tehran. Perhaps the greater stability over the Second Front encouraged the Soviet government to take a more direct line against its overseas opponents. Nonetheless, the main focus of the Soviet press remained on the strength and collaborative nature of the anti-Hitler front.

[57] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 07.05.1944, p. 1.
[58] *Ogonëk*, 12.1943: 49, p. 1.
[59] e.g., *Pravda*, 03.02.44, p. 1.
[60] *Pravda*, 28.11.43, p. 4; 03.01.44, p. 4.
[61] *Pravda*, 13.01.44, p. 4.
[62] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 25.04.1944, p. 4.
[63] *Pravda*, 03.03.43, p. 4; 25.02.44, p. 4.
[64] It was the biggest international story in January (0.15 pages), March (0.10), October (0.18), and December (0.25) 1944.

Fig. 2.1 Churchill and Roosevelt literally look up to Stalin

Ogonëk, 12.1943: 49, p. 1.

From Normandy to Berlin

On 6 June 1944 the long awaited invasion of Europe arrived. The story of the Anglo-American landings went out on successive news bulletins on the radio and was greeted in glowing terms on the morning of the 7th.[65] *Pravda* devoted two full pages to the story stating that 'The blood flowing in the name of the common allied task in the East, West and the South strengthens the basis of the great military alliance of the freedom loving peoples.'[66] Il'ia Ehrenburg wrote excitedly in *Krasnaia Zvezda* that 'It has Begun!' and expressed the pride of the Soviet people in their 'brothers-in-arms'.[67] Over the following days, the strategic success of the amphibious landings was widely praised.[68] Stalin himself commen-

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[65] Werth, *Russia at War*, 853–4.
[66] *Pravda*, 07.06.44, p. 3.
[67] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 08.06.1944, p. 3.
[68] *Ogonëk*, 06.1944: 23, p. 15.

ted that 'The history of war does not know a similar undertaking in breadth of intention, grandiosity of scale and mastery of execution.'[69] The Soviet press also paid an unprecedented amount of attention to the personal aspect of the war, showing allied soldiers in military action and making a rare concession to the idea that British families, as well as Soviet ones, were mourning their dead sons and husbands.[70] In late June, *Ogonëk* published a cartoon of Hitler looking both East and West through a pair of periscopes in total despair.[71] The period after Normandy was the high point of talk about unity and collaboration within the Grand Alliance and also the high point of hope-filled discussions about the post-war world.

However, the post-Normandy era was also the period in which the Soviet press began to talk most transparently about disagreements within the alliance. Poland was the primary sphere of tension. The Soviet denunciation of the Warsaw Uprising as a 'tragic political game' further soured relations between the Great Powers. *Pravda* published Churchill's comments that he had not 'found a resolution to these problems', and Roosevelt's confession that he had 'concerns' over Poland.[72] Even more damning were warnings that German industrialists were seeking support from British and American banks to secure their post-war future.[73] The Soviet press also maintained its assault on certain American publications and politicians, as well as British and Catholic reactionaries in the allied states.[74]

However, the spirit of the era remained one of collaboration and unity. The Soviet press was at pains to point out that, despite these substantive differences, the alliance partners were more united than at any previous time during the war. As Stalin observed in November 1944, 'There are of course disagreements . . . There are disagreements even amongst people of one and the same party . . . But they are as a rule decided almost every time in the spirit of unity and agreed action of the three Great Powers.'[75] In its review of the year since Tehran, *Pravda* observed that, 'The practice of life has shown that in the conditions of

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[69] *Pravda*, 14.06.44, p. 1.

[70] *Ogonëk*, 06.1944: 28–9, p. 7; 31.08.1944: 30, p. 5.

[71] *Ogonëk*, 06.1944: 20, p. 18.

[72] *Pravda*, 16.08.44, p. 4; 28.10.44, p. 4.

[73] *Pravda*, 08.04.45, p. 4; 19.04.45, p. 4; 21.04.45, p. 4.

[74] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 10.01.1945, p. 4; *Pravda*, 03.08.44, p. 4; 04.03.45, p. 4; 07.01.45, p. 4.

[75] *Pravda*, 07.11.44, p. 2.

good will and striving towards mutual understanding, there are no insurmountable disagreements between the Allies.'[76] The Crimean Conference, in February 1945, provided another great testimony to the 'unity' of the Great Powers which was no longer of a 'general strategic' but also 'concrete operative character'.[77] The hope of post-war collaboration, rather than the presence of reactionaries overseas, was what characterized the Grand Alliance as the war drew to its close.[78]

Even in the post-Normandy period, however, the Soviet press continued to make it clear that the USSR was the moral and military head of the Grand Alliance. After a brief burst of enthusiasm in June 1944, official discussions of the battle in the West reverted to the previous bloodless and strategic, rather than heroic narratives. After ordering a number of newsreels concerning the Normandy landings, Soviet cinema officials decided not to screen them, much to the Americans' disappointment.[79] The Soviet–German Front remained the epicentre of the conflict. *Pravda* reported that the first opinion poll in liberated Paris had found that 61 per cent felt the USSR was doing the most to fight Hitler, 29 per cent the USA and 12 per cent Britain.[80] The Soviet press began to fixate, as it had during 1942, on the relative number of German divisions confronting the alliance partners. Stalin himself signalled a return to this alliance accountancy in November 1944 when he noted that there were 75 German divisions in the West and 200 in the East.[81] A *Krasnaia Zvezda* interview with some French pilots fighting in the USSR noted that they preferred to fight on the Eastern Front because they were 'not interested in parades' but in a real struggle.[82] In early 1945, ten out of fourteen consecutive 'International Reviews', *Pravda*'s authoritative weekly summary of world news, stated in their lead story that the vast majority of the fighting was going on in the East.[83] The German forces in the West were undertrained and undergunned.[84] On 11 April Il'ia Ehrenburg took this a step too far in

[76] *Pravda*, 01.12.44, p. 4.   [77] *Ogonëk*, 28.02.1945: 8, p. 3.
[78] *Pravda*, devoted two and a half times as much space per month to stories about post-war collaboration than to 'reactionaries' in the West. (Average 0.045 pages to collaboration, 0.02 to reactionaries from July 1944 to April 1945.)
[79] D. J. Parks, *Culture, Conflict and Coexistence: American-Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917–1958* (London, 1983), 96.
[80] *Pravda*, 04.10.44, p. 4.
[81] *Pravda*, 07.11.44, p. 1.
[82] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 05.11.1944, p. 3.
[83] *Pravda*, 21.01.45 to 22.04.45, p. 4.
[84] *Ogonëk*, 10.1944: 38, p. 5; *Pravda*, 24.08.44, p. 4.

his article 'That's Enough!' He talked of the German soldiers giving themselves up with 'fanatical enthusiasm' and ranted that in contrast 'we did not take Koningsberg by telephone'.[85] Ehrenburg was rebuked by none other than G. F. Alexandrov, the head of Agitprop, for 'over-simplifying'. Alexandrov agreed that the Germans were moving troops eastwards, but argued that this was a sign of German, rather than allied, duplicity.[86] These mollifying sentiments did not stop the Soviet press reporting that the Western Front was being left 'without serious defence' right up to the end of the war.[87] As the war drew to a close, the Red Army was once again presented as the force bearing the majority of the burden in the common anti-Hitler cause.

The endless stories about how the fighting was fiercest on the Soviet Front placed the USSR at the centre of the anti-Hitler coalition. It was not merely a member amongst equals, but the driving force of the Grand Alliance. The Soviet Union was performing a great service in the interests of the whole of humanity. During the last months of the war, *Pravda* ran headlines such as 'The Great Liberating Mission of the Red Army' or 'The Great Historical Service of the Soviet people'.[88] Their heroic actions provoked the thanks of the global population to the Soviet state and the Red Army. The liberated peoples of Eastern Europe expressed their heartfelt gratitude to the Red Army in a litany of thanks that was typical of the Soviet press throughout the Stalin era.[89] However, whereas previously the Soviet people had expressed their appreciation to Stalin and the party leadership, now the people of the world were offering their thanks to the population of the USSR.[90] Citizens of the Soviet Union had acquired a new dignity, as their state had acquired a new identity. The USSR had become a liberator state, and its population had become a liberator people. The Great Powers were united in the common cause, but the Allies could not be equals within this narrative of Soviet global moral and military exceptionalism.

[85] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 11.04.1945.
[86] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 15.04.1945, p. 2.
[87] *Ogonëk*, 04.1945: 15–16, p. 7.
[88] *Pravda*, 20.11.44, p. 1; 21.04.45, p. 1.
[89] *Pravda*, 23.01.45, p. 4; 11.04.45, p. 4.
[90] Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin!*, 200–10.

THE GRAND ALLIANCE IN THE SOVIET
COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION

On 22 June 1941 the rumour network was proved right and the official press proved wrong. Only eight days before, TASS had clearly stated that the friendship between the USSR and Nazi Germany was secure: the word-of-mouth network had been warning of an impending invasion for months. The invasion of the USSR was the decisive moment in the lives of a Soviet generation: as Professor D. Karpov of Moscow State University put it, it was the moment at which 'all our histories turned'.[91] It was also a hugely significant moment in terms of the relationship between Soviet citizens and the official press. The flood of fresh information and the volte face of the Nazi–Soviet Pact had forced Soviet citizens to rely even more heavily on the 'tactics of the habitat' after 1939. The outbreak of war reaffirmed this drift. At least one respondent to HIP claimed that 'When the war started it was impossible for us to believe. I started to cry and I was profoundly shocked.'[92] Most Soviet citizens did not experience June 1941 as an epiphany. However, it set the tone for the war years, when rumour, as well as the official press, played a vital role in informing Soviet citizens about international affairs.

The failure of the official press to forewarn its audience was compounded by the collapse of the infrastructure of the Soviet state in the first months of the conflict. The precipitous retreat of the Red Army sparked panic throughout the areas near the front. Local party bosses struggled to shift factories eastwards and labour discipline fragmented.[93] In some places the mechanisms through which official information was communicated disappeared overnight. In Ivanovo *oblast'* agitators simply stopped visiting the factories. As a result, workers were forced to rely on informal word-of-mouth communication and they began gathering thirty minutes before their shifts to have unofficial discussions about events at the front.[94] What was published in the Soviet press communicated depressingly little to its audience. Retreats

[91] Luzhkov and Gromov, eds., *Moskva Prifrontovaia*, 67.
[92] HIP. A. 23, 468, 6.
[93] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 37, d. 545, ll. 7, 9, 31–4, 45.
[94] Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 41–5.

were masked in euphemisms and major defeats were ignored. During the first months of the war, Soviet film-makers rarely filmed action at the front. Instead they filmed manoeuvres and mock battles in which the Red Army emerged victorious, and presented them as genuine action. Contemporary audiences were not fooled.[95] As M. Sviridov explained in a 1941 letter to Lozovskii, the deputy head of Sovinform-buro, the failure of the official press to provide the kind of information people wanted contributed directly to the spread of rumours.[96]

'News hunger' peaked in the early crisis months of the war and probably contributed to the general collapse of morale during the long autumn of 1941.[97] The first few months of the war were characterized by wild rumours and speculation, as Soviet citizens resorted to *bricolage* in an attempt to plug the gaps within official narratives. In July 1941, rumours circulated in Arkhangel'sk that Leningrad was now indefensible, Murmansk had already fallen, and that two transport ships carrying Red Army soldiers had been sunk in the White Sea.[98] Muscovites rumoured that the Germans had already entered the outer suburbs during the city's days of panic in October 1941.[99] The Soviet state recovered some of its poise during the defence of Moscow in late 1941, and events at the front line received detailed coverage once the tide had turned at Stalingrad. Nonetheless, news hunger remained a feature of Soviet life during 1943–5 as the USSR strained for victory.

Rumours were even more important to Soviet citizens during wartime and they seem to have passed them on with even less regard for the potential risks involved. Respondents to HIP commented:

At that moment one did not have to be too careful about what one said. I openly told my friends that I didn't think Stalingrad could hold.[100]

My watch-repair man openly told me of his resentment about the course of the war . . . The majority did not bother to conceal its feelings of anti-soviet contempt.[101]

[95] Kenez 'Image of the Enemy', 108–9.

[96] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 30, l. 39.

[97] Merridale, *Ivan's War*, 78–9; M. M. Gorinov, trans. R. W. Thurston, 'Muscovites Moods, 22 June 1941 to May 1942', in Thurston and Bonwetsch, *The People's War: Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union* (Chicago 2000), 108–31;

[98] Sv. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 985, ll. 19, 29, 30.

[99] R. Braithwaite, *Moscow 1941: A City and Its People at War* (London, 2007), 247.

[100] HIP. B6, 144, 4.

[101] HIP. B6, 382, 1.

БУДЬ НА ЧЕКУ,
В ТАКИЕ ДНИ
ПОДСЛУШИВАЮТ СТЕНЫ.
НЕДАЛЕКО ОТ БОЛТОВНИ
И СПЛЕТНИ
ДО ИЗМЕНЫ.

НЕ БОЛТАЙ!

Fig. 2.2 N. Denisov and N. Vatolina 1941. 'Don't Chatter!' This famous wartime poster warns that it is a short distance from chatter and gossip to treason.

It might be tempting to describe this candid exchange of views as a product of the wartime 'relaxation'. However, whereas trade, cultural, and religious policies were consciously made less repressive, the growth of the rumour network reflected the failure of the official information networks during wartime. The Soviet state did not plan to allow for more rumour. On the contrary, official brochures and posters warned that rumour mongers were unwitting agents of the enemy (see Figure 2.2).[102] It simply could not contain the proliferation of unofficial information after 1941.

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[102] Inf. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 18–9.

The most successful category of rumour that circulated throughout the USSR during wartime, related directly to Official Soviet Identity and concerned the Soviet relationship with Britain and America. Rumours about the Germans were few and far between. Even if some individuals had initially greeted them as liberators, the experience of occupation rapidly turned most Soviet citizens against them.[103] The relationship with Germany was clear and comprehensible; the relationship with the wartime Allies was full of ambiguities that fuelled a vast body of speculative rumours throughout the period 1941–5.

The success of the official press: the Grand Alliance and Soviet greatness

The available evidence indicates that many Soviet citizens clung to the newfound wartime alliance with Great Britain as a source of hope during the dark days of 1941. The American novelist, Erskine Caldwell, was visiting a Soviet collective farm in 1941 when the news of the British Pact of Mutual Assistance was announced. When the farmers heard the news their faces broke out into smiles, 'The great British Army, they told me, and the great Red Army—together we will crush fascism.'[104] V. I. Nikitin, a Soviet railway worker, drew strength from the fact that that, although the situation was grim at the front in November 1941, 'our cause is just, the people are united and the USA and England are united with us in alliance'.[105] Nonetheless there were also some who regarded their new-found allies with suspicion and doubted the sincerity of 'Churchill's empty words'.[106] Even during the desperate early months of the war, there was a diversity of opinions concerning the credibility of the wartime alliance.

This range of reactions to the Allies typifies popular responses to the Western powers throughout the war. The 'popularity' of Britain and America ebbed and flowed rapidly as the news changed. Werth describes how 'suddenly England seemed to have become wonderfully popular' in his train carriage when the news of a 1,000 bomber raid on Cologne

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[103] Int. Fischer, *Thirteen Who Fled*, 75. See Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*.

[104] Mem. E. Caldwell, *Russia At War* (London, 1942), 8.

[105] Mem. V. I. Nikitin, *Dnevnik Voennogo Zheleznodorozhnika* (St Petersburg, 2004), 35.

[106] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 11369, l. 3; Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 41, l. 18.

circulated in June 1942.[107] It is not possible, nor particularly interesting, to track these day-by-day fluctuations in 'popular opinion'. However, it is possible to examine the imaginative frameworks, or *mentalité*, through which Soviet citizens interpreted the relationship with their wartime Allies.

Pravda's growing focus in 1942–3 on the possibility of an allied invasion of mainland Europe had a profound influence on the manner in which ordinary Soviet citizens understood the Grand Alliance. Reports gathered as early as November 1941 note that the citizens of Leningrad were 'exceptionally interested' in the question of the Second Front.[108] This interest in the Second Front lasted throughout the period until it was finally launched in June 1944. At a gathering of propagandists in Arkhangel'sk in August 1942, Andreev, a Communist agitator at the Polar Institute, noted that 'In recent times, apologising that it is "not your topic", at every lecture without fail they ask a question about the Second Front. This question occupies the foremost place.'[109] Out of forty-three agitators' reports from January 1942 to June 1944, that list the questions asked at lectures, only three do not mention the Second Front. Some of the lists state that this issue was raised at every single public meeting.[110] The Second Front was also a key topic of private conversations in this period. A series of eighteen Interior Ministry NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs) *svodki,* recording the mood of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in Ufa between August 1942 and June 1943, reveal a repeated focus on the question of the Second Front. In October 1942, it had even become an 'hourly topic of conversation'.[111]

The overwhelming evidence suggests that the vast majority of these non-combatant civilians were not only interested in the question of the Second Front, but shared the assumptions of the official press that it would play a vital role in the eventual defeat of fascism. An anonymous cartoon sent to *Krokodil,* just after Molotov's Anglo-American visit of May 1942, pictured a field of destroyed Nazi forces. A Soviet plane rains bombs on them labelled, 'Talks between the USA and England',

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[107] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 368.

[108] Gusev, et al., *Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie*, 18–19.

[109] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 834, op. 2, d. 203, l. 39. His comments were echoed by three other agitators at the same meeting. ll. 42, 43, 44b.

[110] Inf. A significant number of these lists can be found in: RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, dd. 113, 119, 122, 255, 310, 326.

[111] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 125, ll. 1. 25; d. 685, ll. 1–180.

'Second Front in 1942', and 'Agreement with the USA'. On the horizon a new day dawns with the words 'Second Front' in the clouds.[112] When the long-awaited invasion finally came, there was jubilation inside the USSR. In Smolensk *oblast'*, agitators reported that, 'After the news the mood of the collective farm workers improved; they began to talk more cheerfully and even the work in the fields improved.' The *kolkhozniki* remarked to each other that, 'Now the war will be over soon.'[113] Margaret Wettlin, an American resident of the USSR, heard the news in a grocery queue. 'People laughed and slapped each other on the back...' "Things should move fast now", said a workman. "Maybe everything will be over by fall."'[114] The newly opened commercial restaurants in Moscow were packed that night with British, American, and Russian revellers.[115]

This interest in the question of the Second Front was shared by many soldiers in the Red Army. A. T. Mar'ian noted in his diary that an April 1943 army lecture on the life of Lenin had been distracted by questions about the Second Front.[116] Their personal experience of the front line did little to undermine their faith that a Second Front would play a decisive role in the anti-Hitler struggle. The Politruk, Iu. Kominskii, wrote home in May 1942 to greet his family and celebrate the joint Anglo-American declaration about the Second Front; he was convinced it would accelerate the end of the war.[117] I. Rodiukov wrote to his pre-war university Professor, M. A. Veller, in similar terms: 'The winter and the English from the West will help our people to set itself free in the spring from the fascist invaders.'[118] Vasily Ermolenko noted in his diary in July 1943 that if the Allies 'put pressure on Hitler from the west, then the war can be finished in 1943'.[119] When the invasion finally came it was greeted with expressions of joy. A front-line Guards soldier wrote to Leonid Utesov on 6 June 1944, 'Today we received the joyous news about the opening of the Second Front...You cannot understand how

[112] Let. RGALI f. 600, op. 1, d. 20, ll. 77, 130, 169.
[113] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 235, l. 72.
[114] Mem. M. Wettlin, *Fifty Russian Winters: An American Woman's Life in the Soviet Union* (New York, 1992), 247.
[115] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 853.
[116] Mem. A. T. Mar'ian, *Gody moi, kak soldaty: Dnevnik sel'skogo aktivista 1925–1953 gg.* (Kishinev, 1987), 172.
[117] Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad*, 286.
[118] Let. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 46, d. 29, l. 12.
[119] Mem. V. Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik starshego serzhanta* (Belgorod, 2000), 22.

all our moods were transformed.'[120] From the front line to the factory floor Soviet citizens imbibed the message of the official press, that the Second Front in Europe would play a decisive role in the military victory over fascist Germany.

Once the longed-for Second Front had arrived in mid 1944, the official narrative, that claimed the USSR was striking the decisive blows against Germany, also seems to have had a profound influence over the thinking of many Soviet citizens. This was particularly the case at the front line, where pride in the military feats of the Red Army was prominent. A popular Red Army marching song about Hitler, that even made it into the repertoires of some Soviet performing groups, included a verse about allied unwillingness to engage the Germans:

> The Allies ran away from him,
> They were suited to the Mussolini road.
> Waiting for cakes and buns,
> They got black eyes and bumps.
> Scarcely saving their skins.[121]

The notion that the Allies were playing a secondary role also spread beyond the ranks of active combatants. Alexander Werth remembered that within a few weeks of the landings, the allied operations had been relegated in the minds of many Soviet citizens to 'relatively small stuff' in comparison to the massive Soviet offensive in Belorussia.[122]

The Secret Police gathered a huge volume of material about subversive comments during the war. They recorded almost no remarks in which Soviet citizens claimed that the Allies were actually doing the majority of the fighting against Germany. A typical example of what the NKVD regarded as subversive talk was the claim by Professor Grinchenko, a Ukrainian academic in Ufa that, 'The English and Americans . . . are commanding our army on the basis of their strategy . . . We are just being used as a blind weapon in their hands.'[123] Grinchenko manipulated, but did not contest the idea that the Allies were not doing their fair share of the fighting. Rumours that suggested the Anglo-Americans were doing all of the fighting were very rare. They were not successful and so did not spread. The Soviet press established a near

[120] Let. RGALI f, 3005, op. 1, d. 750, l. 69.
[121] Let. Ibid. l. 53.
[122] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 856.
[123] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 125, l. 21.

hegemonic image of the respective contributions of the various alliance partners to the anti-Hitler struggle.

   The Soviet press was also extremely successful at communicating certain aspects of Official Soviet Identity during this period. The narrative of Soviet moral and military greatness enjoyed widespread success amongst significant proportions of the population. As one Russian woman expressed it, after the victory at Stalingrad, 'For the first time in my life, I think we are a very great people, perhaps the greatest people in the world.'[124] A group of factory workers in Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* indignantly enquired in 1942, 'Why do they say Anglo-Soviet-American and not Soviet-Anglo-American Coalition?'[125] The former term diminished the leading role of the USSR. The visitors' book for a July 1943 exhibition about 'Soviet Culture Overseas During the War' was filled with comments such as,

I left this exhibition with a great sense of pride in our country.

We swelled with pride at the knowledge that we were the guiding star to the peoples of the world.

Now I am once again proud of the strength of our country and her place in the world. The love of the peoples of the world towards us as the leading force was inspiring.[126]

This notion of Soviet greatness is also evident in the NKVD *svodki* from the years 1943–5. A doctor, named Sokol from Kiev, remarked exultantly after the Crimean Conference that, 'The fact alone of the journey of Roosevelt and Churchill to the territory of the USSR testifies about the mighty capacity of our country and the dominating role of the Soviet Union amongst the other allied powers . . .'[127] Seniuk, a *kolkhoznik* from Voinilovskii *raion,* noted in a similar vein, 'Now we believe that the Soviet power has great strength. It has won the authority of the greatest state in the world.'[128] The imprint of Soviet late-war greatness remained a prominent feature in the memories of Soviet citizens for years afterwards. Vasilii Ivanovich, a child during the war, remembered how he heard that at Tehran Churchill had stood like a soldier before

[124] Mem. A. Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years* (New York, 1971), 10.
[125] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1301, l. 38.
[126] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, ll. 144–5.
[127] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 2.
[128] Sv. Ibid. ll. 3, 4, 5, 14, 24.

Stalin because of the great authority of the *vozhd'*.[129] Even some of the most anti-Soviet respondents to HIP affirmed that the USSR had done a great thing in defeating Hitler and liberating Eastern Europe.[130]

This sense of Soviet global greatness was particularly powerful amongst the front-line soldiers. After Stalingrad the *frontoviki* were feted as celebrities in the USSR. Their new-found status was closely connected to the moral and military authority of the USSR.[131] Young men, such as V. S. Litvinov, wrote to Soviet leaders begging to be allowed to participate in the 'great task' at the front.[132] One respondent to HIP remarked that 'the feeling of being a victor was predominant' during his first months in Berlin. He enjoyed walking the streets in civilian clothes and then watching the Germans tremble with fear when he revealed his identity.[133] Red Army soldiers were the active arm of the leading nation within the Grand Alliance. As Boris Romanovich, a front-line officer, explained in an interview, 'Our place in the world was higher than in '41 . . . The status as winners was of course very high in 1945.'[134] The official Soviet narrative of self provided a powerful and engaging identity for many Soviet citizens both at the front line and away from it.

Alternative imaginations: rumour, speculation, and manipulation

It is perhaps unsurprising that Soviet citizens were convinced their armies were bearing the brunt of the fight against Germany. The scale of the German invasion and the ongoing casualties were clear to both combatant and non-combatant citizens alike. Soviet citizens were also by no means wrong to conclude that the fighting in France was 'relatively small stuff' in comparison to the massive offensive being

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[129] Int. Vasilii Ivanovich, Moscow, May 2004. See also: Zubkova, *Russia After the War*, 32–3.

[130] HIP. A. 30, 642, 60; 9, 121, 30.

[131] Mem. A. Korin, *Sovietskaia rossiia v 40–60 godakh* (Frankfurt, 1968), 107.

[132] Let. GARF f. R7523, op. 29, d. 52, ll. 51; see also ll. 25–6. See Edele, *Soviet Veterans of World War II*, and Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 49–56, for a discussion of Red Army service as a marker of status in the post-war period.

[133] HIP. B9, 25, 6.

[134] Int. Boris Romanovich, Moscow, September 2004.

conducted on the Belorussian front in 1944. Moreover, the discursive power of the Soviet propaganda machine made it likely that significant proportions of the population would be influenced by its version of wartime Soviet patriotism.

However, the hegemony of the Soviet press concerning the internal dynamics of the Grand Alliance did not extent to the interpretations Soviet citizens placed on this state of affairs. A large number of alternative inferences concerning this military imbalance circulated within the word-of-mouth network at this time. These explanations shared the official press' vision of the internal military dynamics of the alliance, but differed as to the implications of that state of affairs.

The Soviet press failed to provide a clear explanation for the allied failure to open the Second Front throughout 1942 and 1943. The most common question asked about the Second Front was *why* is it not open? It was asked at every agitational meeting in Kursk *oblast'* during April 1943.[135] Many agitators struggled to provide an answer. At a May 1942 gathering of agitators in Arkhangel'sk, several of those present confessed that they did not know what to say when the workers asked about the Second Front.[136] A wartime *frontovik* remembered in a similar vein that 'Many questions were asked about relations with the Allies but the *zampolits* gave evasive answers.'[137] This void in explanation fed directly into the informal world of rumour and speculation that flourished in the USSR. Soviet citizens employed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* to draw their own conclusions about why the Allies were failing to fulfil their duty in the shared struggle against Hitler. They fused the information they received from the official press with pre-existing assumptions about Britain, America, and international affairs to generate a wealth of rival interpretations within the informal news network.

Whether they regarded it in a positive light or not, many Soviet citizens concluded that the Allies were taking advantage of the USSR. This narrative of allied exploitation is evident in a vast array of different sources generated by the state, Soviet citizens themselves, and later interviewers. Vselevod Vishnevskii, who became a well-known author, echoed one of the most common conclusions within the rumour

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[135] Inf. For example: RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 136, l. 58.
[136] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 834, op. 2, d. 203, ll. 40b–44b. The chair of the meeting simply told them that they should read the newspapers and everything would become clear. See also f. 296, op. 1, d. 1551, l. 50 for a similar problem.
[137] HIP. B4, 64, 7.

network, when he wrote in his diary that the Allies hoped to 'manoeuvre to protect their forces until Germany and the USSR have drained from each other the maximum of blood and arrive for the finale of the war'.[138] Others held that the Allies were holding off because they were convinced the USSR was about to collapse. Anatolii Rybin wrote in his diary in early 1942 that, 'Our allies were also waiting, believing in our powerlessness to carry out significant active operations.'[139] Such comments were also common in the *svodki* gathered by the Secret Police, which often recorded speakers attributing sinister causes to allied inaction. A senior scientific worker of the Biology Institute based in Ufa, Zerov, concluded in March 1943 that 'It is clear that they are not inclined to actively help us, and are almost as afraid of our victory as of Hitler's.'[140] The strange story of Rudolph Hess's flight to England led numerous individuals to question Alexander Werth in 1941 about whether he was 'quite sure that no deal had been made' between Britain and Germany.[141] Andrei Ivanovich, a wartime *frontovik*, affirmed this attitude during an interview when he remembered that, 'We thought that they were waiting and hoping for us to destroy the Germans.'[142] In the absence of a clear official narrative, Soviet citizens employed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* to provide their own speculative explanations for the allied failure to act.

Many of these comments regarding the Allies' failure to open the Second Front went much further than the official press in their criticism of the Allies. A May 1942 report to Agitprop noted that some of the questions asked about the Second Front expressed 'a sharp tone of address to England and the USA'. At a gathering of activists in Lenin *raion*, Moscow, a piece of paper was handed in with the question, 'When in what month will the Second Front be open? Perhaps on the 31 December 1942 with 15 soldiers and a beaten up tank?'[143] G. M. Moskalenko wrote to Stalin in March 1943, urging him to begin preparations now for the inevitable future conflict with the

[138] Mem. Vishnevskii, *Leningrad: Dnevniki voennyx let. 2 Noiabria 1941 goda – 31 dekabria 1942 goda* (Moscow, 2002), 109. See also: Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 125, l. 11.
[139] Mem. A. Rybin, *My byli soldatami: Frontovoi dnevnik voennogo zhurnalista, 1941–1945 gody* (Moscow, 2000), 89.
[140] Sv. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 685, l. 99.
[141] See: Mem. Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 48; Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1413, l. 110.
[142] Int. Andrei Ivanovich, Moscow, July 2004.
[143] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 82, l. 18.

Anglo-American powers.[144] An indiscrete Soviet lecturer at the Interna-
tional Club in Murmansk generated a furore in October 1943 by
'diminishing' the allied war contribution.[145] He appealed to his
Anglo-American audience with the question: 'Do you want to extin-
guish Hitlerism?' When they replied 'yes' he responded 'Then open the
Second Front!'[146] Vasili Ermolenko noted in his diary, after the Tehran
Conference, that 'Now the Allies will not wriggle out of the responsi-
bility to open the Second Front. They are such cunning ones . . . It is not
properly allied behaviour.'[147] Il'ian Lvoevich remembered events in
similar terms when he told me that he thought the allied actions in
the Balkans were 'an incomplete fulfilment of their responsibilities as
allies', and Viktor Dmitrovich claimed the Second Front was launched,
'in a betraying manner. It was necessary earlier.'[148] The Ukrainian
academic Bulakhovskii, in Ufa, summed up this mood in October
1942 when he complained that 'the Allies have defrauded us'.[149]
When they applied the 'tactic' of *bricolage*, Soviet citizens often con-
cluded that allied bad faith was the clearest explanation for the military
imbalance within the alliance. This notion often fuelled anti-Allied
resentment as Soviet citizens concluded the USSR was being exploited
by its wartime partners.

The idea that the Allies were taking advantage of the Soviet govern-
ment became a staple element within Soviet wartime rumours. These
rumours did not contest the idea that the USSR was doing more than its
fair share of the fighting against the Wehrmacht. They simply employed
the 'tactic' of *bricolage*, supplementing the available information with
explanations that circulated within the word-of-mouth network. As a
result, Anglo-American manipulation became the default explanation
for surprising shifts within government policy during the war. As
the head of Propaganda Groups in the Central Committee, Petrosian
admitted in a letter to Zhdanov and Aleksandrov in March
1944 the 'false logic that the Soviet state needed to make concessions

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[144] Let. RGASPI f. 588, op. 11, d. 885, ll. 8–9.
[145] For a discussion of the International Club see Chapter 3.
[146] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 131, ll. 132–3. Dmitriev was subsequently rebuked
for his indiscretion.
[147] Mem. Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik*, 29.
[148] Int. Il'ian Lvoevich, Moscow, May 2004; Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, Septem-
ber 2004.
[149] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 125, l. 14.

to the capitalist world' was extremely widespread, even amongst party members, during the war period.[150]

This line of reasoning was clearly evident in the reactions of many Soviet citizens to the dissolution of the Comintern in May 1943. The news that the body which governed the international Bolshevik parties had been disbanded came as an enormous surprise to the Soviet population. The official explanation was that each party would now pursue their own path during wartime.[151] The population of the USSR was not convinced. Party reports from around the USSR admitted that it had left the population 'bewildered'.[152] The head of propaganda in Molotovsk *raikom*, in Sverdlovsk, admitted that 'if we talk about mood we have to admit that there is a lot of surprise and confusion'. The deputy head of the party organization in factory number 694, 'directly admitted that he is afraid to go to the shop floor at the moment as he is afraid that the workers will ask him questions about the Decree'.[153]

Reports drafted by the NKVD, Agitation and Propaganda, and *Orginstruction* Departments over the following days all noted that the most common reaction to these events was to assume that it was a concession forced on the USSR by their Allies. The Orginstruction department for Gorky *oblast'* noted that, 'A number of questions were given by the workers … the majority of which came to one: "Isn't the dissolution of the Comintern connected with the demands of our Allies?"'[154] The reports repeatedly note that the dissolution was considered a concession (*ustupka*) under the pressure (*davlenie*) of the Allies.[155] Within the informal oral news network the decision was associated with the recent visit of Davis to the USSR or the recent Anglo-American meeting in the USA. Others concluded that it was the price for the opening of the Second Front.[156] The idea that allied pressure had been responsible for the decision remained a truism within

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[150] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 242, ll. 21–4.

[151] *Pravda*, 22.05.43, p. 1.

[152] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 594, l. 8.

[153] Sv. Ibid. op. 125, d. 181, l. 5.

[154] Inf. Ibid. op. 88, d. 594, l. 14. See also: ll. 8, 16, 37; op. 125, d. 181, l. 3; Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 685, l. 178.

[155] Mem. Werth also reports that this was the common assumption. Werth, *Russia at War*, 674.

[156] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 594, l. 1; Sv. op. 125, d. 181, l. 1; op. 88, d. 594, l. 44; op. 122, d. 55, l. 8.

the informal news network for years to come.[157] A wide spectrum of Soviet citizens fused the idea that the Red Army was carrying more than a fair share of the wartime burden with notions of allied exploitation, and concluded that the Anglo-Americans were extracting concessions from the USSR in return for their support.

The same process of *bricolage* was applied to a number of other surprising decisions within the unofficial rumour network. One common claim was that the Allies had forced the Soviet government to change its policy on the Church.[158] In 1942 a wave of rumours speculated that the relaxation of strictures against celebrating Easter was a political move 'to please England and America'.[159] N.A.K. was arrested in 1943 for passing on the rumour that 'England and America forced us to open the churches and re-establish them'.[160] The idea that official policy towards the Church was being dictated by the Allies was so widespread that even some of the agitators in Voznesensky *oblast'* considered it to be true.[161] Allied meddling in Soviet internal life was also employed to explain the absence of a May Day celebration in 1945, the reintroduction of epaulettes on officers' uniforms, the introduction of a new Soviet anthem, or the lack of a major offensive in late 1944.[162]

Another category of rumour speculated on the changes that would be introduced after the war as a result of pressure from the Allies. These rumours were based on the idea that the Allies were already forcing the USSR to 'go to the old way'.[163] It seemed logical to infer that further changes were imminent. The most widespread story was that the Allies were demanding the abolition of collective farms in the USSR.[164] Such rumours appear within a variety of sources and contexts. Audiences at

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[157] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 76746, l. 12; d. 47092, ll. 3–4. Let. Soviet agitators were still writing to Bolshevik asking for help in understanding this question in 1947–8. See: RGASPI f. 599, op. 1, d. 3, l. 64; d. 6, l. 47.

[158] On the church in wartime, see Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War*. He argues that changes in church policy were not largely for an international audience.

[159] Ibid. 161.

[160] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 21382, l. 9.

[161] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 30, ll. 44–5.

[162] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 27; Mem. Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik*, 98; Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 16696, l. 20; d. 47092, ll. 3–4.

[163] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 13905, l. 3.

[164] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 945; G. Bordiugov, trans. R. W. Thurston, 'The Popular Mood in the Unoccupied Soviet Union: Continuity and Change during the War', in Thurston and Bonwetsch, eds., *The People's War*, 63; Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad*, 289; HIP. A. 9, 121, 15.

agitational meetings frequently asked whether collective farms would be preserved after the war.[165] Petrushevich, a collective farmer of the village of Kiianka, Chernigovskii *oblast'*, stated in August 1945, 'I have not read the decisions of the Conference [Berlin] myself, but I have heard from some people that at the conference the Allies demanded of the Soviet government that they liquidate the *kolkhozy*.'[166] N.V. Nashadim claimed to a friend in June 1945 that, 'soon America will dictate to the Soviet Union to divide the *kolkhoz* land amongst the peasants and our government will do it.'[167] When asked to describe a typical piece of news obtained by word of mouth, one respondent to HIP remembered, 'Yes, we got many rumours such as: When the war is over the collective farms must be destroyed, because Roosevelt asked Stalin to destroy them.'[168]

In his history of the partisan struggle, Armstrong suggests that the government intentionally sponsored this idea to rally popular support. However, he admits that there is no documentary evidence that this is the case.[169] The prosecution of individuals such as M.S. and F.E. in 1944 for holding 'counter-revolutionary conversations' about the fact that the collective farms were to be abolished also casts doubt on the idea that the regime was covertly promoting this idea.[170] Other rumours focused on the Allies' supposed post-war demands for national independence in certain regions of the USSR, for free trade within the Soviet Union, or for Western-style democracy.[171] Whether as an explanation for changes that had already taken place, or a potential cause of alterations to come, the idea that the Allies were applying pressure to extract concessions from the Soviet government was a potent and widespread concept in the wartime USSR.

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[165] Inf. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 32, d. 304, l. 23; Sv. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1479, ll. 1–4.

[166] Sv. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 43.

[167] Sv. Ibid. d. 1477, l. 9. See also: d. 1626, l. 12; Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 136, l. 50; Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 30527, ll. 7–9.

[168] HIP. A. 9, 121, 15; B8, 645, 10.

[169] Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II*, 246–7. Some respondents to HIP did claim that agitators had spread these rumours: HIP. B8, 645, 10; A. 3, 27, 16. More likely is the claim of one respondent that the government did 'not officially approve these rumours but they did nothing to dispel them either'. A. 31, 445, 57.

[170] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 30527, l. 8. See also: d. 39494, l. 13, and d. 380347, l. 7.

[171] Sv. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op, 23, d. 890, l. 85; d. 892, l. 91; d. 685, l. 6; HIP. B11, 64, 54.

Another prominent wartime rumour, whose success was dependent on this idea of allied exploitation, was that the USSR would be forced, against its will, into joining the Anglo-American war against Japan. Soviet citizens were desperate to return to 'ordinary life' when the war ended in May 1945. Workers who had been mobilized for construction submitted requests to return home and for a return to normal working hours.[172] The most commonly asked question, cited in every one of the sixteen lists of questions at the end of the war, was 'Will the USSR now fight with Japan?'[173] Rumours about troop transfers to the Far East were widespread during the three months of peace between 9 May and the Soviet declaration of war on 9 August.[174] The levels of anticipation were so high that the story that war had already broken out circulated a number of times before 9 August.[175] The operating assumption that underwrote these rumours, like those concerning forthcoming changes to Soviet society, was that the USSR was being forced to act against its will by the Allies.

There was little enthusiasm for the war against Japan when it did begin.[176] The controller of the Irkutsk radio corner, Luk'ianov, voiced his opinion that 'Our government always screws up . . . The Allies forced this war on us and they will ride on our shoulders.'[177] Listeners at agitational meetings in Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* asked, 'Is it true to say that the English love to get others to do their dirty work? They will again not fight with Japan and we will pour out our blood?'[178] In Pskov *oblast'* another voiced the view that 'A war with Japan is not terrible to us but what is terrible to us is England who as our ally pulled us into a war with Japan.'[179] The idea that the Allies were exploiting the Soviet Union and serving only their own interests remained a powerful explanatory framework up until the end of World War II.

The origins and transmission of these rumours bear little resemblance to Viola's image of anti-regime peasants spreading apocalyptic tales.[180] Rumours about allied perfidy were passed on by intellectuals, managers,

[172] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 469, ll. 23–32, 163.
[173] Ibid. ll. 5–217.
[174] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 1001; Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 469, ll. 89–92.
[175] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 469, l. 96.
[176] HIP. B4, 64, 7.
[177] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 469, ll. 55–6.
[178] Sv. Ibid. pp. 6–9.
[179] Sv. Ibid. p. 133.
[180] Viola, *Peasant Rebels*, 48–65.

workers, and peasants.[181] They also emerged in a variety of urban and rural locations throughout the USSR and circulated both at the front line and the rear.[182] The assumption that the Allies were taking advantage of the USSR also informed the comments of a number of 'loyal' individuals who were incensed by the perfidy of the Anglo-Americans. The changes, or anticipated changes, within Soviet society were often greeted with dismay as well as delight in the USSR. Doctor Cherkasskii of Frunzenskii *raion* in Ivanovo declared in response to the dissolution of the Comintern that, 'It is a concession. To destroy the Comintern signifies to destroy the communist parties and I cannot tolerate that thought. Perhaps Churchill and Roosevelt demanded of us changes, and a few of them could have been made, but not this.'[183] Others denounced the declaration as, 'an incorrect decision taken under the conditions of wartime,' or '10 steps backwards'.[184] Comrade Simonov of 25 October Artel in Ivanovo complained in a similar vein that, 'England and America are turning us back onto an old path. How else to understand this question when even the papers have begun to write about the patriarch?'[185]

Some went even further, taking what might be termed an 'excessively loyal' view of the situation, and denouncing the government for failing to recognize the perfidy of the Allies. A. Shur wrote to Kalinin in November 1943 arguing that, 'All of history confirms that England (the stronghold of capital) and the USSR cannot work together.' He complained that millions of Soviet citizens were dying on account of the government's naivety.[186] Others dismissed those who believed in long-term Anglo-Soviet collaboration saying, 'It is high time they read some Lenin'.[187] Koriakov, a student at the Philosophical Faculty of Moscow State University, accused the party and Stalin of ideological degeneration in relation to their 'closening with bourgeois countries'.[188]

[181] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 122, l. 10; Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 30527, ll. 8–9; Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1477, l. 9; d. 1449, l. 43.

[182] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 31773ж, ll. 1–3; Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 30, ll. 44–5. HIP. B8, 645, 10; Sv. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 43.

[183] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 594, l. 17.

[184] Sv. Ibid. ll. 30, 44.

[185] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 122, l. 17.

[186] Let. Livshin and Orlov, eds., *Sovetskaia povsednevnost'*, 70. It does not seem necessary to question the sincerity of such sentiments which were likely to get the author into trouble.

[187] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War*, 942.

[188] Inf. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 46, d. 26, l. 8.

He was one of a number of individuals arrested during the war for excessively negative comments about the Allies. A.D.V. was prosecuted for saying that 'America and England are weaving webs against the USSR' and that they were moving 'intolerably slowly' with the Second Front. In his defence he claimed that he 'did not consider these comments counter-revolutionary'. Others defended themselves in similar terms. Casting doubt on the likelihood of the Second Front ever being open was 'incorrect . . . but not directed towards discrediting the Soviet Union'. This kind of speculation was understood by those who passed it on to be mainstream, if excessively anti-Allied, speech.[189]

'Supporters' and 'resisters' of the Soviet government, as well as ordinary citizens who did not fit neatly into either category, applied the tactic of *bricolage* to the internal dynamics of the Grand Alliance and concluded that the Allies were exploiting the USSR. Allied exploitation was the preferred explanation for their unexplained failure to behave as true comrades of the USSR. It emerged as a highly successful rumour in various forms and at various times throughout the war. The Soviet press established a hegemony of perception, but not a hegemony of interpretation concerning the internal dynamics of the Grand Alliance. The rumours of allied meddling provide a clear example of the 'tactic' of *bricolage* in evidence. They did not function solely as vehicles of dissent, but survived and flourished because they were credible to large sections of the Soviet population.

SOVIET WARTIME *MENTALITÉ*: THE ALLIED STATES AND THE RUMOUR NETWORK

Speculative rumours, such as those about allied manipulation, were extremely widespread between 1941 and 1945, in part because of the relative disorder and news hunger of the wartime USSR. As official information networks collapsed, the oral news network became even more important as a means of plugging the gaps. The experience of wartime also reinforced the credibility crisis of the official press that had begun in 1939. The volte face of the Nazi–Soviet Pact in 1939 was followed by the failure of the Soviet press to warn its audience about the coming invasion of 1941. Even A. Mar'ian, a rural activist before the

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[189] Proc. GARF f. 8131, op. 31a, d. 75634, ll. 5–41; d. 81080, l. 4.

war, was forced to admit in 1943 that, 'in general the rumours are always ahead of events'.[190]

The boundaries of what was considered possible also expanded during the war. Soviet citizens wrote to the government suggesting ideologically aberrant ideas such as an official civil role for the Orthodox Church, or fundamental reforms of the *kolkhoz* system.[191] In June 1944, there were mass gatherings in Kazan (2,000) and Kuibyshev (500) of people who had heard fictitious rumours that a group of child-killers would be publicly executed.[192] Villages in Voronezh *oblast'* were liable to descend into panic over stories that the Germans were returning in 1944.[193] Stories that the Allies were exerting pressure on the Soviet government for a systematic reform of the USSR flourished in this context of expanded credibility and weakened official mechanisms of communication.

However, the greater likelihood of speculative rumours during the war does not explain why Soviet citizens repeatedly returned to the idea of allied perfidy when employing the tactic of *bricolage*. There is no causal connection between social conditions and specific collective behaviour.[194] The focus of wartime rumours on the idea of the allied manipulation and exploitation of the USSR reveals the kinds of narratives that were credible in wartime Soviet society. These rumours were successful because they were believable.[195]

Rumours of allied exploitation reveal the centrality of the ideas of vulnerability and authority within the Soviet wartime *mentalité*. This chapter has argued that many Soviet citizens identified strongly with the new diplomatic version of Official Soviet Identity, as an authoritative and powerful state, that emerged after Stalingrad. However, external allied pressure was also a widely credited lever behind internal changes within the USSR. These two narratives of authority and vulnerability might be considered mutually incompatible. On the contrary, however, the juxtaposition of these two ideas goes to the heart of the Soviet collective *mentalité* in 1945. Indeed they reinforced one another to some extent. Rumours of allied perfidy were almost certainly fuelled

[190] Mem. Mar'ian, *Gody moi, kak soldaty*, 172.
[191] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 136, ll. 192–3; Let. op. 122, d. 122, l. 13.
[192] GARF f. R9401, op. 2, d. 65, l. 199.
[193] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 136, ll. 192–3.
[194] See Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, 258–60.
[195] Shibutani, *Improvised News*, 80–6.

by the righteous indignation of individuals who felt the need to defend the global moral authority of the Soviet Union. It is clear that some Soviet citizens were so intoxicated with the might of their state, and in particular the Red Army, that they would not have taken rumours of allied interference seriously. Similarly, there were some Soviet citizens who were peculiarly convinced that the USSR was susceptible to external pressure. However, a very large number of people seem to have considered that both were true: the USSR had won great authority in the war and had risen in status, but also remained vulnerable to external meddling by the Allies. The balance of these two ideas was a distinctive feature of the manner in which Soviet citizens imagined their relationship with the outside world by the end of World War II.

The second aspect of the Soviet wartime *mentalité*, which contributed to the spread of rumours about allied meddling, was the deeply rooted mistrust of Soviet citizens towards the Allies. Recent experience had demonstrated that allies could be unfaithful, and questioners at lecture gatherings openly speculated that Britain and America might 'start a war with us' as Germany had.[196] Other individuals were suspicions of the Allies because of their capitalist nature. This was particularly the case for the 'excessive loyalists' who decried the government's naive friendship with the Allies. However, even for those who did not think explicitly within these Marxist-Leninist categories, over twenty years of denunciation of capitalist evil must have had an impact. Capitalism's inter-war record of militarism, depression, and appeasement can hardly have endeared the allied powers to ordinary Soviet citizens. The drip feeding of Official Soviet Identity of the 1920s and 1930s made it more difficult for some Soviet citizens to adjust to the idea that the great capitalist states were now collaborating with the USSR.

This distrust of the capitalist states, particularly the distrust of England also had longer term historical roots. Britain had been regarded as the 'natural ally' of Russia in the eighteenth century.[197] However, by the middle of the nineteenth century, Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia had transformed Britain into the natural competitor of the Romanov state.[198] Borisov argues that, 'In both the public opinion and mass

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[196] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 242, ll. 99–103.

[197] D. M. Griffiths, 'Catherine II, George III, and the British Opposition', in A. G. Cross, ed., *Great Britain and Russia in the Eighteenth Century: Contacts and Comparisons* (Newtonville, 1979), 306–20.

[198] N. A. Erofeev, *Tumannyi Albion: Angliia i anglichane glazami russkikh 1825–1853* (Moscow, 1982), 308–10; O. A. Kaznina, A. N. Nikoliukin, *'Ia pokidal Tumannyi*

understanding of Russia towards the start of the 20th century there was a traditional lack of faith in England.'[199] This aversion developed during World War I when a common joke ran that England was 'prepared to fight until the last Russian soldier'.[200] Britain, the ultimate imperial state, had remained the key enemy of the USSR throughout the 1920s, and its behaviour at Munich had only confirmed this antipathy. As one of the respondents to HIP explained, 'All the old wars were caused by economic reasons. Russia always competed with England.'[201]

Historic British manipulation, allied with Soviet-fuelled ideas of English imperialism, directly contributed to the culture of mistrust directed at the Anglo-American Allies during World War II. Britain was regarded as the primary partner within the Western powers during World War II. Churchill, in particular, was understood to have played a leading role in the strategic policy of the alliance. In the absence of a clear narrative to explain the internal military dynamics of the Grand Alliance, Soviet citizens resorted to the 'tactic' of *bricolage*. Explanations for the unopened Second Front, and by extension the rumours about wider allied perfidy, relied on pre-existing ideas about capitalist Britain's manipulative diplomatic game. A number of listeners at agitational meetings openly wondered whether 'the English have abandoned their traditional policy of "getting others to do their dirty work?"'[202]

The Soviet population seems to have had a more positive vision of America.[203] Roosevelt enjoyed the status of 'a real friend' to the Soviet Union in a way that Churchill never did.[204] His death provoked an outburst of genuine grief in the USSR and also fear that America's pro-Soviet line might be reversed.[205] Molotov, who was in San Francisco at the time, later remembered that, 'We took it to heart more than they

Al'biona': Russkie Pisateli ob Anglii 1646–1945 (Moscow, 2001), 11–16; J. Siegel, *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia* (London, 2002), 198–201.

[199] Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad*, 275.

[200] Ibid. 277; Figes and Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution*, 164–75.

[201] HIP. A. 1, 7, 31.

[202] (Загребать жар чужними руками), literally, 'obtaining results through others' hands'. Inf. GAOPDiFAO, f. 296, op. 1, d. 1652, l. 171; d. 1551, l. 18; Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 1477, l. 9; d. 1631, l. 4; 2837, l. 2.

[203] See HIP. B3, 64, 82.

[204] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 972; *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 13–14, 51, 60.

[205] Mem. Ibid. 972. Inf. TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, d. 1632, ll. 1–5. Soviet leaders received a number of letters after 1945 suggesting a memorial to Roosevelt or a formal marking of the anniversary of his death: RGASPI f. 588, op. 11, d. 872, ll. 3, 26–8, 112.

did.'[206] *Pravda* itself occasionally endorsed this distinction, particularly in late 1942 when it presented the British 'blimps' as the major force behind the failure of the Second Front. On the whole, however, the official press was respectful of both allies. The collective assumption that Britain, and to some extent America, were manipulating the USSR was founded on pre-existing ideas about these nations' historical characters. These ideas predated 1917, but had been reinforced by Soviet rhetoric in the 1920s and 1930s. The rapid shift in Official Soviet Identity in 1941 did not instantaneously transform Soviet citizens' imaginations about the outside world. In the absence of a clear explanation for the absence of the Second Front, Soviet citizens turned to traditional and historically informed ideas about the character of Britain, as an explanation for their contemporary perfidy.

CONCLUSION

Being Soviet mattered during wartime in the USSR. Soviet identity was more than simply a coded form of Russian nationalism. The diplomatic identity of the USSR as a great and morally authoritative power, that emerged after Stalingrad, was deeply attractive to many Soviet citizens. Nonetheless, rumours that the USSR was being exploited by their wartime partners also circulated widely. These rumours about the Comintern, churches, or collective farms were largely attempts to understand the official press, rather than reject it. *Pravda* and the language of Official Soviet Identity remained the starting point in the struggle to understand the relationship between the USSR and the world around it.

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[206] Resis, ed., *Molotov Remembers*, 51. See also: Scott and Krasilshchik, eds., *Yanks Meet Reds*, 74, 167.

3

Patrons or Predators? Foreign Servicemen, Technology, and Art within Official Soviet Cultural Identity 1941–45

The German invasion of June 1941 transformed the cultural, as well as diplomatic identity of the USSR. The wartime alliance with Britain and America led to a dramatic about-turn in official attitudes towards the scientific and artistic products of the outside world. During 1939–41 Soviet citizens had been discouraged from listening to, watching, or making use of the fruits of capitalist civilization. However, after 1941, jazz music, American films, and Western science were swiftly rehabilitated and Official Soviet Identity embraced the contribution of these foreign artefacts.

A few Soviet citizens had already enjoyed the opportunity to personally interact with capitalist civilization in the newly occupied borderlands during the Pact Period. During the Great Patriotic War, that opportunity was afforded to a vastly greater number of people. Both defeat and victory built on the process that began in 1939. The Wehrmacht's occupation of large swathes of the USSR forced many Soviet citizens to interact with German food, technology, music, religion, and combatants. The conquest of Eastern and Central Europe in 1944–5 also offered millions of Red Army soldiers their first taste of the outside world. The story of wartime interaction with the Germans is now thoroughly told, with the prevailing view that contact with capitalist riches led many to question the credibility of the Soviet system.[1]

This chapter focuses instead on the much less well examined place of the Allies within Official Soviet Identity as a civilization during the war.

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[1] Zubkova, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957* (Armonk, NY, 1998), 25–6. See also Edele, *Soviet Veterans of World War II* (Oxford, 2009).

Contact with the wartime Allies was less widespread than with the German occupiers or the peoples of Eastern Europe. However, the relationship with the scientific, human, and artistic products of the Western powers was far more complex. The Soviet press could not openly denigrate Anglo-American civilization, but there were limits to the extent of legitimate enthusiasm for newspapers, trucks, and human visitors from Britain or the USA.

The first half of this chapter examines some of the less complex aspects of Official Soviet Identity in this arena: foreign films and music, and the wartime goods sent to the USSR via Lend Lease. The second half of the chapter deals with the more delicate question, from the point of view of the Stalin-era government, of personal interaction between Soviet and Anglo-American citizens. The most celebrated example of this took place at Torgau, in Central Germany, where Red Army and allied troops celebrated their shared victory in April 1945.[2] However, a much greater and more sustained volume of interaction took place in the Arctic ports of Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk. Between 1941 and 1945 seventy-eight allied convoys, made up of around 1,400 ships, arrived in these two northern towns making them the centre point for inter-allied relations. Arkhangel'sk hosted up to a thousand foreign visitors at any one time. This chapter focuses on this almost completely ignored aspect of the Soviet wartime experience. The presence of so many foreign sailors deep inside the Soviet heartland placed great strain on local Bolshevik administrators. They struggled to reconcile the interpersonal relationships that emerged with the boundaries of Official Soviet Identity as a civilization. For their part, Soviet citizens carefully deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' in this unprecedented situation, juggling the imperatives of their own personal interest and the need to be loyally Soviet.

OFFICIAL SOVIET IDENTITY AND WESTERN SCIENCE AND CULTURE

The outbreak of World War II transformed Soviet press coverage concerning the outside world. For the first time since 1917, government newspapers held their fire about the social injustices and economic woes

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[2] Scott and Krasilschik, *Yanks Meet Reds: Recollections of US and Soviet Vets from the Linkup in World War II* (Santa Barbara, 1988).

of capitalist life.[3] In the pre-war period, American racial inequality and British class oppression had served to reinforce the superiority of Soviet civilization. During the first few months of the war, however, syrupy articles comparing the sufferings of London, 'the city of fogs and parks', and Moscow were common.[4] This early war enthusiasm waned somewhat, though there were prominent exhibitions on 'Britain in the War' and concerts to celebrate American Independence Day in 1943.[5] In 1944 Alexandr Korneichuk's play, *Mr Perkins' Mission to the Land of the Bolsheviks*, was first performed. It narrated the visit of an American millionaire to the USSR and his discovery that the Soviet Union was not, as he had been told, a land of oppression. The message of the play was that ultimately these two nations could, and should, get along.[6] The peace-loving nature of Britain and America superseded their capitalist character and made them worthy allies for the USSR.

This positivity about the allied way of life also found expression on the cinema screens and in the dance halls of the wartime USSR. During World War II 70 per cent of Soviet-made films dealt with the war; *She Defends the Motherland* and *Zoia* established the dominant motif of the partisan hero. The Anglo-American Allies were rarely mentioned, let alone featured, in these films, though Eisenstein's 1944 historical epic *Ivan the Terrible* played up the Tsar's alliance with Elizabethan England.[7] However, the Soviet state's new-found positivity about the culture of their wartime Allies led to the screening of the first new Hollywood-made movies for ten years. *Mission to Moscow*, a docudrama about the former American diplomat in the USSR Joseph E. Davies, was presented to the Soviet leadership at the Tehran Conference. To the Americans' surprise, it was accepted for screening throughout the USSR.[8] Following the success of *Mission to Moscow*, a movie exchange programme was set up, and over twenty Hollywood films went on

[3] Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, 2000), 193; McKenna, *All the Views Fit to Print: Changing Images of the U.S. in Pravda Political Cartoons, 1917–1991* (New York, 2001), 4.

[4] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 07.11.1941, p. 4; 07.12.1941, p. 4.

[5] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 107; Wettlin, *Fifty Russian Winters: An American Woman's Life in the Soviet Union* (New York, 1992), 240.

[6] For a discussion see: Barghoorn, *The Soviet Image of the United States: A Study in Distortion* (New York, 1950), 78.

[7] Drobashenko and Kenez, 'Film Propaganda in the Soviet Union, 1941–1945: Two Views', in K. Short, ed., *Film and Radio Propaganda in World War II* (London, 1983), 96–121.

[8] T. Bennett, 'Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow: Film and Soviet-American Relations during World War II', *The Journal of American History*, 88. 2 (2001), 489–518.

general release.[9] *Edison*, *Sun Valley Serenade*, and *Charley's Aunt* were cheerful advertisements for the American way of life and their screening reflected the more positive attitude of the Soviet regime towards the cultural products of their wartime Allies.

'American' jazz music also moved back into the mainstream during the war. Romantic songs that longed for hearth and home, such as *Wait for Me* or *Blue Kerchief*, were enormously successful after 1941. However, jazz artists such as Leonid Utesov, Eddie Rosner, and Boris Renskii, who had played nothing but nationalist folk music during the Pact Period, swung their way to musical stardom after 1941. Jazz ensembles suddenly sprung up in huge numbers performing 'hot' versions of Soviet tunes and also direct imports such as *Chatanooga Choo-Choo* and *In the Mood*.[10] Utesov recollects that 'jazz was being played in the factories and the mines, on the ships, and amongst the army functionaries on the Kalinin front.' The Baltic Fleet Band became one of the unofficial markers of resistance in Leningrad, performing throughout the siege. Utesov himself was bombarded by an endless stream of letters from jazz bands, often at the front line, requesting the scores to his more popular tunes.[11] His 1943 show included the popular *Jazzinformburo*, which involved a supposed dramatized radio link-up between Moscow, New York, and London during which the popular tunes of each allied nation were performed.[12] Jazz and swing, like Hollywood movies, were legitimate diversions for Soviet citizens as the place of Anglo-American culture shifted within Official Soviet Identity.

This new-found openness to capitalist culture culminated in the launch of two foreign embassy-run journals during the war: *Britanskii Soiuznik* (British Ally) and *Amerika*. *Britanskii Soiuznik* was launched in 1942 as a weekly journal informing Soviet citizens about British life and society. By the end of 1942 it had thousands of subscribers and its circulation peaked at about 50,000 copies.[13] *Amerika*, a monthly

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[9] See: Parks, *Culture, Conflict and Coexistence: American-Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917–1958* (London, 1983), 84–5.

[10] Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1980* (Oxford, 1983), 186–94; Stites, 'Frontline Entertainment', in Stites, *Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia* (Indianapolis,1995), 134.

[11] Let. RGALI f. 3005, op. 1, d. 82, l. 236; d. 750, ll. 1, 17, 20, 21, 33, 44, 47, 69; Uvarova, *Russkaia Sovetskaia estrada 1930–45: Ocherki istorii* (Moscow, 1977) 328.

[12] Let. RGALI f. 3005, op. 1, d. 82. pp. 244–5.

[13] V. O. Pechatnov, 'The Rise and Fall of *Britanskii Soiuznik*: A Case Study in Soviet Response to British Propaganda in the Mid-1940s', *The Historical Journal*, 41.1 (1989), 293–301.

journal modelled on *Life Magazine* followed in 1944. The publication of the journals generated some controversy. In October 1943 the head of Glavlit launched an attack on *Britanskii Soiuznik* for claiming that 'Great Britain is allegedly carrying the great burden of the struggle with German fascism on its shoulders, that the material and spiritual supplies of the population of Great Britain are better and of a higher level than other countries, including the Soviet Union.' An internal review admitted that there were some 'undesirable statements' in the journal but that its publication should continue in order to avoid offending the Allies.[14] There were limits to the wartime positivity about Anglo-American culture, but the publication of an uncensored, foreign-embassy authored, journal demonstrated how far Soviet official attitudes towards the outside world had shifted.

The wartime shift within Official Soviet Identity also paved the way for a fresh embrace of Anglo-American scientific achievements. *Ogonëk*'s 'Technology Overseas' section was full of features about innovations in the allied states, particularly American-made trucks and planes, such as the Flying Fortress.[15] In May 1942 *Pravda* carried a letter to the scientists of the whole world which praised Britain as the 'country of Newton, Maxwell, and Darwin, the home of technical revolutions' and noted that 'Russian researchers have always and with great attention studied the achievements of American scientists'.[16] The Academy of Scientists began electing foreign members again during the war and Soviet researchers were able to publish their results overseas for the first time in a decade.[17] Meanwhile Soviet scientists travelled to the USA on purchasing missions. In just one example, G. Lebedenko, the head of the Soviet Red Cross mission in the United States bought 600 X-ray machines, 20,000 pairs of forceps, and 500 anaesthesia sets.[18]

The body of sources that shed light on how Soviet citizens engaged with this new narrative of Sovietness is much narrower than that for the wartime diplomatic identity of the USSR. However, what evidence there is suggests that Hollywood films were extremely popular during the war. Respondents to HIP remembered that they had greatly admired *Mission to Moscow*, *The Great Waltz,* or the British-made

[14] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 185, ll. 67–75.

[15] e.g., *Ogonëk*, 05.1942: 19, p. 13; 10.09.1944: 32, p. 15.

[16] *Pravda*, 11.05.1942, p. 1.

[17] N. Krementsov, *The Cure: A Story of Cancer and Politics from the Annals of the Cold War* (London, 2000), 66; *Stalinist Science* (Princeton 1997), 115.

[18] Inf. GARF f. R9501, op. 7, d. 14, ll. 2–5; d. 26, ll. 74–8.

1940 adventure film *The Thief of Bagdad*.[19] Frank Capra's romantic comedy *It Happened One Night* ran continuously for two years from 1943 to 1945 in Moscow and Leningrad.[20] The staff of the US Embassy, at least, were convinced that there was a great 'craving' for foreign-made movies at this time.[21] Some Soviet citizens, such as the university students of Arkhangel'sk creatively deployed the 'tactics of the habitat' in order to watch British and American films. They responded in droves to appeals for volunteer staff at the International Club for foreign sailors. Their behaviour was a classic case of reappropriation; many of them seemed less interested in their work and more concerned with watching Hollywood movies in the cinema.[22]

The enthusiasm with which Soviet citizens embraced jazz music is unquestionable. The barrage of letters received by Utesov and the vast number of amateur jazz bands that sprung up throughout the USSR testify to the popularity of the revived 'hot' sound during wartime. According to the respondents to HIP, Utesov exemplified the excellence of Soviet jazz.[23] Stites argues that the jazz revival reflected the desires of the frontline soldiers, but club administrators in the rear also struggled to get their audience to dance Russian folk dances rather than the massively popular jazzy foxtrot.[24] As V. A. Alexandrov pointed out in a letter to other Soviet leaders in October 1941, in the dark days of wartime, the people wanted 'cheerful . . . upbeat' music. Jazz fitted this bill exactly.[25]

It is also clear that, at the very least, the Central Committee's Agitprop department was worried about the popularity of the new foreign journals. A 1943 report on *Britanskii Soiuznik* complained that, 'Amongst the "lieutenants" of the paper are academics, professors, engineers, technicians, artists, painters, writers, journalists, etc.'[26] Svetlana Ivanovna

[19] HIP. A. 3, 25, 40; 18, 343, 27.

[20] Ball, *Imagining America: Influence and Images in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Oxford, 2003), 179.

[21] Bennett, 'Culture, Power and Mission to Moscow'.

[22] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 2097, l. 48b.

[23] HIP. A. 15, 310, 26. It should be noted that some others also told their interviewers that Soviet people did not like jazz and it should not be broadcast to the USSR: A. 32, 91, 47.

[24] Inf. Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Arkhangel'skoi Oblasti, henceforth GAAO, f. 5790, op. 3, d. 7, ll. 51–2; GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1541, l. 57; Stites, 'Frontline Entertainment', 138.

[25] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 28, ll. 69–77.

[26] Inf. Ibid., d. 135, ll. 1–3.

remembered that all of her student friends read the foreign journals during the war.[27] Even more concerning, from the point of view of Agitprop, were the letters sent by agitators to *Britanskii Soiuznik* and *Amerika* informing the editors that their material was being employed 'to the full' in agitational work.[28] When *Amerika* first went on release in October 1944, the 10,000 copies sold instantaneously and worn copies circulated on the black market.[29] These journals provided fresh information and ideas that could be drawn upon in the process of *bricolage* that Soviet citizens used to understand the outside world. One respondent to HIP commented that even the colour photographs and quality of the paper on which *Amerika* was printed enabled readers to infer certain things about the USA.[30]

The wartime openness to foreign research and technology also seems to have generated great enthusiasm amongst Soviet scientists. Eric Ashby, an Australian scientist who visited the USSR in 1944–5, commented that, 'It is rare to find a laboratory without half-a-dozen British, American, or German journals on the table, and some zealous young research worker puzzling over one of them with a dictionary.'[31] Soviet academics and scientists spoke in public about Western science in a manner that would have been unthinkable during the 1930s. At a gathering of the All Union Plenum on Architecture Burov, an architect from Moscow, spoke of how the Soviet agricultural and industrial revolutions had been 'carried out through reliance on American experience'. He suggested that Soviet architects should now pay similar attention to the work of their colleagues in the United States.[32] Indeed all the evidence suggests that Soviet scientists wrote, in large numbers, to their leaders requesting permission to travel to the West and restock their laboratories there. As Academician Vavilov explained, in a spring 1945 letter to Agitprop, many researchers felt that the breakdown of contact with foreign science before the war had seriously harmed the development of Soviet research.[33] In July 1943 Zhebrak, the prominent

[27] Int. Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004.
[28] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 135, ll. 1–3.
[29] Parks, *Culture, Conflict and Coexistence*, 87.
[30] HIP. A. 37, 628, 66.
[31] Mem. E. Ashby, *Scientist in Russia* (New York, 1947), 27.
[32] Livshin and Orlov, *Sovetskaia Propaganda v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny: 'Kommunikatsiia Ubezhdeniia' i mobilizatsionnye mekhanizmy* (Moscow, 2007), 583–8.
[33] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 362, ll. 9–12. Others wrote in similar terms. See: Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy 1939–1956* (New Haven, 1994), 112–13; Krementsov, *Stalinist Science,* 140.

geneticist, wrote to the Soviet leadership in a letter that exemplifies the tactic of performance in action. His letter placed great emphasis on the Marxist and Darwinist nature of genetics, and refuted Lysenko's allegation that genetics was a capitalist and degenerate science. At the same time he also stressed the rich international heritage of chromosomal theory, drawing strength from the current sympathy for Western science.[34] The Director of the Lenin Library wrote to Malenkov and Andreev in similar terms, stressing the international significance of the Library and suggesting that, as there was likely to be a large growth in foreign visitors after the war was over, their staff budget would have to be increased.[35] Soviet scientists, academics, musicians, film-makers, and artists performed the language of Official Soviet Identity with gusto when it suited their personal and institutional agendas during the Great Patriotic War.

When the Red Army occupied Eastern Poland in 1939, the response of its soldiers was largely to 'plunder' the economic resources before them. The wartime enthusiasm for Anglo-American film, music, and science suggests that capitalist civilization exerted an appeal that went beyond purely economic motivations. Jazz music and Hollywood films were fun and glamorous, and British and American researchers were highly regarded by their Soviet counterparts. The opportunity to interact with the fruits of capitalist civilization was made possible by the Soviet government's careful wartime embrace of Anglo-American culture and science. However, there were limits to legitimate enthusiasm for Western products, as demonstrated by the official anxiety surrounding *Britanskii Soiuznik* and *Amerika*. Film, science, and music were some of the easiest aspects of Anglo-American culture for Soviet power to embrace because it was comparatively easy to control access to them. However, the way in which Soviet citizens interacted with and understood the military hardware, clothing, and food that arrived in the USSR from overseas was more difficult to control. The presence of allied military personnel presented an even greater challenge to the carefully constructed official narrative about Soviet civilization between 1941 and 1945.

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[34] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 198, ll. 41–68.
[35] Let. Ibid. d. 219, ll. 83–7.

LEND LEASE: GIFT OR PAYMENT?

The key mechanism that brought foreign servicemen and technology into the USSR during World War II was Lend Lease. The Lend Lease Agreement was originally signed in 1939 to provide Britain with American military aid, but in October 1941 it was extended to include the USSR. By the end of the war the Soviet Union had received around 11 billion dollars of supplies, or 29 per cent of all Lend Lease aid.[36] Most of the goods received were high calorie foodstuffs and clothing that were shipped to Vladivostok. However, the Soviets also received a significant number of tanks during 1941–2, and trucks, planes, and communications equipment in 1942–5.[37] Much of this military materiel arrived via the Northern Route, from Britain and Iceland to the Arctic ports of Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk, where the flow of goods peaked in 1943–4.

Allied imports of military materiel were a sensitive issue inside the USSR. The quality of Soviet technology was an important aspect of Official Soviet Identity through which the superiority of Soviet civilization could be asserted. The thirteen years before the German invasion, since 1928, had been devoted to the crash industrialization of the Soviet Union. Part of the rationale for that programme had been to prepare the USSR technologically for war. The brutal defeats of 1941 came as a major shock to many Soviet citizens. They also made the drawing of comparisons between Soviet and foreign-made hardware an even more sensitive issue. One respondent to HIP remembered that 'there were many conversations about the technological superiority of the Germans' that year.[38] Some official publications demonstrated an awareness of this attitude. One of the leading characters in Korneichuk's play, *The Front,* comments that, 'German radio communications, like their system of communications in general, are first-rate. It is our duty to learn from the enemy in order to surpass him.'[39] However, by the start of 1943, the achievements of Soviet science were being trumpeted as one of the causes of the decisive turn in the war. The official press even

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[36] H. P. van Tuyll, *Feeding the Bear: American Aid to the Soviet Union, 1941–1945* (London, 1989), 22–3. Estimates vary between 22 and 29%.

[37] M. Suprun, *Lend-Liz i severnye konvoi, 1941–45 gg.* (Moscow, 1997), 122.

[38] HIP. B6, 144, 4.

[39] A. Korneichuk, 'The Front', in, *Four Soviet War Plays* (London, 1944) 9.

directly denied that Germany had enjoyed a technological advantage at
the start of the war.[40] The arrival of vast volumes of military hardware
from overseas was, therefore, a delicate issue. The government was
simultaneously fostering Soviet honour and civic pride in the techno-
logical achievements of the USSR, whilst importing foreign machinery
in its hour of greatest need.

In the early, desperate months of the war, the Soviet press gave a high
profile to the economic support that the capitalist Allies had promised
to the USSR. The planes and tanks from Britain and America were
afforded particularly prominent coverage. And a number of expressions
of gratitude from senior Soviet leaders were published.[41] Molotov
praised the 'close cooperation', and 'broad and systematic manner' in
which the Anglo-Americans had agreed to help the Soviet Union;
Litvinov offered the 'warm thanks of my government'; and Stalin
expressed his 'sincere thanks' for the 'exceptionally significant sup-
port'.[42] This promise of military and economic aid was intended to
bolster the mood of the population during the desperate hours of the
German advance on Moscow. Aid from Britain and America was also
afforded a prominent role in the *listovki* dropped behind enemy lines
carrying headlines such as, 'Everything that England has promised to
send to Russia has been sent.'[43]

However, once the early danger had passed, the Soviet press began to
ignore the programme. Lend Lease was ignored by the official mass
media because the arrival of foreign-made goods threatened the idea
that the USSR was technologically and militarily advanced enough to
win the war with its own weapons. The flow of supplies increased in
1942–3 but the volume of Soviet reportage fell. *Pravda* published, on
average, one article every two months about the scheme, and they were
largely excerpts from official speeches by American public figures. These
reports tended to be highly factual and numerical, detailing the volume
of goods that had been received. Hence Roosevelt's report to Congress
in December 1942 noted that the USSR had received 4,000 tanks,
3,000 planes, and 30,000 trucks in the previous year. These figures
were, however, buried in a mass of other details, and they lacked any
clear sense of the overall contribution allied goods were making to the

    [40] *Pravda*, 25.03.43, p. 1.   [41] *Pravda*, 25.10.41, p. 4; 02.10.41, p. 1.
    [42] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 9.11.41, p. 1, *Pravda*, 02.10.41, p. 10; 14.12.41, p. 1.
    [43] Almost 20% of the available space in a series of *listovki* in the Komsomol archive
from December 1941 was devoted to this story. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 32, d. 15, ll. 1–12.

Soviet war effort.[44] This policy of sparing commentary continued until the end of the war. One historian even claims that the Soviet military removed the brand names from American and British-made equipment in an effort to obscure their origin.[45]

The challenge to Official Soviet Identity presented by Lend Lease was also softened by discussing it in the context of the allied failure to open the Second Front. In a typical example of this, Gromyko, the Soviet Ambassador to the USA, offered a toast to President Roosevelt in October 1943 in which he began by noting that the 'heaviest burden of force and suffering' was being carried by the USSR. Gromyko went on to thank the President for the tanks, weapons, and food the USA was sending, before returning to his call for greater allied military action.[46] The same dynamic was evident in a model lecture circulated by the Komsomol in association with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Revolution in 1942. The lecture summarized the official position that, 'The help that has been shown us by England and America so far has only had a small effect in comparison to the help that we have given them.'[47] Allied weapons could not compensate for the blood of the Soviet soldiers who operated them.

In private, at both the Tehran and Yalta Conferences, Stalin expressed his warmest appreciation for the 'absolute necessity' of allied goods and technology.[48] In public, however, Soviet leaders hesitated to thank the Allies for Lend Lease; it was the Allies who should thank them. This lack of gratitude precipitated a diplomatic incident in May 1943 when the American Ambassador, Standley, angrily attacked the Soviet government for minimizing the significance of Lend Lease. Official coverage of the programme increased a little afterwards.[49] On the other hand, Soviet officials exploded with anger in 1944 when Gruilow, a representative of the American charity Russian War Relief, sent a message back to the USA expressing the 'greetings and thanks' of a group of Russian orphans to the American people.

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[44] *Pravda*, 15.12.1942, p. 4. See also, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 21.04.1944, p. 4.
[45] van Tuyll, *Feeding the Bear,* 37.
[46] *Pravda*, 06.10.43, p. 4.
[47] RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 32, d. 67, l. 42.
[48] van Tuyll, *Feeding the Bear,* 38; Werth, *Russia at War* (1964), 980.
[49] See: *Pravda,* 13.05.43, p. 4.

Kemenov, the head of VOKS, accused Gruilow of 'intolerable exaggeration of the significance of American aid to Russia'.[50] As Kemenov explained in a letter to Russian War Relief, the extraordinary nature of Soviet suffering and endurance in the war meant that American 'gifts' to the USSR could never be presented as 'charity'. The gratitude should flow the other way.[51] Lozovskii complained in similar terms at a Sovinformburo meeting in February 1943: the allied aid organizations wanted the Soviet government to 'tell them how their 15 cans of conserves helped destroy 300,000 Germans at Stalingrad'.[52]

The strategic calculation that Lend Lease should be minimized in order to stress the debt owed by the Allies to the Soviet Union is typical of subtle dynamics of gift exchange described by Marcel Mauss in his *Essai sur le Don* in 1924. Mauss observed that the giving of a gift creates a burden of obligation on the receiver 'to reciprocate the present that has been received'.[53] Mauss's ideas have been challenged, particularly by Iuri Lotman, who has argued that the notion of reciprocity is alien to the Orthodox Slavic tradition of unconditional self-giving.[54] However, the reaction of Soviet officials and the Soviet press to Lend Lease exemplifies Mauss's notion that gift giving is an assertion of prestige. Mauss notes that if one party fails to express due thanks for the gift, then the exchange can 'go wrong', leading to tensions between the parties. In Maussian terms, the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR, as the leading moral and military force within the Grand Alliance, was preserved by stressing that Lend Lease was not a gift. It was merely an act of reciprocation for the much greater gift of the lives of Soviet citizens.

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[50] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 248, ll. 1–4.

[51] Ibid. ll. 5–8.

[52] Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad: formirovanie vneshnepoliticheskix stereotipov v soznanii rosiiskogo obshchestva pervoi polovini XX Veka* (Moscow, 1998), 283.

[53] M. Mauss, trans., W. D. Halls, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London, 1990), 6.

[54] Iu. M. Lotman, trans. N. F. C. Owen, '"Agreement" and "Self-Giving" as Archetypal Models of Culture', in A. Shukman, ed., 'The Semiotics of Russian Culture', *Michigan Slavic Contributions*, 11 (London, 1984), 125–40. See also M. Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, 2nd edn (London, 2004); N. Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991).

LEND LEASE WITHIN THE SOVIET WARTIME IMAGINATION

Lend Lease was not widely discussed in the Soviet wartime oral information network. Soviet citizens rarely spoke of, and frequently demonstrated ignorance about, the flow of goods arriving from outside. It is striking how infrequently Soviet citizens are recorded speculating and wondering about Lend Lease during the war. It might be the case that secret police informers and prosecutors were not interested in comments about Lend Lease. However, the programme touched on a highly sensitive aspect of wartime Official Soviet Identity: informers would have been likely to report on it. Furthermore, this explanation would not account for the absence of Lend Lease within wartime letters and diaries. It seems far more likely that the Soviet press successfully shaped the concerns and interests of its audience. The lack of rumouring and conversation about Lend Lease is in stark contrast to the centrality of the Second Front to the thinking, worrying, and speculating of the Soviet population at war. The Soviet press was very effective at focusing the attentions of its audience on to, or away from, particular topics. However, its capacity to 'strike dumb' its readers exceeded its ability to shape their attitudes towards the issues they were interested in.[55]

When Soviet citizens did discuss Lend Lease it was often in a highly confused manner. Residents of the Arctic ports were, at least initially, mystified by the new arrivals. At an October 1941 lecture in Arkhangel'sk one of the listeners enquired where the English people had come from and where they had gone away to.[56] Igor Andreevich, aged 11 when the war broke out, remembered that he and his friends deduced from observation that these foreign sailors must be bringing relief supplies to the USSR, 'We could just guess because we could see the foreign ships that were arriving in Arkhangel'sk with various goods . . . There was no information.'[57] Lend Lease was so badly understood that the few rumours that did circulate about it sometimes stated that 'the Caucuses have been sold by the Soviet Union to England for 20 years' or 'For all the American goods the Soviet Union will pay not with gold but

[55] K. Verdery, *National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania* (Oxford, 1991).
[56] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 834, op. 2, d. 69, l. 17.
[57] Int. Igor Andreevich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.

will give the Far East to Baikal on a lease.'[58] Such miscomprehension reflected the very limited volume of information available about the programme.

Those individuals who understood the programme rather better often regarded it as a minor factor alongside the strategically significant allied failure to fulfil their military responsibilities. Tins of American spam were ironically dubbed 'Second Front' by Red Army soldiers: they reminded the soldiers of the Allies' failure to do more.[59] Viktor Dmitrovich, a Red Army medical officer who claimed to despise the Soviet regime, remembered that, 'My attitude was twofold. On the one had it was help. But on the other—it was done in a criminal fashion . . . When people are dying in their thousands—600 thousand to take Poland alone, 300 thousand to take Berlin!'[60] Margaret Wettlin remembered that her fellow academics also felt that 'The signing of pacts, the sending of food and munitions, were one thing. Blood was another. Blood was the great common denominator.'[61] Some Soviet citizens even commented directly on the official silence concerning Lend Lease. When Stalin ignored the allied war contribution in his 1943 speech which sparked the Standley incident, Professor Kornoukhov of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences noted, 'How pleasant the order of Com. Stalin is, that in the struggle with Hitlerism we have single-handedly won a victory without any help. He did not even refer to the technical help of the Allies. It is obvious that the impact of this help is not great.'[62]

A few individuals who were prosecuted for anti-Soviet agitation during the war went even further and described Lend Lease as part of a wider picture of allied perfidy. G.I.K. was arrested in January 1945 for speculating that the allies would use the debt accrued by Stalin's government to apply pressure for further internal changes within the USSR.[63] M.V.G. suggested that the destruction of the *kolkhozy* might be an appropriate payment.[64] Such attitudes were shaped by the wider experience of the Anglo-American failure to open the Second Front in 1942 and 1943.

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[58] Proc. GARF. f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 13613, l. 17; Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 66, l. 18.
[59] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 586.
[60] Int. Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, September 2004.
[61] Mem. Wettlin, *Fifty Russian Winters,* 188.
[62] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 685, l. 97.
[63] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a. d. 14701, l. 2.
[64] Ibid. d. 20886, l. 25.

A counter-narrative did emerge at the end of the war, but largely in the post-war period, which argued that Lend Lease had been an essential mechanism for the wartime victory. This was argued by a number of respondents to HIP, possibly to flatter their American interviewers.[65] It also appeared as an example of anti-Soviet prosecutable speech by 1945.[66] Some Soviet citizens, demonstrating what was almost certainly diplomatic politeness, thanked American representatives for their help during the war.[67] However, the wartime profile of Lend Lease was strikingly low. It made a very limited impact on the wartime rumour network, and rarely become a source of conversation or speculation. This lack of comment suggests that Soviet citizens did not regard Lend Lease, unlike the Second Front, as a vital strategic feature of the anti-Hitler struggle.

When they personally interacted with Lend Lease goods, however, Soviet citizens developed a diversity of complex and nuanced views concerning the foreign-produced material. Lend Lease was not a strategic priority in the minds of the Soviet population, but the opportunity to make use of British and American technology resulted in inevitable comparisons with their Soviet-made equivalents. They employed the 'tactic' of *bricolage*, fusing personal experience with their pre-existing prejudices and the language of Official Soviet Identity, to generate a plethora of different responses.

The evidence concerning these reactions is fragmentary, but it does demonstrate that at least some Soviet citizens reiterated the claims of Official Soviet Identity that the goods were inferior to their domestic equivalents. Such comments were particularly common amongst Red Army soldiers who were often very critical of Anglo-American tanks. A. T. Mar'ian wrote in his wartime diary in June 1943,

I saw some English tanks in the neighbouring brigade. They are better than the Americans ones but incomparably worse than our [T] 34s. They are not that manoeuvrable and very high. Of course they are frightening to Africans but

[65] HIP. A. 4, 32, 52.
[66] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 34977, ll. 13–14; d. 36321, ll. 26, 29. For examples from 1945 see d.75172, l. 8; d. 36799, l. 6. Of the small number of those prosecuted for making such comments during the war, several were prosecuted well after it was over, in the early 1950s, raising questions about the authenticity and timing of the purported comments.
[67] van Tuyll, *Feeding the Bear,* 38.

they are metal coffin targets for the German guns ... our tankists have dubbed the Churchill tank 'the enemy of the tankists.'[68]

A number of my interview respondents echoed these sentiments. One veteran described the Lend Lease tanks as 'children's toys' and claimed their primary value had been for removing the clocks and measuring instruments inside.[69] Other combatants complained that the British-made 'Matilda' tank was as 'inflammable as a box of matches'.[70] Viktor Iosifovich mistakenly thought the name 'Matilda' was a Red Army nickname to mock the machines.[71] There were also occasional complaints about the quality of the foodstuffs sent over. Moscow schoolboys complained that the marmalade sent from America was *drisnia* ('the squits').[72] Spam apparently 'excited the eye, but not the taste buds', whilst others complained that a few 'rotten sausages' would not make the Soviet people strong.[73] Such comments at the very least exhibited the 'tactic' of performance and quite possibly the internalization of official rhetoric or 'thinking Bolshevik'. However, they also reflected the realities of personal experience in many cases. The Churchill tank had to undergo a major redesign in 1943 and production of the Matilda was abandoned altogether.[74] Pride in the achievements of domestic production, and the Soviet project as a whole, fused with negative experiences of foreign products to produce a contemptuous attitude towards imported goods amongst some Soviet citizens.

However, the pragmatic circumstances of use and consumption ensured that the reactions of Soviet citizens were not entirely monochrome concerning Lend Lease produce. This was particularly the case in areas of American excellence: trucks and food. Many wartime combatants were unstinting in their praise of Studebaker trucks and Dodge jeeps. Vasili Ermolenko repeatedly described in his diary how the Manchurian offensive could not have been carried out without these 'Amerikankas'.[75]

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[68] Mem. Mar'ian, *Gody moi, kak soldaty: Dnevnik sel'skogo aktivista 1925–1953 gg.* (Kishinev,1987), 173.

[69] Int. Viktor Iosifovich, Moscow, May 2004.

[70] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 620–3.

[71] Int. Viktor Iosifovich, Moscow, May 2004.

[72] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 761–2.

[73] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 3a1, d. 15112, l. 35; V. Shalamov, trans., J. Glad, *Kolyma Tales* (1994)*,* 275.

[74] P. Chamberlain and C. Ellis, *British and American Tanks of World War II* (New York, 1969), 54, 66–7.

[75] Mem. Ermokenko, *Voennyi dnevnik,* 169, 171, 173.

Nikolai Litvin was similarly effusive in his praise for the Willys Jeeps he drove: they demonstrated 'decent speed, excellent off-road capability and good power'. They were long-lasting and extremely popular amongst the Red Army soldiers.[76] According to a GI who served at the Poltava airbase in 1944, the word 'Studebaker' became a superlative term of praise for anything excellent, including a Soviet soldier's female object of desire.[77] My military interview respondents, who were dismissive of Lend Lease tanks, often spoke in rapturous tones about the cars and jeeps:

The cars, of course, were excellent.[78]

Then the American cars arrived, Dodge and Jeep—wonderful cars, they helped a lot.[79]

Similar praise was sometimes, though not always, lavished by Soviet veterans on Lend Lease aeroplanes, which they credited with reviving the Soviet Air Force.[80] A number of veterans also spoke in glowing terms about the Lend Lease cans of pork and milk which were distributed at the front line. Viktor Dmitrovich claimed that Lend Lease meat was still his benchmark for quality.[81] Marshal Akhromeyev, the last remaining senior Soviet officer to have seen combat in the war, reminisced about the quality of Lend Lease sausage forty years later during the Gorbachev–Reagan talks.[82]

The evidence for such attitudes is fragmentary, and a significant volume, though not all of it, was gathered well after the war itself. Nonetheless, comments such as these demonstrate that the process of *bricolage* did occur when Soviet citizens directly interacted with Lend Lease goods. Allied aid was not extensively discussed within the wartime oral news network; the Soviet press succeeded in focusing attention on the absent Second Front. However, Red Army truck and tank drivers were able to draw on their personal experiences, as well as the contents of the official press, and at least some of them appreciated the quality

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[76] Mem. N. Litvin, trans., S. Britton, *800 Days on the Eastern Front: A Russian Soldier Remembers World War II* (Lawrence KS, 2007), 50.

[77] Barghoorn, *Soviet Image,* 240.

[78] Int. Viktor Iosifovich, Moscow, May 2004.

[79] Int. Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, September 2004.

[80] Int. Boris Romanovich, Moscow, September 2004; Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 787; G. Khmelev, *Ia khochu na front (dnevnik, pis'ma s peredovoi)* (Moscow, 2003)*,* 130.

[81] Int. Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, 2004; Viktor Iosifovich, Moscow, May 2004.

[82] M. Walker, *The Cold War* (1993), 294.

of what was sent. Even if they did not regard them as strategically significant, Soviet soldiers sometimes could not help but marvel at the precise edges of the American sugar cubes they received.[83]

Dmitri Loza's tank memoir, published in the 1990s, demonstrates that even many years later, Soviet veterans remained sensitive to the dual demands of practical experience and the language of honour. Although he praises the Sherman tanks that he used throughout the war, he is quick to point out how the Soviet tankists had adapted and improved them. He also draws the inevitable comparison to the T 34.[84] Loza's fusion of personal observations with a sensitivity to the categories of official rhetoric and a pride in Soviet achievements reveals that the 'tactics' of the Soviet habitat remained ingrained many years after the Stalin era had come to an end.

ANGLO-AMERICAN SERVICEMEN IN THE WARTIME USSR

Official Soviet Identity embraced Anglo-American art and science, with a few reservations, during World War II, but was more cautious about the presence of Lend Lease goods in the USSR. The presence of British and American servicemen in the Soviet Union presented a more significant challenge. They brought foreign food, mores, and music into the heart of the Soviet homeland when thousands of them visited the Arctic ports of Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk.[85] Their presence created major difficulties for local administrators and presented great opportunities for innovative members of the local community. The under-written story of their life ashore in the USSR provides a microcosm for the tensions at the heart of Official Soviet Identity as a civilization during the war and the creativity with which ordinary people negotiated the boundaries of what could and could not be Soviet between 1941 and 1945.

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[83] Mem. Khmelev, *Ya khochu na front*, 101.

[84] D. Loza, trans., J. F. Gebhardt, *Commanding the Red Army's Sherman Tanks: The World War II Memoirs of Hero of the Soviet Union Dmitriy Loza* (Lincoln NA, 1996), 7–8, 129.

[85] A much smaller number visited Odessa as well in 1944–5. See: TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1455, ll. 7–8.

Official relations and the contest for honour

Life in the Arctic ports was extremely hard for the Soviet population. In 1942 Murmansk was largely destroyed by German bombing and the daily food supply in Arkhangel'sk, and its sister port of Molotovsk, barely outstripped that in Leningrad.[86] Between 1941 and 1945 thousands of over-paid, over-sexed, and under-employed foreign sailors descended on these deprived towns.[87] As Golubtsova notes, 'In the memories of contemporaries in 1943 Arkhangel'sk was overflowing with foreigners... You could meet them in the street and at the market, at the station, in the church and the cinema, in the summer at the beach, in winter on the ice rink.'[88] Air raid free Arkhangel'sk was dubbed the 'Las Vegas of Northern Russia' and felt the force of the sailors more than anywhere else.[89] It was not the first time in the city's history that the streets had thronged with British servicemen: it had a long heritage of trade with England and was the centre of operations for British interventionist forces during the Civil War.[90] By 1941, however, the British had been absent for over twenty years, and their arrival heralded an unprecedented degree of contact with the outside world for the younger generation of city residents.

This unprecedented 'invasion' presented a conundrum for the Soviet press. The convoyers' dangerous journey to the USSR dramatically embodied the Allies' military contribution to the war and the USSR's partial reliance on foreign technology. In the early, desperate days of 1941, this was regarded in a positive light. The first allied convoys arrived at Murmansk in September 1941 bringing 300 Hurricane aircraft and an entire squadron of pilots, ground staff, and engineers.[91] The Hurricanes, and their crew, rapidly became a symbol of Anglo-Soviet cooperation. Their pictures appeared in *Pravda*, and in 1941 Konstantin Simonov wrote in *Krasnaia Zvezda* about how they had

[86] Suprun, *Lend-Liz,* 161–2.

[87] Many of the experiences of the sailors mirrored those of the 'over-sexed, over paid and over here' GI's in wartime Britain. See: D. Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain, 1942–1945* (London, 2000).

[88] O. Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov' po-angliiski. Dokumental'naia povest'* (Severodvinsk, 2000), 9.

[89] R. Woodman, *The Arctic Convoys: 1941–1945* (London, 1994), 180. C. B. Tye, *The Real Cold War: Featuring Jack in Joe's Land* (Gillingham, 1995), 79–80, 90, 115, 122.

[90] R. L. Willett, *Russian Sideshow: America's Undeclared War: 1918–1920* (Dulles, 2003), 3–20.

[91] Mem. See: H. Griffith, *R.A.F. In Russia* (London, 1943); J. Golley, *Hurricanes Over Murmansk* (Wellingborough, 1987).

found 'a common language' with their Russian hosts.[92] They had 'arrived here to fight and have behaved like true soldiers'.[93]

However, the Hurricane crews were the only Anglo-American service-men stationed in the USSR during the war to benefit from such favoured reporting. *Pravda*'s article 'O-Kei Britannia' in January 1942 marked the end of the era in which the paper regularly spoke in open terms about the presence of British and American personnel on Soviet soil.[94] When Soviet papers described the naval battle in the North, they routinely did so without making any reference to the allied convoys operating in that sector.[95] Even the Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* newspaper, *Pravda Severa,* made almost no direct references to the fact that Lend Lease supplies were disembarking in the region. On the other hand, the actions of French Normandie-Niemen Squadron, who served on the Russian front, were openly discussed. They presented no meaningful threat to the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a leader of the Grand Alliance.[96]

The two major exceptions to this rule were an often cited, but highly atypical, speech by Maiskii, the Soviet Ambassador in Britain, that praised the convoyers 'endurance, staying power, and bravery' and a serialized story in *Ogonëk* at the start of 1944.[97] In the *Ogonëk* story a Russian Captain, Zhitkov, has developed a lacquer to make periscopes invisible. His great rival, a German spy, enters the USSR disguised as a British officer on the ship *Mary Glory* to steal the new product. The German spy also finds a willing accomplice in Miles, the storeman of the *Mary Glory,* who agrees to blow the ships up as they travel back to Britain carrying Soviet conserves for the British people. Needless to say, the plot is foiled but the image it presents of the convoyers could hardly be more negative.[98] Beyond these fleeting references, the blanket of silence was nearly total. As Stalin himself admitted at a Kremlin banquet during the Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers, 'We don't talk much about them [the convoyers] but we do know what they do.'[99]

[92] *Pravda*, 18.11.41, p. 2; 28.11.41, p. 2.

[93] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 30.11.1941, p. 4.

[94] *Pravda*, 16.01.42, p. 2. The only subsequent references, largely in the mouths of foreign leaders, I found were: 12.05.42, p. 4; 28.08.42, p. 4; 22.04.43, p. 4; 21.05.44, p. 4.

[95] *Ogonëk*, 01.1943: 1, p. 9; *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 04.06.1943, p. 4.

[96] *Ogonëk*, 07.1943: 27, p. 11.

[97] *Pravda*, 22.04.43, p. 4. Simonov also published a positive short piece about American convoyers in May 1942: Kiparsky, *English and American Characters in Russian Fiction* (Berlin, 1964), 103.

[98] *Ogonëk*, 10–18.1944.

[99] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War,* 751.

However, the presence of hundreds of foreign servicemen could not be ignored in the port cities themselves. The behaviour of the local Soviet administration was constrained by the need to maintain a cordial relationship with their wartime allies. Nonetheless, it is clear from the internal reports of the city and *oblast'* authorities that they regarded the convoyers as at best a nuisance, and at worst a threat to the honour of the USSR. Inter-allied relations ashore were dominated by a concern for status and reputation. Soviet officials persistently complained that 'The British do not treat the Russians as equals.'[100] From the other point of view, the convoyers were upset by the ingratitude of the local Soviet adminsitrators. Signalman Rob Lowe 'often wondered what some of our colleagues who had been lost en route to Polyarnoe [Murmansk] and back had died for' he was 'convinced the average Russian was not aware of their sacrifice'.[101] The origins of this Maussian 'contest for honour' lay in two differing understandings of the convoyers' presence in the USSR, as gift bearers or reciprocators.[102]

Official relations ashore were marred by a series of tit-for-tat allegations on both sides. Soviet reports often cast aspersions on the bravery of the foreign sailors during the crossing to Northern Russia. The Royal Navy's tactic of scuttling damaged but still floating ships was a source of particular irritation.[103] Tales, such as that of an American crew which jumped into their lifeboats on hearing the shout 'aeroplane' before returning when it transpired that the sighting had only been of a bird, were repeated with delight.[104] When a staff member at the Molotovsk International Club complained that the sailors were pampered, spoiled, and lovers of comfort, they were simply reiterating a standard official view of the convoyers.[105] Gluzman, the director of the International Club, claimed that many sailors came to the USSR simply for financial reward.[106]

The memoirs of the convoyers counter that the Red Fleet was incompetent. Robert Hughes, a Gunnery Officer on HMS *Scylla,* remembers that they 'seldom put out to sea and I doubted whether

[100] Mem. Taffrail, *Arctic Convoy* (London, 1956), 281.

[101] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War,* 102.

[102] M. Douglas, 'Foreword', in, Mauss, *The Gift,* ix.

[103] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 124, ll. 89–90.

[104] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1210, ll. 14, 19–20.

[105] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 151b.

[106] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 9; f. 296, op. 2, d. 3, l. 10.

they would stand up to the weather much less the enemy'.[107] Percy Price, a survivor of PQ 17, commented, 'We didn't see much of them! They only came out as we arrived in port.'[108] The convoyers also complained that the local government, through incompetence or malice, was wasting the supplies which they struggled to bring to Russia.[109] Both sides also accused the other of spying. The convoyers were convinced that the staff of the International Club were handpicked by the Secret Police.[110] On the other hand, the Secretary of the Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* committee complained that only 25 of the 238 permanent British staff stationed in the city were naval operatives. The rest were engaged in 'active spying work'.[111] Such allegations reinforced the impression on both sides that they were innocent victims of a dishonourable ally.

Soviet officials and the visiting sailors also routinely described the other side as 'backward'. The Director of the International Club lamented in 1943 that the 'bad behaviour of the foreign sailors' was a product of their 'exceptionally low cultural level'. They drank in excess, brawled, wore coats inside the building, talked in the cinema, lay on the sofas, and smuggled in alcohol.[112] His monthly reports expressed the hope that the backward seamen might be acculturated via contact with Soviet institutions. By 1945, 'under the influence of the workers of the club' they were 'refraining from the untrammelled "evils" of hooliganistic behaviour'.[113] From the perspective of the convoyers, it was the citizens of Arkhangel'sk who lived in 'primitive' conditions.[114] They describe how they were 'ashamed of our smart uniforms amid so much squalor'.[115] This struggle to label the other as backwards went to the heart of Official Soviet Identity as a civilization. It was a mechanism for asserting, in the

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[107] Mem. R. Hughes, *Flagship to Murmansk: A Gunnery Officer in H.M.S. Scylla 1942–3* (London, 1975), 128.

[108] Int. Percy Price, Oxford, September 2005. PQ was the Royal Navy's designation system for the convoys. PQ convoys sailed to the USSR, QP back to Britain or Iceland.

[109] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War*, 165. Internal party reports admit that there were major problems with unloading and transport: Inf. GARF f. R9401, op. 2, d. 64, ll. 2–5 and 54–5.

[110] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, 164.

[111] Let. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1136, ll. 8–9.

[112] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 34.

[113] Inf. Ibid. d. 6, l. 24.

[114] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War,* 31, 48, 56, 101.

[115] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys,* 169.

face of these unusual visitors, that the Soviet way of life was superior to that of the outside world.

It was inevitable that the complexities of cross-cultural inter-allied relations would generate some tension in the wartime Arctic ports. However, the bitterness with which the languages of bravery, incompetence, spying, and backwardness were invoked, points to the tensions the sailors' presence generated in relation to the status and honour of Soviet civilization. It is striking how infrequently official reports refer to the visiting sailors in class terms, or to their capitalist origins. The language of status and reputation that lay at the heart of Official Soviet Identity was a far more potent concern than Marxist-Leninist ideology in the wartime Arctic ports.

Local party administrators feared that these degenerate aliens would have a corrupting influence on vulnerable elements within the Soviet community. However, they could not publicize their view that the visiting sailors were backward cowards and spies. Official policy was, therefore, to keep contact between convoyers and local residents to a minimum. Soviet bureaucrats made it extremely difficult for the visiting sailors to obtain shore passes.[116] When they did come ashore, the convoyers were encouraged to attend the International Club. One aspect of the Club's role was to create a positive impression of the USSR. However, its primary function was to minimize contact between impressionable Soviet citizens and the visiting sailors. In a letter to Moscow in 1942, Rita Rait, a local activist, urged the establishment of an additional International Club in Molotovsk on exactly these grounds: its absence had led to unhealthy liaisons between the foreign guests and Soviet citizens.[117] Even the Club's employees were not allowed to sit and share a drink with the customers they served.[118]

The drive to enforce separation gathered momentum as the war proceeded. In late 1944 the International Club in Arkhangel'sk introduced a membership list, to limit the contact between vulnerable local citizens and the convoyers.[119] Griffith's account of his 1941 Soviet sojourn differs decidedly in tone from that of Ronald Phelps, who visited between February and October 1945. As the British Mission in

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[116] Mem. P. Lund and H. Ludlam, *PQ 17—Convoy to Hell: The Survivors Story* (Slough, 1968), 176.

[117] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, ll. 153–4.

[118] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 26.

[119] GAAO f, 1649, op. 2, d. 3, l. 56. Such a system had been under consideration for some time, see: f. 296, op. 2, ll. 36–48.

Arkhangel'sk drew to a close, the members of Naval Party 200 felt increasingly embattled and isolated.[120] They barely socialized with Russian civilians. As Ronald Phelps remembered, 'During those last few months we had machine guns ready to defend ourselves, because we thought that we might be attacked at any time.'[121]

Although they regarded all unsupervised interaction as unhelpful, the local Bolshevik administrators seem to have concluded that the British sailors were a particularly pernicious force. The Director of the International Club's monthly reports often made unfavourable comparisons between the conduct of the British, as opposed to American, visitors. The Royal Navy was denounced as distastefully hierarchical, and the reports complain that the sailors often took a high-handed approach towards the local Russian population.[122] When there were tensions between the British and Americans, the Soviet administrators usually sided with the US sailors.[123] The distinction between the Americans and British was by no means total, the Spanish and French sailors were clearly preferred to both of them, but it was a persistent sub-text of the official reports produced by the Club.[124]

Interpersonal interaction in the port cities

Many residents of the Arctic ports, particularly Soviet servicemen, shared their government's disdain for the visiting foreigners and shunned the convoyers during their time in the USSR. Until late 1944, the Arkhangel'sk International Club was open to Russian citizens as well as foreign guests. During the winter months, members of the

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[120] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys,* 160. The shore mission in Murmansk was known as Naval party 100 and in Arkhangel'sk Naval Party 200.

[121] Int. Ronald Phelps, Oxford, September 2005. This memory almost certainly reflects the exaggerated effect of the passing of time. Nonetheless his comments capture the mood of 1945 when the guns, which had probably been there for some time, acquired an added significance.

[122] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 4, l. 30; d. 6, l. 25.

[123] Inf. Ibid. d. 6, ll. 14, 25; d. 3, ll. 85–7.

[124] The preference accorded to the French and Spanish sailors was in part a consequence of the fact that they were often communist sympathizers. However, it is notable that the Director of the International Club praised them, above all, for their criticism of the British and Americans with regard to the absent Second Front and their cowardice at sea. Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 3, ll. 8–11, 35; d. 4, l. 50; d. 5, ll. 21–2.

Soviet Union of Sailors made up the majority of visitors to the club.[125] During the navigation season, however, when large numbers of foreign sailors were in the city, the club received very few visits from Soviet servicemen.[126] When Russian sailors did attend the club, fights often broke out. The allied failure to take their share of the military burden was a major source of tension, and the presence of hundreds of foreign sailors in the port cities does not seem to have alleviated this frustration. Towards the end of 1943, the club's administrators regularly had to evict Soviet servicemen for abusing the foreign sailors about the absent Second Front.[127]

Many non-combatant residents of Arkhangel'sk also shared the local government's contempt for the foreign sailors. Joseph French complained in later years that in 1943, 'British and Americans were being subjected to disgraceful behaviour by certain local elements, being pushed and jostled in the street and having pockets picked.'[128] It was common for the convoy veterans to ascribe any frostiness on the part of the local Arkhangel'sk residents to the omnipresent Secret Police.[129] It is clear, however, that many Soviet citizens shared their local administrators' sentiments with regard to the convoyers. The anti-sailor mood was reflected in a report by a worker at the Molotovsk International Club who commented that she 'often heard our people saying that we "have made enough fuss over the Allies"'.[130] A female Arkhangel'sk resident, writing to a local newspaper many years later remembered that, 'Like the majority of the youth I was educated in a strong patriotic and moral spirit . . . All of the boys were called up into the army and sent to fight. The majority of the girls could not meet with foreigners: it was considered immoral.'[131]

Stories about the convoyers' cowardice also circulated beyond the reports of the party administrators. Nikolai Vasil'evich, a Russian veteran of PQ 16 described how he had witnessed the abandonment and scuttling of an American ship in these terms. 'The facts remain the

[125] There were 635 foreign guests in the month of December 1943 and 300 every day (9,000 a month), in May–June 1943. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 3, l. 8; d. 4, l. 30.
[126] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 151.
[127] GAAO f. 1649, op. 1, d. 3, l. 1.
[128] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War,* 123–4.
[129] Mem. See B. Edwards, *The Road to Russia: Arctic Convoys 1942* (Barnsley, 2002), 69; Woodward, *Arctic Convoys,* 164.
[130] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 153b.
[131] *Poleznaia Gazeta* (Severodvinsk), 14.09.2001.

facts. You could still see the ship and the captain was sitting in the lifeboat.'[132] Another Soviet veteran of the convoys told me how funny it had been to see the British sailors sitting in their lifeboats having abandoned ship when they saw a torpedo approaching: it missed.[133]

These memories almost certainly serve as narratives about personal wartime heroism and they may have been shaped by subsequent years of Soviet propaganda. Nonetheless, together with the complaints of British sailors and the contemporary reports in the Soviet archives, they suggest that some individuals shared the party's negative assessment of the wartime convoys. Conscious of the silence of the official press and aware of the barely disguised disdain of local officials, many residents treated the convoyers with calculated coldness. This frosty reception even caused concern amongst a visiting Moscow report writer who feared it was creating a negative impression of the USSR.[134] The foreign sailors, as active foreign servicemen bringing foreign technology to aid the Soviet Union, challenged both the wartime Official Soviet Identity and the *raison d'etre* of the Stalin years as a whole. Soviet civilization did not need to rely on their 'gifts' of technology. The negative reactions they faced demonstrate the extent to which Soviet values and Soviet honour had infused the thinking of many residents of the Arctic ports. The convoyers represented something profoundly un-Soviet at a moment of great collective patriotism and, as such, were to be avoided.

Comrades-at-arms

However, the visiting sailors were not universally treated as social out-casts. Their physical presence in Arctic Russia, like the presence of Lend Lease goods, offered local residents the chance to form their own impressions of, and relationships with, individuals from the outside world. As a result, many of these relationships were more complex than the official denunciations of the dangerous aliens. The convoyers experienced friendship and intimacy, as well as rejection and distrust, during their time in Arctic Russia. The behaviour of those individuals who found a common language with the visitors demonstrates the

[132] Int. Nikolai Vasil'evich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004. See also: Suprun, *Lend-Liz,* 118.
     [133] Int. Respondent anonymous, Moscow, May 2004. For an admission from a convoy veteran that the call to abandon ship may occasionally have been pre-emptive, see R. Ransome Wallis, *Two Red Stripes: A Naval Surgeon at War* (London, 1973), 119.
     [134] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 135, ll. 44–5.

'tactics of the habitat' in operation as they delicately walked the line between Soviet and un-Soviet behaviour. A respect for comrades-at-arms, a desire for food, a passion for foreign music and film, and even love were the motivating factors that drove their actions. The relationships that emerged creatively renegotiated the official response of the local Soviet government.

When united by the pressures of battle, many Soviet and Anglo-American servicemen established a bond of respect that superseded the mutual recriminations of cowardice and incompetence.[135] Archie Byrne, a Naval Gunner whose ship sank 170 miles from the Soviet coast remembers the moment he was rescued vividly: 'As we came on deck we saw the flag on the stern, stopped, made the Russians stand back and saluted their flag in proper RN (Royal Navy) style, in appreciation of their rescue and saving our lives. Shouts. All stopped. The Captain and all the crew came and hugged us.'[136] This culture of 'comrades-at-arms' was particularly prominent during the early period of the Arctic convoys. Robert Turley, a Hurricane pilot who visited in 1941, remembered that the pilots he had flown with treated him with great friendliness.[137]

Relations became more tense as the war went on. This was particularly the case after Convoy PQ 17 was abandoned by its Royal Navy Escort, resulting in the loss of twenty-four of the thirty-three vessels and the cancellation of convoys for some time. However, a number of British and American signalmen served aboard the Soviet destroyers based in Murmansk and they often remember the ship's crews as considerate hosts who defied the shortages of the time to obtain white bread and sugar for their guests.[138] Alone on the open sea, Soviet and British servicemen shared drunken nights and intense conversations in their confined quarters.[139] Igor Dmitrevich, himself a convoyer, witnessed the loss of an American tanker with only three survivors during PQ 16. His description of the spectacular sinking of the ship was related with great empathy and sadness. He claimed that a 'true brotherhood'

[135] Mem. The experience of being 'comrades-in-arms' also thawed American–Australian relations in the Pacifc during the war. E. D. Potts and A. Potts, *Yanks Down Under 1941–45* (Oxford, 1985), 68–72.

[136] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War*, 20.

[137] Int. Robert Turley, Oxford, September 2005.

[138] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War*, 104.

[139] Mem. Ibid. 120–1.

was established between the sailors, which endures to this day.[140] Such stories, like those about the famous 'Meeting at the Elbe' in 1945, are susceptible to post-rationalization by those who wish to remember their youth in glowing terms. However, the evidence provided by the contemporary Russian sources and the memoirs of the British sailors, suggests that they are not entirely the romantic storytelling of aged veterans.

The fellowship of the seas often evaporated on arrival in port. British and American officers expressed dismay in the summer of 1942 that their 'blood brothers', with whom they had served side by side, were banned from the Inturist restaurant in Arkhangel'sk.[141] Under the microscope of life ashore, Red Navy sailors deployed another 'tactic of the habitat' and performed as they should to preserve Soviet honour. When the pressures of conflict threw them together, however, a mutual respect resulted, which endures to this day. The collapse of the USSR has resulted in a series of annual celebrations of the arrival of the first convoy in Murmansk. These events are somewhat unique in the Russian memorial calendar, which continues to place such a strong emphasis on the decisive Soviet contribution to victory. At the 1999 event Gordon Long, of the Russian Convoy Club, declared that, 'There is no stronger seafaring friendship anywhere in the world!'[142] This comradeship with the seafaring Allies subtly negotiated the boundaries of Soviet behaviour. Soviet sailors were not being 'truthful' at sea and 'false' in port. They were living as Soviet citizens in the different environments of the Soviet 'habitat'.

Food, Friendship, and Love

The most widespread, and most contentious, relationships on land in Arctic Russia were between the visiting convoyers and local girls. The female population of Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk could hardly fail to notice the colourful, curious, and wealthy foreign sailors. Many of them did not shun the company of the convoyers ashore as their male military counterparts did. Hundreds of wartime relationships were established, platonic and sexual, temporary and permanent. As one wartime Arkhangel'sk resident explained, 'all the foreign sailors had Russian

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[140] Int. Igor Dmitrevich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
[141] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1210, ll. 22–4.
[142] *Poleznaia Gazeta* (Severodvinsk), 07.09.2001.

girlfriends'.[143] An August 1942 report by the director of the International Club noted that 30 per cent of the 14,000 monthly visitors to the Arkhangel'sk International Club were Soviet citizens, 'The mass of whom are young women invited by foreign sailors into the club.'[144] The floor thronged with Soviet girls at the regular dance evenings, some of whom became the permanent dancing partners of individual foreign sailors.[145] Young women hung around outside the club waiting for the foreign sailors to arrive, and requesting to be admitted as a guest. The foreign servicemen were enthusiastic hosts, sometimes entering and leaving the club several times in an evening to bring in more guests.[146]

These casual acquaintances often developed into more serious relationships. Lund and Ludlam, two survivors of PQ17, remembered that 'the survivors who were not hospitalized had little to do with their time except to sit in the International Club or find themselves girl friends, and many found regular sleeping partners, as did some naval officers who "went native" and lived with girls ashore.'[147] A drug resistant form of VD infected up to 50 per cent of the Anglo-American shore crew at one point.[148] Even the staff of the International Club pursued intimate relationships with the foreign guests. In December 1942 three members of the club's *aktiv* were removed for over-familiarity with the convoyers.[149] The same fate befell three full-time staff members in November 1943; Rait and Gorinova had attended private parties at the English Mission; Ruzskaia had developed a close relationship with a British officer, with whom she spoke on the phone and arranged regular 'intimate meetings'.[150]

The relationships between Soviet girls and the convoyers became a major source of tension between the visiting sailors and the local Bolshevik administration. Wartime poems, such as Simonov's *Wait for Me*, highlighted the concerns of Soviet combatants that their women should be faithful whilst they were at the front. Sexual purity both at home and under the German occupation was a key marker of a

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[143] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 26. This was clearly something of an exaggeration.

[144] GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 2.

[145] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys,* 180.

[146] Inf. GAAO f. 1694, op. 2, d. 3, ll. 36–48.

[147] Mem. Lund and Ludlam, *PQ 17,* 182.

[148] Mem. Ibid. 82. An early decision not to issue contraceptives was later revised, 158.

[149] GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 4, l. 5.

[150] Ibid. l. 65.

true Soviet woman.[151] The same principles applied to the visiting convoyers. The anxieties of the local Bolshevik administrators focused on the widespread practice amongst British and American servicemen of providing their girlfriends with gifts of food, cigarettes, or clothes.[152] Internal party reports described this practice as prostitution. The girls who hung around outside the International Club were of 'loose behaviour' (легкого поведение), or more explicitly prostitutes.[153] Within the view of the local administrators, their behaviour undermined the honour of Soviet civilization. It was not solely economic but also social 'prostitution'. A local party report in June 1943 objected that the conduct of the young women in the International Club was 'damaging the honour and dignity of Soviet girls'.[154] Reflecting on the wartime experience, the Secretary of the Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* Komsomol lamented that, 'There were very bad cases when our girls established friendships with foreign sailors in order to obtain silk stockings, or dresses, or shoes, but in the process undermined their honour, their dignity as Soviet citizens.' Such behaviour was a betrayal of the Motherland. When they received a gift from a foreign sailor, they actuated all the Soviet government's concerns about the convoyers as gift-givers in the USSR. They had allowed themselves to become indebted to the foreign servicemen, threatening the honour of the Soviet Union as a whole.

That relations between the convoyers and Russian women became the cause of tension with local officials is hardly surprising. Competition over sexual honour often generates conflict between occupying forces and local populations, as it did in post-war Japan or Germany.[155] The fact that the resident aliens were allies also did little to mitigate the tensions in wartime Britain and Australia.[156] Nonetheless, the recurrent emphasis on honour within this inter-allied war of words reflects the particular concerns of the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a civilization. Honour, status, and dignity were not simply abstract

[151] See: RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 38, l. 6 for the denunciation of a *komsomolka* who had attended parties with German and Italian forces.

[152] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 124, ll. 93–4.

[153] Inf. G f. 1649, op. 2, d. 3, l. 1; RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 219, l. 150b.

[154] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1344, l. 32.

[155] See: J. W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Aftermath of World War II* (London, 2000); V. A. Kozlov and S. V. Mironenko, eds., *Spetsial'nye lageria NKVD, MVD SSSR v Germanii. 1945–50 gg. Sbornik dokumentov i statei* (Moscow, 2001), 334–47.

[156] Reynolds, *American Occupation;* Potts and Potts, *Yanks Down Under,* 102–30.

concepts. They were the interpretative categories that Soviet officials turned to when articulating their response to their foreign guests.

The girls themselves seem to have perceived their relationships differently. Whether their liaisons were pragmatically or emotionally motivated, they did not inhere a renunciation of their dignity as Soviet citizens. Some local girls did work as prostitutes.[157] The only distinction they drew between Soviet and foreign clients was that they demanded the convoyers pay in foreign goods rather than cash. In some cases they even had Soviet and foreign men at 'parties' on the same evening. One woman charged 100 roubles to Russian men, but took payment in kind from convoyers.[158] Foreign chocolate, cigarettes, and laundry soap fetched high prices on the black market.[159] In a time of extreme material hardship, the foreign sailors provided an opportunity for some women to supplement their diet and income. Their behaviour was typical of the 'tactic' of *bricolage* whereby Soviet citizens used official and unofficial means to obtain enough food.[160] Many wartime prostitutes in Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk were older women with families, who saw the foreign visitors as an opportunity to provide for the needs of their dependants.[161] What evidence there is suggests that some girls actively preferred foreign men, perhaps because they paid more.[162]

Many of the local girls also seem to have made no distinction between the American and British sailors. One American convoyer remembered that the best way to enjoy a night out was with the British sailors. They knew the best places in town and they got on with the local population better.[163] The memoirs of the British veterans speak, if anything, rather more about their successes with the local girls than those of their US contemporaries. At least some of the female population of the Arctic ports took a rather different view of the convoyers from that of their government. They did not consider a relationship with a foreign sailor

[157] Mem. Lund and Ludlum, *PQ 17,* 182.

[158] G f. 1649, op. 2, d. 3, l. 1; d. 4, ll. 62, 31.

[159] Ibid. d. 1648, l, 184; d. 1210, l. 18.

[160] On wartime 'hawking' see: Hessler, *Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917–1953* (Princeton, 2004), 251–83.

[161] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys,* 174–5; Lund and Ludlam, *PQ 17,* 182. This was not always the case, however. The average age of 35 girls expelled for 'prostitution' in 1944 was 28. One was only 16 years old. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1459, ll. 2–34.

[162] Some girls had almost exclusively foreign clients: ibid. ll, 5, 16, 26, 30.

[163] Mem. M. Scott, *Eyewitness Accounts of the World War II Murmansk Run 1941–1945* (Lewiston, 2006), 136. Some Americans, on the other hand, boasted of their closer friendships with local Russians.

to be more dishonouring than that with a Soviet citizen, nor did they draw distinctions between them on the basis of nationality.

Futhermore, not all wartime liaisons were established on the basis of economic interests. They frequently made up for the deficiency of companionship or intimacy on the female-dominated home front, and some were entirely platonic. Tania became the regular dance partner of Maurice Irvin of the *Empire Elgar*. They used to take the ferry home across the river every evening together. Irvin remembered that, 'Each night followed the same routine with furtive contact in the café and on the ferry [home]. Never would I have imagined that such an existence would bring happiness but it did.' They ended each evening with a secret squeeze of the hand before going their separate ways.[164] Of the thirty-five girls expelled from the city for 'prostitution' in 1944, a number were in long-term relationships, and the evidence against them does not include any indication of economic exchange.[165]

Severodvinsk journalist Ol'ga Golubtsova's research emphasizes the centrality of love, excitement, and genuine attachment in these wartime relationships. Valentina Evleva's wartime diary testifies to the romantic exhilaration of her relationship with the American sailor Bel [Bill?]:

The day has just begun and all my thoughts are about Bel.

. . . I died from happiness.

In my heart a wonderful light had come on, true love.[166]

Jimmy and Vera met in 1943. He used to row her out to the sandy islands on the Dvina, but was posted away to France in 1944.[167] A poem Jimmy sent to Vera, six months after he left, demonstrates that his ardour had not dimmed.[168] However, communication became impossible after the end of the war. When Golubtsova interviewed Vera in the 1990s she still had the only gift Jimmy had given her, a Russian–English Dictionary.[169] Kapitolina Panfilovna did not tell her son Steve (changed to Stepan after the war) that his father had been a British sailor until the end of the Cold War. She never married because she was 'remaining faithful to her loved one'.[170]

[164] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys,* 180.
[165] GAOPDiFAO, f. 296, op. 1, d. 1459, ll. 2–49.
[166] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 46–8.
[167] Ibid. 13–16.
[168] *Poleznaia Gazeta* (Severodvinsk), 22.06.2001.
[169] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov',* 13–15.
[170] *Severnyi Rabochii* (Severodvinsk), 5.11.2002; 11.01.2003.

Despite the hardships of the intervening years, many of the Russian women remembered their wartime sweethearts with fondness, and enthused about the love they had shared.

For those who did not fall in love, contact with the foreign visitors provided a romantic and exotic alternative to the drudgery of wartime life. Valentina Arkhinovna remembered John as a 'refinedly polite gentleman' who walked her home at the end of an evening.[171] The convoyers brought their own styles of music with them, turning the Arkhangel'sk into an unlikely hub of Western music and dance.[172] The club's Director, Gluzman, repeatedly gave assurances that the foreign sailors were learning Russian folk dances (*pliaski*).[173] However, an Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* Central Committee report in mid 1943 noted that, 'At the dance evenings, as a rule, they employ European dances—foxtrot and others.'[174] Percy Price, one of my interview respondents, remembered that his ship's crew set up a gramophone in a small shed on the quayside. The music attracted crowds of hangers on, who came to listen to foreign as well as familiar tunes.[175] Regular nights of foreign films, the foxtrot, and jazz exerted a powerful attraction in the otherwise dull world of wartime Arkhangel'sk.[176] The convoyers' appeal as purveyors of unfamiliar culture went beyond the local female population. But it was amongst them, on the dance floor at the International Club, that they exerted their most powerful attraction.

Whether they were supplementing the available supply of food, companionship, or love, these girls were creatively employing the 'tactic' of *bricolage*. In doing so they were not engaging in 'resistance' and stepping outside of the 'habitat' of Soviet life. They were carefully skirting the boundaries of legitimate 'Soviet' behaviour and taking advantage of the unprecedented freedom and relaxation in the wartime USSR. However, the foreign origins of the convoyers lent them a highly sensitive nature. Zina explained to her British boyfriend Bill that some individuals were rude to him because 'people are scared to meet foreigners it used to be dangerous'.[177] She assumed that what used to be illicit had now become

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[171] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 32, 33, 40.
[172] The Moldovan and Estonian jazz ensembles performed in the International Club: GAAO, f. 1649, op. 2, d. 5, ll. 5, 24.
[173] Ibid. d. 2, l, 12.
[174] GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1544, l. 32.
[175] Int. Percy Price, Oxford, September 2005.
[176] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 9; GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1544, l. 32.
[177] *Severnyi Rabochii* (Severodvinsk), 13.07.2002.

acceptable. Nonetheless, in her memory she associated her time with Bill with the music of Vadim Kozin, whom she remembered was banned at that time.[178] Their friendship was not dangerous, but it was risky. Valentina Evleva was a feature of the International Club at the age of 15 in 1941. After a series of relationships with foreign sailors, she was called to see the local NKVD but was aware that they were unlikely to take serious sanctions, particularly against an underage girl.[179]

The exile of up to 100 'prostitutes' and low-level agitation campaigns against fraternization made it clear that such behaviour was frowned upon by the local party.[180] However, many of the girls who danced at the International Club, or received gifts of chocolate and stockings from the visiting sailors, were not consciously subverting the dictates of the Soviet government. They were creatively responding to their wartime needs, ensuring they had enough to eat, enjoying going to parties, and falling in love. As the Director of the International Club in Arkhangel'sk complained, their behaviour was such that they could not be banned from the club, yet it was clear that they were behaving inappropriately.[181] They were not stepping outside of the 'habitat' in order to resist Soviet power. They were aware of the attitude of the local government, but they creatively juggled the competing demands of their personal interests and official policy. Their behaviour stretched, without explicitly transgressing, the boundaries of acceptable conduct for Soviet citizens.

In the post-war period, as the Soviet government sought to reassert the boundaries of the community, wartime liaisons with the convoyers took on a new, and more defined character. Many wartime romances ended in tragedy, as the girls concerned were sent to the Gulag after 1945. In later years, the offspring of inter-ally relationships, such as Edik Erikovich, struggled to get into schools and institutes because of their foreign patronymics.[182] The wartime line, that these women so carefully negotiated, had been moved by the exigencies of post-war life. The boundaries of legitimate *bricolage* had shifted and what had been

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[178] She is incorrect: Kozim was not banned until the end of the war. The mistake serves to highlight the risky associations the relationship had despite the fact she never suffered any formal punishment, either during the war or afterwards.

[179] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 46.

[180] In November 1941 the head of the *oblast'* NKVD suggested carrying out agitation at an apartment block level. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 934, l. 84.

[181] Inf. Ibid. 2097, l. 48.

[182] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 23.

creatively risky became illicit. Some of them, however, continued to regard this period as the best time of their lives.

Patrons or predators?

The other group of individuals who interacted extensively with the foreign sailors were children. Wartime Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk had large populations of vagrant children, without a school to attend or parents to look after them. These minors provided a major point of contact between the visiting sailors and the local population. The relationships were largely economic; the children begged for handouts, bought and sold goods, and stole from the convoyers. The convoyers dubbed them the 'gum gum boys', because of their opening gambit, 'Any gum chum?', and used them as an access point onto the black market.[183]

On arrival in the USSR, Soviet law required the convoyers to exchange foreign currency at highly unfavourable rates fixed by the Soviet Foreign Ministry.[184] As a result, many sold cigarettes, chocolate, laundry soap, and clothes on the black market, to bolster their income. Foreign chocolate, preserves, and cigarettes became recognized currencies with fixed values in the Arctic ports.[185] The waitresses at the International Club and the Inturist restaurants could be cajoled into serving more than the requisite volume of spirits for a few cigarettes or a can of meat.[186] In 1942, the British ship HMS *Trinidad* undertook repairs in Arkhangel'sk, and required internal strengthening to make her seaworthy. The Russian authorities refused to provide steel girders for the task. Late one evening two groups of ratings left the ship. One party, equipped with gifts of chocolate, distracted the sentries whilst the other used oxyacetylene gear to cut up some unused railway tracks, which were then brought aboard and used as supports.[187] Even the guards patrolling the Arkhangel'sk prison used to demand cigarettes from the staff of the nearby British communications building.[188] Foreign cigarettes were particularly popular because they were greatly superior to domestic Soviet brands.[189] *Lucky Strike*, *Phillip Morris*, and *Kent* were engraved

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[183] Scott, *Eyewitness Accounts,* 165.

[184] 48 roubles to the pound, 5.3 to the dollar: Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, 467.

[185] Mem. Taffrail, *Arctic Convoy*, 209, 251.

[186] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 1210, l. 24.

[187] Woodman, *Arctic Convoys*, 114.

[188] Int. Percy Price, Oxford, September 2005.

[189] Mem. Lund and Ludlam, *PQ 17*, 182.

on the memory of Nikolai Vasil'evich, a local child, long after the war was over.[190]

With such large sums of money being exchanged, street speculation also developed an unsavoury aspect. The International Club was often surrounded by 'shady individuals' who aggravated the club's patrons.[191] Igor Andreevich, who lived in Arkhangel'sk during the war, remembered how he and his friends collected old money, which had gone out of circulation in 1924. They then traded this worthless currency with the foreign seamen.[192] The convoyers also became a target for theft, with pickpockets taking hats, bags, and cash.[193] Tensions sometimes spilled over into violence, most famously in the cases of the British sailors Loades and Prior who were only released from a Soviet prison after Churchill intervened on their behalf.[194]

The vast majority of the thieves, speculators, and street traders were minors. As a local NKVD report noted, 'At every corner of the central streets of the city you can meet foreigners, surrounded by youths. The sailors astonishedly enquire where the Soviet children have this much money, 500–600 roubles.'[195] The local Komsomol worked hard to crack down on street speculation. In May 1943 a wave of arrests netted 104 minors. Forty-three were charged with attachment to foreigners and another fourteen with speculation. The arrest report frankly admitted that many of the children were driven to speculation by their desperate living conditions. L.B. sold foreign cigarettes, 'explaining his actions on the grounds of a lack of money'. Even Komsomol members at the local higher technical school (FZO) were engaged in cigarette speculation. In one case, the individual concerned claimed that he was selling goods in order to pay for the summer Pioneer camp.[196] This child's response demonstrates how blurred the boundaries between 'support' and 'resistance' might be. They were behaving illegally for entirely loyal and officially endorsed ends.[197] At the very least, he was an adept 'performer' of official rhetoric. In August 1943 a children's club was established to keep them off the streets.[198]

[190] Int. Nikolai Vasil'evich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
[191] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 16.
[192] Int. Igor Andreevich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
[193] Inf. GAAO f. 1649, op. 2, d. 2, l. 16.
[194] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 37, d. 1433, ll. 49–50.
[195] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 124, l. 92.
[196] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 1740, op. 1, d. 690, l. 37.
[197] Alternatively it was just a very clever answer!
[198] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 1740, op. 1, d. 690, l. 42.

However, Ronald Phelps remembered that the easiest way to obtain a drink in Arkhangel'sk in 1945 was still to step outside of the house and offer a few cigarettes to the local lads, who would exchange them for a bottle of vodka.[199]

The under-employed convoyers appreciated the opportunity to assist the 'destitute' children of the Arctic ports. Some of these relationships developed into more lasting attachments. The crew of the *Dianella* 'adopted' a quayside orphan called Wolfga, whom they renamed 'Vodka'. They sewed him a petty officer's uniform and gave him a bosun's pipe. There were tears on both sides when the ships departed, leaving their adoptees behind.[200] Ken Bull, a sick-bay attendant on the *Tuscaloosa*, gathered extra fruit and vegetables for a malnourished child in Murmansk: 'It was very rewarding to see the great improvement and he was soon actually walking on his own.'[201] The opportunity to help these 'lost children' provided great satisfaction to the visiting seamen.

However, the local Soviet regime did not perceive the exchange of a piece of chocolate between a sailor and a Soviet child as a moment of inter-allied solidarity and comradeship. In November 1941 Mal'kov, the head of the Arkhangel'sk NKVD, spoke to the *oblast'* party activists on this topic.

You can observe on the streets crowds of children who are running after the Englishmen . . . and they are given a square of chocolate or another item. The English . . . take back to England material which represents the population, our Soviet children, as beggars for any petty gift. At the same time as giving them the cigarettes or chocolate they are taking photographs of the children and then giving them to British journals. This type of contraband provides an opportunity for the English to discredit our Soviet children.[202]

From Mal'kov's perspective, the foreign sailors' behaviour dishonoured the Soviet children, and by implication the USSR as a whole. They were taking advantage of the material struggles of the population to prey on the weakest elements within Soviet society. The giving of the gift of a square of chocolate established a hierarchy of patronage which they then exploited to their advantage. These everyday interactions provided a microcosm for the Soviet regime's anxieties about Lend Lease. No Soviet citizen could be in debt to a foreigner. The exchange of a square

[199] Int. Ronald Phelps, Oxford, September 2005.
[200] Mem. Tye, *Real Cold War*, 57.   [201] Ibid. 47.
[202] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 1, d. 934, l. 84. See also: d. 1136, l. 11.

of chocolate asserted the superiority of British or American civilization and was an act of predation on the USSR's most vulnerable citizens.

The children themselves have left only fleeting glimpses of their own perspectives. However, Igor Andreevich, who was 11 in 1941, remembered his interactions with the foreign sailors with much mirth. He lived at the wood factory, along the river from the city centre, and remembered with delight the experience of fooling the sailors with worthless currency. He laughed as he remembered that the only English he knew at that age was 'give me one cigarette!' 'They were able to see how we lived, that life was difficult for us . . . I remember a benevolent (доброжелателный) relationship from us to them and from them to us . . . They of course made an effort to help us. That was my conclusion from the impression of a young child.'[203] Remembering the black-market cigarettes he used to trade he commented that, 'The majority of the time they just gave them to us and we were very glad.' I asked him whether they were generous and he replied, 'Yes they were generous. We were very happy to have them here. It was pleasant (приятный).'[204] G. N. Loginova wrote to *Poleznaia Gazeta* when Golubtsova began to publish her research on wartime relationships: 'I remember how the English and the Negroes were in the barracks. They gave gifts to all of us children of chewing gum. We had frequent trips to the room of the cleaner of the barracks. After the war the woman disappeared: they said that she had been put in prison . . . Thank you newspaper for exploring this "forbidden" theme.'[205]

The tone of these limited sources is very positive. At least some Soviet children did not consider trading and receiving goods from the foreign sailors to be a humiliating experience.[206] The government's attempts to curb street speculation were to no avail. At the end of the war, allied seamen were arriving in the USSR forewarned, with stockpiles of cigarettes and cigars.[207] Soviet children did not feel preyed upon by the foreign sailors. Instead they took advantage of the situation before them to supplement economic, and on occasion relational, resources. It is likely that few of them even considered that their behaviour might

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[203] Int. Igor Andreevich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.   [204] Int. Ibid.
[205] *Poleznaia Gazeta* (Severodvinsk), 14.09.2001.
[206] Their comments mirrored those of many Soviet children who lived through the German occupation and remembered the gifts they received of chocolate and cigarettes. Int. Mikhail Borisovich, Moscow, June 2004.
[207] F. S. Herman, *Dynamite Cargo: Convoy to Russia* (London, 1943), 93.

imperil the dignity of Soviet civilization. The 'tactics' they employed were less subtle than the local women. They had not yet become sophisticated users of the 'little tactics of the habitat'. Nonetheless, like the female population of the Arctic ports, their behaviour exhibited the 'tactic' of *bricolage* in action.

SOVIET WARTIME *MENTALITÉ*: THE GLAMOUR OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Between 1939 and 1941 a few Soviet soldiers enjoyed a once in a lifetime opportunity to interact with the material culture of the capitalist world. Their approach was largely to 'plunder' the economic opportunities before them. During the Great Patriotic War, this opportunity was extended to many millions more Soviet citizens. Their reactions to Anglo-American films, music, technology, and servicemen reveal that glamour and excitement, as well as raw economic interests, shaped the way Soviet citizens evaluated their allies. It is hardly surprising that the wartime population of the USSR were so enthusiastic about American feature films: good quality movies were in short supply in the USSR. Lend Lease goods and even foreign sailors were also assessed, to some extent, in terms of their usefulness. If a tank or truck was poorly made, then Soviet citizens were prepared to say so.

However, the popularity of jazz music, *Britanskii Soiuznik*, and foreign convoyers seems to have extended beyond these purely pragmatic concerns. It reflected their exotic associations with the outside world. Forty years on, Golubtsova's respondents still talked about the 'gallant cavaliers' from Britain, the 'glittering lights of the dance floor', and the splendour and 'finery' of the balls at the International Club.[208] The foxtrot, foreign films, and Big Band music clearly enjoyed glamorous associations for some of the population of Arkhangel'sk. Just as American GI's in Britain capitalized on the allure of Hollywood, so the convoyers cashed in on the exotic mystique associated with the outside world.[209] The very act of

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[208] Golubtsova, *Voennaia liubov'*, 32, 33, 40, 46. Such memories might reflect the glow of memory, though the evidence suggests it was a factor at the time as well.

[209] On the enthusiasm with which visiting Americans were greeted during the 1957 Youth Festival see: K. Roth-Ey, 'Loose Girls' on the Loose?: Sex, Propaganda and the 1957 Youth Festival', in M. Ilic, S. Reid, and L. Attwood, eds., *Women in the Khrushchev Era* (Basingstoke, 2004), 75–95.

'enclosing' the USSR in the 1930s had not dampened, and may even have excited, some Soviet citizens' interest in the capitalist West. Whether they simply enjoyed *Britanskii Soiuznik* or actually got to dance with a foreign sailor, Britain and America represented an exciting world of novelty and interest. Such enthusiasm often stretched the boundaries of what could be authentically Soviet during wartime.

However, this image of a capitalist world of exotic luxury could easily be turned on its head. The allegations of cowardice directed at the convoyers reflected the wider wartime rhetoric about the stoic Soviet citizen who was preternaturally capable of enduring great hardship.[210] The readiness with which Soviet citizens passed on these tales, even many years later, provides an indication of the extent to which this self-image had entered into the *mentalité* of those who lived at the time.

It would be an error, however, to assume that these two narratives of Soviet stoicism and Western glamour were antithetical to one another. Official propaganda had propagated the image of overfed and over-dressed capitalists. It is not hard to imagine how such an image could be rather attractive in food and entertainment starved wartime Arkhangel'sk. Eric Ashby described in his wartime memoir how the occupants of his carriage on a train journey to Murmansk refused all offers of food until he produced some chocolate. Even the unfriendly NKVD colonel could not resist that.[211] It was entirely possible to disapprove of Western decadence but be partial to certain Western luxuries. Stalin himself enjoyed *Lucky Strike* and *Philip Morgan* cigarettes. Many of the best quality goods and foodstuffs associated with Lend Lease were consumed by the Soviet elite. Images of the West as an arena of cowardly decadence may have reinforced the idea that it was a world of exotic luxury. The two concepts coexisted side by side as features of the Soviet wartime *mentalité*. As a common joke about the meeting at the Elbe went, the American's first comment was 'Congratulations on our meeting', the Russian asked 'Do you have bread and vodka?'[212] Cowardly decadence and exotic luxury were structural features of the way Soviet citizens imagined the world their allies inhabited beyond the border.

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[210] Allegations of excessive luxury are a common feature of anti-Western rhetoric. I. Buruma and A. Margalit, *Occidentalism. A Short History of Anti-Westernism* (London, 2004), 49–72. In the Soviet context, see Werth, *Russia at War*, 9.

[211] Mem. Ashby, *Scientist in Russia,* 151–3.

[212] HIP. A. 1, 2, 39.

CONCLUSION

Evgeny Petrov, the popular author, with Il'ia Ilf, of the American travelogue *One Storey America* (1937) was writing a book when he died in 1942. The new novel, *Journey into the Land of Communism* depicted the USSR, as seen through the eyes of two American travellers in 1963. The USSR that they visit closely resembles the USA that Petrov described in *One Storey America* but without the typical American problems. There is a People's Commissariat for Service and excellent transportation, but no poverty and no advertising. Petrov's vision of the Soviet future was typical of the wartime attitude towards British and American civilization. The best parts of it could be imported into the USSR and redeemed for the good of the people.[213] This admiration for certain aspects of capitalist civilization was by no means new. The status of foreign science and music had ebbed and flowed through the Soviet era. However, it underwent an extraordinary renaissance during World War II.

The challenge for the Soviet state was that some aspects of the wartime interaction between Anglo-American culture and its citizens could not be easily controlled. Films and music could be censored. Physical goods were more tricky and real live foreign sailors were deeply problematic. Many Soviet citizens performed as they should or even 'thought Bolshevik', shunning the wartime visitors to Arctic Russia and embracing the official rhetoric about their cowardice and moral decrepitude. However, many others engaged with them and deployed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* in order to tread carefully along the boundaries of legitimate behaviour. Most of these people were not 'resisting' Soviet power: their actions reveal a careful intent to remain inside the 'habitat' of Soviet life. Unfortunately many of them fell victim to the rapid shift in the categories of Soviet and un-Soviet behaviour that occurred once the war was over.

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[213] B. Fieseler, 'Il'f's and Petrov's "Amerika", 1935/36', paper presented at *Perceiving and Imagining 'the Other': The Soviet Union and the USA in the 20th Century* (Moscow, 2008).

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PART III

BEING SOVIET IN THE POST-WAR YEARS

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Panics, Peace, and Pacifism: Official Soviet Diplomatic Identity in the late-Stalin years 1945–53[1]

On 9 May 1945 British, American, and Soviet forces celebrated their shared victory over fascism with rounds of mutual hugging, back-slapping, and congratulation in central Germany. However, by the end of 1947 diplomatic relations between the Grand Alliance partners had degenerated to the point where it seemed possible that they might soon turn their guns against one another. The final two chapters of this book focus on the place of Britain and America within the diplomatic and cultural identity of the Soviet Union between 1945 and Stalin's death. Sovietness, in an international context, was by no means exclusively associated with the Anglo-Saxon powers after 1945. The Soviet 'liberation' of Eastern Europe and later protection of the oppressed people's of the Far East were also important features of official self-definition. However, the shift from complex allies to implacable enemies made Britain, and in particular America, the most significant benchmarks for Sovietness in this period.

Official Soviet Identity during the war had emphasized that the USSR was playing the leading role in the global struggle to defeat fascism. However, it had also stressed that cooperation with the progressive and democratic Anglo-Saxon powers could and would extend beyond the end of the war. That identity, at the heart of the cooperating Grand Alliance, remained largely intact until the summer of 1947. The Soviet press did not deny that there were differences of opinion amongst the Great Powers but it continued to emphasize the possibilities for fruitful collaboration. Historians have pinpointed the outbreak of the

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[1] This chapter has been published in two fuller articles: Johnston, 'Subversive Tales?', and T. P. Johnston, 'Peace or Pacifism? The Soviet "Struggle for Peace in all the World" 1948–54', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 86.2 (2008), 259–82.

Cold War on the occasion of Stalin's February 1946 speech to the electors of Moscow, the failure of the Council of Foreign Ministers in April 1947, or the June 1947 discussions surrounding the Marshall Plan.[2] The vital moment in the evolution of the official press has also been identified in February 1946 or the winter of 1946–7.[3] However, many of these assessments reflect a post-hoc knowledge that the Cold War was coming. The diplomatic identity of the USSR remained largely rooted in great power collaboration until September 1947.

This narrative of great power collaboration had failed to convince many Soviet citizens in wartime. Rumours circulated widely within the word-of-mouth network that the Allies were pressurizing the regime into concessions in religious, national, and economic policy. Suspicion of Britain and America did not evaporate but instead deepened after May 1945. The early post-war months were a particularly fertile period for war rumours and war panics that spread throughout the USSR. This fear of invasion contributed greatly to the success of the new version of Sovietness that emerged once great power collaboration had been abandoned.

Official Soviet Identity in the early Cold War stressed the USSR's role as a benefactor to the world's oppressed and the defender of world peace. The narrative of peace was a highly successful feature of the Official Soviet Identity that endured, in some form, until the collapse of the USSR. The Soviet 'Struggle for Peace in all the World' was largely perceived as an empty rhetorical exercise by contemporary outside observers.[4] More recently a number of authors have briefly touched upon the Soviet Peace Campaigns, but this chapter represents the first thorough evaluation of their impact inside the USSR.[5] The Peace

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[2] A. Resis, 'Stalin, The Politburo and the Onset of the Cold War', *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and Eastern European Studies,* 107 (1998), 16–26; Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years* (New York, 1971), viii; G. Roberts, 'Moscow and the Marshall Plan: Politics, Ideology and the Onset of the Cold War, 1947', in C. Reed ed., *The Stalin Years: A Reader* (Basingstoke, 2003), 170–89; Danilov and Pyzhikov, *Rozhdenie sverx-derzhavy: SSSR v pervye poslevoennye gody* (Moscow, 2001), 45.

[3] A. Dallin, 'America Through Soviet Eyes', *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 11.1 (1947), 26–39; Brooks, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War* (Princeton, 2000), 207–8.

[4] Barghoorn, *The Soviet Image of the United States: A Study in Distortion* (New York, 1950), 248–50. The success of the Peace Campaigns in Western Europe and America received more attention: D. H. McLachlan, 'The Partisans of Peace', *International Affairs,* 27.1 (1951), 10–17; R. Liberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anticommunism and the U.S. Peace Movement, 1945–1963* (New York, 2000).

[5] On the rhetoric of the campaigns see: Brooks, *Thank You,* 224–5; Fateev, *Obraz vraga v sovetskoi propagande: 1945–54* (Moscow, 1999), 125–7. On responses, see

Campaigns generated great enthusiasm amongst their participants. However, these enthusiastic participants often transformed the campaigns, via the 'tactic' of reappropriation, from a robust struggle for Soviet might into a platform for the articulation of personal grief.

FROM ALLIES TO ENEMIES: BRITAIN AND AMERICA, MAY 1945–SEPTEMBER 1947

The diplomatic identity of the USSR remained as a member of a collaborative, peace-loving community of Great Powers until the summer of 1947. In the first flush of victory *Ogonëk* carried pictures of American Embassy Staff and Soviet citizens celebrating together in Moscow, and *Pravda* declared that the 'cooperation of the great powers' would be the foundation of the post-war peace.[6] Over the coming months, the Potsdam Conference, opening of the United Nations, and Nuremburg Trials were all held up as evidence of the continued fruitfulness of the wartime alliance.[7] This Great Power cooperation reinforced the prestige and honour of the Soviet state by association. As Molotov explained in November 1945, the 'joint struggle of the democratic countries' had bolstered the 'international prestige of the USSR'.[8] Soviet honour shifted from the battlefield to the conference table, but it remained in association with the other freedom-loving progressive powers.

Great power relations were not without some difficulties in this earliest post-war period. However, any negative commentary was directed at foreign newspapers such as *The Times, The Economist*, and *Le Monde*, or against nebulous and largely defeated 'reactionary forces'.[9] As *Ogonëk* explained, 'Reaction has suffered a defeat in Europe', the people were looking to the 'three great powers' to lead them into a progressive future.[10] This language of post-war collaboration reflected the expectations

Zubkova, *Poslevoennoe Sovetskoe Obshchestvo: Politcka i Povsednevnost' 1945–53* (Moscow, 2000), 130–5; S. Yekelchyk, 'The Civic Duty to Hate: Stalinist Citizenship as Political Practice and Civic Emotion (Kiev, 1943–53)', *Kritika*, 7.3 (2006), 529–56. See also Gould-Davies' very brief discussion: N. Gould-Davies, 'Pacifist Blowback?' *Cold War International History Project Bulletin,* 11 (1998), 267–8.

[6] *Ogonëk*, 05.1945: 20–1, p. 7; *Pravda*, 22.07.45, p. 4.
[7] *Ogonëk*, 07.1945: 28, p. 30; 08.1945: 31, p. 1; *Pravda*, 19.10.45, pp. 1–3.
[8] *Pravda*, 07.11.45, pp. 1–2.
[9] *Pravda*, 05.08.45, p. 4; 19.08.45, p. 4; 18.11.45, p. 4; 25.11.45, p. 4.
[10] *Ogonëk*, 07.1945: 30, p. 1.

amongst the Soviet leadership that they would enjoy a period of fruitful post-war cooperation with their wartime Allies.[11] Post-war diplomatic Official Soviet Identity was as a mighty power amongst the leading states in the world.

The first moment of serious disagreement amongst the Allies came in early 1946 when the USSR came under pressure from Britain and America to remove its troops from Iran. The Iran Crisis precipitated a qualitative shift in tone that was reinforced by Stalin's February 1946 speech to the Moscow electors. Stalin explained that the war had broken out 'as an inevitable result of . . . modern monopoly capitalism'.[12] Within less than a month Churchill replied with his famous warning about an 'Iron Curtain' descending across Europe. Over the course of 1946 a number of subtle shifts took place. The American and British governments were no longer heralded in the May Day or Revolutionary declarations of the Central Committee.[13] The Soviet press also began to grumble about the Allies' failure to disarm and deindustrialize Western Germany and reacted angrily to the unification of the British and American occupation zones in January 1947.[14] The growing global network of American military bases and the British engagements in Greece and Indonesia also came in for tentative criticism.[15]

However, despite these criticisms of Anglo-American policy, Official Soviet Identity remained in association with, rather than distinction from, the other Great Powers. The Soviet press' main objection during the Iran Crisis was that the issue had been dragged before the UN Security Council, and not resolved by 'common-sense' discussion amongst the USSR, Britain, and the USA.[16] Stalin's criticism of Churchill's Iron Curtain speech focused on the fact that it might 'sow the seeds of dissention amongst the allied states'.[17] The *vozhd'* also offered a series of high-profile interviews during which he affirmed that he 'did not believe in the danger of a new war'.[18] The comments of figures such as J. B. Priestley, who praised British friendship with the

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[11] V. O. Pechatnov, 'The Big Three After World War II: New Documents on Soviet thinking about Post War Relations with the United States and Great Britain', *Cold War International History Project,* Working Paper 13 (1995), 1–25.

[12] *Ogonëk*, 02.1946: 7, pp. 6–7.

[13] *Pravda*, 24.04.46, p. 1; 02.10.46, p. 1.

[14] *Pravda*, 09.05.46, p. 4; 12.01.47, p. 4.

[15] *Ogonëk*, 03.1946: 12, p. 33; *Pravda*, 31.07.46, p. 4.

[16] *Pravda*, 30.01.46, p. 6; 26.05.46, p. 4.

[17] *Pravda*, 14.03.46, p. 1.

[18] *Pravda*, 23.03.46, p. 1; 25.09.46, p. 1; 21.12.46, p. 1.

USSR, were also cited with approval.[19] Meanwhile Molotov stressed the ongoing successes of the various peace congresses and his hopes for future collaboration.[20] When the leaders of the allied states arrived in Moscow for the March 1947 Council of Foreign Ministers, the Soviet press printed and reprinted images of warm greetings offered by friendly, smiling Soviet dignitaries.[21]

Official Soviet Identity continued to present the USSR as a Great Power amongst a fractious, but fundamentally operable, great power community. The tone had cooled since the highpoint of alliance enthusiasm in 1941–2 but it remained broadly positive. Relations were warm enough for *Mezhdunarodnaia Kniga,* the USSR's international publishing house, to suggest the publication of a collection of commemorative stamps depicting Stalin and Roosevelt. The idea was not declared 'inappropriate' until February 1947.[22] Their policies might be awry on occasion, but the Anglo-Americans remained fundamentally similar Great Powers well into 1947.

The announcement of the Truman Doctrine, that the USA would fight to contain communist expansion, during the March 1947 Council of Foreign Ministers was hailed by *Pravda* as a 'turning-point in US foreign policy'.[23] It also precipitated another shift within the language of Official Soviet Identity. The Soviet press responded by turning its fire on Anglo-American foreign policy and in particular the Marshall Plan, which was denounced as 'dollar expansionism'.[24] Britain and America's policy of dividing Germany in half and forming a separate bloc in Western Europe also came in for heavy criticism. Such a path could not serve the cause of peace.[25] Official Soviet Identity was increasingly defined in distinction from, rather than by similarity with, the former wartime Allies. The first criticisms of the Western powers also appeared on the Soviet stage in mid 1947, led by Simonov's play *The Russian Question.* However, one of the key narratives of *The Russian Question* was that American society contained both reactionary and progressive forces.

In September 1947 the language of shared progressive tendencies was finally abandoned. Zhdanov's speech at the foundation of the Cominform discarded talk of progress and refocused attention on Soviet

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[19] *Ogonëk*, 07.1946: 27, p. 34.   [20] *Ogonëk*, 01.1947: 1, p. 2.
[21] *Ogonëk*, 03-04.1947: 11–14.   [22] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 539, ll. 8–9.
[23] *Pravda*, 15.03.47, p. 1.   [24] *Pravda*, 16.06.47, p. 4.
[25] *Pravda*, 08.05.47, p. 4; 29.07.47, p. 3.

exceptionalism. He stated that there were two camps within the international community: the People's Democracies and colonial peoples headed by the USSR and the capitalist imperialist camp headed by the USA.[26] Molotov reiterated the point in November, speaking of the need to 'unite all the anti-imperialist and democratic forces of the people into one mighty camp cemented by common vital interests against the imperialist and anti-democratic camp'.[27]

However, right up until the moment at which the narrative of cooperation was abandoned, the Soviet press continued to speak, on occasion, in positive terms about relations amongst the Great Powers. Official Soviet Identity was twofold between March and September 1947. It criticized Anglo-American imperialism whilst simultaneously describing them as Great Powers who shared concrete interests with the USSR. *Ogonëk* declared that, despite the difficulties, 'significant progress' had been made at the Moscow Council of Foreign Ministers.[28] Meanwhile Stalin reiterated in May 1947 that 'of course' the Great Powers could continue to work together. Even the Marshall Plan was greeted with guarded positivity, until it became clear that the cost of participation would be economic sovereignty.[29] In 1947 50 per cent of Soviet foreign policy reportage continued to describe good relations with foreign countries.[30] Only once the talks surrounding Marshall Aid had collapsed, were American and British leaders themselves the target of direct attacks. The period from March to September 1947 was a time of 'partial ideology': the USSR continued to derive some of its status from membership of the elite group of Great Powers whilst increasingly asserting its difference from them.[31] After September the definition of what it meant to be Soviet in diplomatic terms changed. The USSR became a mighty superpower, isolated from the other Great Powers and enjoying the support of its client states. However, the Soviet press had clung tenaciously to the idea of Great Power cooperation long after many in the Western capitals had concluded that conflict was inevitable. Only when all other options had failed, did the USSR decisively abandon its identity as a shared steward of the global order and embrace a new identity as a superpower in a divided world.

[26] *Pravda*, 22.10.47, pp. 2–3.   [27] *Pravda*, 07.11.47, pp. 1–2.
[28] *Ogonëk*, 05.1947: 18, p. 9.   [29] *Pravda*, 21.06.47, p. 3; 29.06.47, p. 4.
[30] Brooks, *Thank You,* 207.
[31] Fateev, *Obraz vraga, starshego serzhanta* (Belgorod, 2000), 33–4, 55.

Rumours and panics

The notion that the USSR was a mighty and authoritative state, that derived its authority in part from its association with the other Great Powers, clearly shaped the thinking of at least some Soviet citizens in the early post-war period. Vasili Ermolenko wrote a highly irritated diary entry after Churchill's March 1946 speech, denouncing him for 'calling for the organization of a new crusade against the USSR'. Churchill's attempts would fail because 'after the victorious conclusion of the Great Patriotic War the authority of the USSR has grown in the world as never before'.[32]

However, the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as an authoritative global power at the heart of a community of Great Powers failed to convince significant sections of the Soviet population. Rumours of a new war against the Allies broke out repeatedly across the USSR in the months following the Nazi capitulation. There are thousands of references to invasion stories in the Secret Police, state prosecution files, letters, memoirs, and interview transcripts relating to this period. The fragility of the Grand Alliance was a source of speculation even before peace had been declared in Europe. I.Iu.P. was prosecuted for telling his friends in December 1943 that 'the Allies want to do as they did in the Civil War—to conclude a peace with Germany and attack the USSR'.[33] In May 1945 a Komsomol Instructor lamented the complete failure to 'explain the question about the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Allies' following a lecture tour in Ukraine and Belarus.[34]

Confusion about the Grand Alliance and suspicion of the Allies' motives resulted in repeated outbreaks of war rumours in the first post-war months. In late May 1945, within weeks of the war ending, Dimitrovka *kolkhoz*, in Crimea, broke out into uproar in response to a fresh wave of war rumours. A local *kolkhoznik* had read an article in the newspaper *Red Crimea* about the exiled Polish government in London. He concluded, on the basis of the article, that Britain was at war with the Soviet Union and began urgently warning his friends and colleagues. Rumours about the conflict spread rapidly throughout the collective farm community, before passing to the nearby village of Kishlav. In the

[32] Mem. Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik*, 248–50.
[33] Proc. GARF f. R3131, op. 31a, d. 15112, l. 24.
[34] Inf. RGASPI M f. 1, op. 32, d. 304, l. 14.

ensuing panic, *kolkhozniki* refused to go to work, convinced that a new and bloody conflict had broken out. Only once *oblast'* agitator Oshepkova had explained, in detail, the relationship between Britain and the USSR, were the villagers convinced that a new war had not broken out and order was restored.[35]

Stories of invasion only intensified in the early post-war months. Secret police *svodki* cited a huge number of rumours to this effect, such as the comments of a worker in Kirovgrad who declared in November 1945 that he doubted the vote for the Supreme Soviet in February would go ahead 'since all the states are armed for an invasion of the USSR'.[36] S.P.I. was prosecuted for having explained to his work colleagues in March 1946 that an invasion of the USSR was now imminent; B.I.B suffered the same fate for spreading this story in early 1947.[37] Frederick Barghoorn, a member of the US Embassy staff, recalled meeting a woman at the station in Leningrad in March 1947: 'The woman was taking her small children to Helsinki to join her husband. She expressed doubt regarding the wisdom of her going, lest the family be caught in Helsinki by a new war.'[38] Listeners at agitational meetings often openly expressed their concerns. 'Will there be a war?' was one of the most popular questions asked at such meetings in the early post-war months.[39]

War rumours as dissent

It is clear that at least some of these war rumours were spread with subversive intent. Despite the *svodki*'s tendency to assume that all rumours were anti-regime and to ascribe them to ideologized hate groups, the content of some of the rumours from this period cannot be understood in any other terms. Nina Velikova of Crimea *raion* was recorded commenting in 1946 that, 'It is necessary for there to be a war . . . Do you understand that if there is a war there will be an exchange of power?'[40] Whether or not this particular comment was accurately reported, the overwhelming evidence is that at least some Soviet citizens spoke in these terms. The Secret Police did not have to be

[35] Inf. GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2414, ll. 67–129.

[36] Sv. Ibid., l. 6.

[37] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 37, d. 36253, l. 3; d. 37006, l. 6.

[38] Mem. Barghoorn, *Soviet Image of the United States*, 254.

[39] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 705, l. 73; GAARK f. 1. op. 1, d. 2550, l. 7.

[40] Sv. GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, l. 25.

paranoid or excessively creative to infer that there were some individuals who were hoping for liberation from outside.

Anti-Soviet nationalist movements were the most prominent employers of rumour as a language of subversion. The western borderlands, occupied in 1939–41, were a kind of 'Wild West' in the early post-war years, where nationalist partisans controlled large portions of the countryside. Up to 100,000 Lithuanians, 40,000 Latvians, 40,000 Ukrainians and 30,000 Estonians fought the Soviet regime, and Soviet power only stabilized in the region in the summer of 1947.[41] These active fighters, as well as the many more sympathizers who supported them, were a fertile constituency for war rumours after 1945. Slegushkina, a *kolkhoznitsa* from Starobel'skii *raion* was recorded saying 'Now all the bread is being removed to Russia and Ukraine will starve again . . . A war is inevitable, indeed without it, it will be impossible to live, and Ukraine will die under the rule of Russia.'[42] Partisan propaganda from the time also makes clear that they were hoping for external intervention. A leaflet published in Latvia in May 1945 claimed that, 'All the people are hoping that England and America in the near future will decide the case of Latvia on the principles of the Atlantic Charter . . . The Allies will never leave the Latvian people to the Bolsheviks.'[43]

Various nationalist partisans also affirmed in later years that they had been hoping for liberation at this time. Valdur Raudvassar, an Estonian partisan, remembered that hopes were particularly high in the earliest post-war months.

No one bothered to study too much because everyone thought that war would break out soon for certain. Everyone thought that either the Americans would come to our aid or that the Germans would come back. So all the schoolboys kept hoping for and preparing to go to war.[44]

Whilst it is necessary to retain a cautious approach to individual comments, Secret Police, state prosecution, and agitators' claims that nationalist partisans were key vehicles for war rumours do not seem

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[41] W. C. Clemens, 'Comparative Repression and Comparative Resistance: What Explains Survival?' in O. Mertelsmann, ed., *The Sovietisation of the Baltic States, 1940–1956* (Tartu, 2003), 23; M. S. Pyskir, trans., A. Savage, *Thousands of Roads: A Memoir of a Young Woman's Life in the Ukrainian Underground During and After World War II* (Jefferson NC, 2000), 28.

[42] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 517, l. 36.

[43] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 94, l. 92.

[44] M. Laar, trans., T. Ets, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival 1944–1955* (Washington, 1992), 148. See also: HIP. B7, 188, 16–25.

entirely fanciful. Government authored reports claim that Polish and Ukrainian nationalist groups, in particular, were relying on Anglo-Saxon support for a revision of the Soviet imposed post-war national boundaries. Their underground newspapers greeted the Crimean and San Francisco Conferences as disasters, gloomily noting that if the Anglo-Saxons continued their line of cooperating with the USSR then it would represent 'the end of Poland'.[45] However, they did not give up hope. Report writers claimed that nationalist pressure had influenced the behaviour of A. I. Nikore, a Komsomol agitator in Polushna village, Buzhorskii *raion*. In February 1946 she stated that, 'The Soviet power will not be here for long. Therefore, I do not want to and will not explain the constitution and the situation about the elections. When the government has changed I don't want them to say that I was a *komsomolka* and an activist.'[46] It was not until the summer of 1947, that a combination of Soviet punitive operations and the entrenchment of the international situation rendered the mythology of an overseas rescuer increasingly irrelevant.[47] Until that point, however, war rumours offered the promise of liberation, and were a key aspect of the linguistic artillery of anti-regime nationalist groups in their struggle against the state.

Anglo-American forces also bore the hopes of individuals and groups opposed to collective farming in this period. The wartime tales that the government had bowed to allied pressure and agreed to end the system morphed into post-war stories about allied threats to invade if they were not abolished after 1945. In mid 1947, I.F.Sh. explained to his friend in Leningrad *oblast'* that although life was now hard, 'the Americans will arrive and the *kolkhozy* will no longer exist and life will be good'.[48] The body of evidence is significantly thinner, but government sources also suggest that religious groups were important conduits for war rumours in the first post-war months. Prayers for religious liberation are frequently recorded, often fused with nationalist aspirations for the Catholic minorities in the borderlands. Ukrainian Uniates in Bulkhovtsy village

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[45] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 333, l. 24; Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, ll. 23, 31; d. 890, l. 56.

[46] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 183, l. 36.

[47] For a discussion of the punitive operations, see A. Weiner, 'Nature, Nurture, and Memory in a Socialist Utopia: Delineating the Soviet Socio-Ethnic Body in the Age of Socialism', *American Historical Review*, 104.4 (1999), 1135–41. For the borderlands more generally, see K. Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge Mass., 2005); E. Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml' 1940–53* (Moscow, 2008).

[48] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36799, ll. 5–8.

gathered systematically to pray 'in order to spoil the elections and so that the Anglo-Americans would arrive quickly'.[49] The religious language of apocalyptic transformation that had dominated the anti-*kolkhoz* protests of the 1920s and 1930s had been replaced by a more earthly day of reckoning for the Soviet government after World War II.[50]

The idea that an external invasion would bring freedom was a clear example of resistance, in the sense of stepping outside of the Soviet 'habitat' and invoking an alternative order as a means of opposing Soviet power. Invasion narratives undermined the stability of the Soviet state, casting doubt on its capacity to last. They were a particularly potent weapon at a time when the government was articulating an official identity which presented the USSR at the heart of a collaborating community of Great Powers. Soviet administrators railed against war rumours as 'scandalous', 'pessimistic', or 'defeatist'. The rumour of Anglo-American invasion was a powerful linguistic shorthand for the dream of social transformation in the first post-war months. Such rumours functioned as a language of resistance that punctured and inverted the rhetoric of Soviet power.

War rumours beyond subversion

However, the transmission of war rumours in this period did not rely exclusively on their subversive capacity. They were too successful to have functioned purely as a language of resistance. War rumours were certainly recorded more regularly in regions that had an active anti-Soviet underground, but that may tell us as much about the anxieties of local administrators as about the comparative spread of invasion stories. The idea that the Anglo-Saxon powers were about to invade was a highly successful rumour throughout the USSR in the first post-war months. Such rumours were transmitted by peasants, workers, and intellectuals in urban and rural communities, and thrived in regions that had no organized anti-Soviet underground.[51]

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[49] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 507, l. 268.

[50] See: Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivisation and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (Oxford, 1996).

[51] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 693, l. 2 (worker); Sv. f. 17, op. 125, d. 425, l. 39 (peasant); Int. Il'ia Lvoevich, May 2004, Moscow (intellectual). Inf. GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, l. 19 (rural) Sv. RGASPI f. 125, op. 425, l. 4 (urban).

War rumours were so successful and so believable that Soviet citizens regularly acted on them. Hoarding, of either food or money in preparation for a future conflict, was extremely widespread in the first post-war months.[52] An NKVD *svodka* in October 1946 recorded Fomin, a metalworker, stating amongst his colleagues that, 'The raising of prices on food in all likelihood is a result of the forthcoming war...now we need to create reserves in order to not be caught out like in 1941.'[53] A respondent to HIP told his interviewers that he, along with a group of fellow soldiers, had set aside a supply of petrol, in preparation for their flight once the war began in 1947.[54] Others planned their physical movements on the assumption that war was coming. One group of students at the FZO no. 30 in Voroshilovgrad decided to go home in December 1946 to avoid being separated from their families by war, others travelled to the Crimea so the war could swiftly pass them by and they would be in the English occupation zone.[55] Large numbers of Soviet citizens due for repatriation from Central Europe also resisted being sent home because they expected a war to break out at any moment.[56] In May 1945 and March 1946 traders at the L'vov market began refusing Soviet roubles and insisted on payment in dollars or pounds, as roubles would become worthless after the Anglo-Americans arrived.[57]

The non-subversive capacity of war rumours is also illustrated by the fact that they were often passed on by 'loyal rumourers', who were well disposed towards the government. Rudskii, the Vice-Director of Rovenskii Oil Production base, despaired in August 1947 that, 'It is clear to everyone that there will soon be a war; sooner or later the Soviets will be destroyed either way. The population do not support us...England and America are very strong and mighty states. The end is inevitably coming to us, we are destroyed.'[58] An August 1947 letter to Malenkov begged him to ask Stalin to lower bread prices. The writer claimed to understand that the state needed to stockpile bread for a forthcoming

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[52] On hoarding, see Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917–1953* (Princeton, 2004), 11. Hessler describes hoarding as a response to subsistence crises; in this period hoarders often also explained their behaviour as preparation for war.

[53] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 425, l. 4.

[54] HIP. A. 17, 331, 12.

[55] Sv. Ibid., d. 2837, l. 12.

[56] Inf. GARF R9526, op. 1, d. 90, ll. 55, 111.

[57] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1449, l. 24; d. 2835, l. 98.

[58] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 289, l. 62.

war, but pointed out that the people needed to do so as well.[59] A.D.V. was prosecuted in 1945 for criticizing Soviet foreign policy from an 'excessively loyal' perspective. He argued that 'it was necessary initially together with Germany to defeat America and then to finish with Germany.' As it was, Britain and America were now 'weaving webs against the USSR' and preparing for war. In his defence he argued that he did not consider such comments to be counter-revolutionary.[60] Rumours of war were spread by those who were positively, as well as negatively disposed towards Soviet power.

War rumours succeeded in this period because ordinary Soviet citizens deployed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* and inferred that conflict was likely. Government initiatives and shifts in policy were routinely interpreted by ordinary citizens as signs that a new war was about to break out. The September 1946 'Campaign to Economize on Bread', was interpreted as a pre-emptive initiative to conserve food before a new war in Moscow, the Crimea, Vologda, Ivanov, Novgorod, Pskov, Rostov, Leningrad, Kiev, and Estonia.[61] A mechanic of 'Forward' Artel, in the city of Tarangog, explained to his colleagues that, 'On the Soviet Turkish border a war is going on. From there they are sending many wounded. They have begun the evacuation of the cattle from the Caucasus . . . This is the cause of the rise in prices for foodstuffs.'[62] The vigorous campaigns to collect the grain harvest were also repeatedly interpreted as signs of a coming war.[63] Even the arrival of an *obkom* instructor in Shushvalevskii agricultural Soviet, Poltava *oblast'*, in July 1947 was interpreted as a sign that 'a meeting would be called about the beginning of the war'.[64]

This process of logical inference, on the basis of information received in the official press, sometimes led to full-scale war panics in this period. The reaction to Churchill's speech at Fulton Missouri on 5 March 1946 was exceptional in this regard. On 11 March, *Pravda* ran a front-page article, 'Churchill is Rattling His Sabre', which emphasized the lack of support his speech had received in the capitalist world.[65] However,

[59] Let. GARF f. R5446, op. 80, d. 8, l. 222.
[60] Proc. GARF. f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 75634, ll. 5–6, 40–1.
[61] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 705, ll. 1–137; op. 125, d. 425, ll. 1–53; op. 122, d. 188, ll. 9–29.
[62] Sv. Ibid., op. 88, d. 705, l. 137.
[63] Inf. Ibid., op. 125, d. 420, l. 57; Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 2837, l. 60.
[64] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 4557, l. 10.
[65] *Pravda*, 11.3.46, p. 1.

many Soviet citizens read the article, applied the 'tactic' of *bricolage* and concluded that the untrustworthy British were about to launch a fresh invasion. Alexander Werth found the population of Moscow 'badly rattled by the talk about "the next war"' in the following days.[66]

In some areas, the reaction extended beyond the normal wave of rumouring and descended into panic. The records of the Crimea *oblast'* demonstrate how sensitive the local population was to war rumours. In the five days following the speech, savers bombarded the Bank of Yalta with requests to withdraw their cash; some banks ran out of supplies altogether and were forced to close.[67] In this light, Stalin's interview on 14 March in *Pravda* looks like an attempt to restore order, as were the thousands of rapidly organized meetings across the USSR on 15 and 16 March.[68] The records of those meetings testified to a breakdown of obedience in some areas. On Kuibyshev *kolkhoz*, Kirov *raion*, 'Amongst the villagers they are gathering their possessions, harnessing their cows and evacuating for Tambov *oblast'*.' *Kolkhoznitsa* Safonova publicly abused Agitator Bondarenko declaring his words to be 'pure agitation . . . you should not hide things from us, the war has already started. We don't want to remain in work.' Only two of the reports use the word 'panic'. However, they indicate that panic was exactly what had taken place. Over the coming days ten *raions* or *gorkoms* provided eleven lists of questions asked by the population at agitational meetings. They reveal a striking uniformity of concern. The population wanted to know whether the speech was a declaration of war and whether President Truman supported Churchill. As one report noted, 'At nearly every meeting the question was offered whether the speech of Churchill in Fulton was leading to a new war.'[69] The response in the Crimea was probably more dramatic than elsewhere. It was within striking distance of Turkey, and the recent deportation of the local Tatar population may have contributed to a heightened sense of instability. However, the Crimean panics were symptomatic of the wider expectation throughout Soviet society that a war was imminent. Bank withdrawals also spiked in Ukraine after Churchill's speech, and attempts to flee the imaginary front line occurred at various times throughout this period.[70]

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[66] Mem. Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years,* 112.
[67] Inf. GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, ll. 13–14, 40.
[68] *Pravda*, 14.3.46, p. 1; GAARK, f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, l. 19.
[69] Inf. GAARK, f. 1, op. 1. d. 2550, ll. 5–50.
[70] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 2523, l. 9; d. 4557, l. 102.

The manner in which Soviet citizens passed on and responded to war rumours is evidence, once again, of the centrality of the 'tactic' of *bricolage* within informal rumour creation and transmission in the USSR. Soviet citizens cross-referenced information from official and unofficial sources and acted accordingly. Ordinary citizens were already predisposed to think the Allies might betray the USSR. However, they did not act on this until they had, what they mistakenly assumed to be, verification from an official source. The trigger was often the false interpretation of a 'sign' from above. Invasion stories were largely transmitted within the oral news network as information. They survive within the Soviet era archives because the state considered them to be socially corrosive. Yet it seems unlikely that the women of Saks *raion*, Crimea *oblast'*, who began mourning the fact that they would never see their sons and husbands again in February 1946 were engaging in anti-party discourse.[71] They were simply convinced of the credibility of the story that the USSR was once again either at, or on the brink of, war.

A PEACE-LOVING SUPERPOWER: SOVIET DIPLOMATIC IDENTITY IN THE EARLY COLD WAR: 1947–1953

The emergence of the 'two camps' vision of international affairs in late 1947 was a profound shift within Official Soviet Identity. Since at least the early 1930s, the USSR had derived most of its security via association: with Britain and France during the Popular Front era, with Germany during the Pact Period, and with the Anglo-Saxon powers between 1941 and 1947. In 1947–8 the USSR struck out on its own as a superpower in its own right with the capacity to defend not just itself but also its sphere of influence in Europe and, later, East Asia.

Before Stockholm: a moral state

Official Soviet Identity from late 1947 onwards revolved around two ideas: peace and might. The language of peace was by no means a novelty within the Soviet political lexicon. It had been a vital Bolshevik

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[71] Inf. GAARK f. 1, op. 1, d. 2550, l. 40.

slogan in 1917 and remained an element within official rhetoric throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[72] It was also invoked as the justification for the Nazi–Soviet Pact in 1939. However, it was not until 1947–8 that peace began to play a central role in the official version of what it meant to be Soviet. In September 1947 Vyshinsky launched a vicious attack on the Anglo-American 'warmongers', an assault that was quickly followed by a Soviet motion at the United Nations to ban 'agitators for war' throughout the world.[73] The rhetoric of peace continued to grow in importance throughout 1947–8. When Stalin wanted to express his support for Henry Wallace, the US presidential candidate, he focused above all on his contribution to global security, and when the UN nuclear commission collapsed into rancour in mid 1948, the Soviet press indulged in a fresh bout of attacks on US nuclear aggression.[74]

The rhetoric of war and peace became the central distinction between the two camps after 1947. The Soviet press also criticized the imperialist pretensions of the Western powers, particularly American 'enslavement' of Europe during this period.[75] However, peace became the vital watchword of the era. Conferences such as the August 1948 World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace in Poland and the 1949 World Congress of Supporters for Peace received heavy coverage; they vividly demonstrated the 'astronomical' global movement against the war-mongers.[76] The Paris gathering established a World Peace Council which was joined by national and local affiliates throughout the world. The first Soviet All Union Congress in Defence of Peace took place in August 1949, followed by a World Day in Defence of Peace on 2 October 1949.

The rhetorical bombardment was maintained beyond these set piece events. On the infrequent occasions when Stalin spoke to the press after 1948, he almost always praised the world peace struggle.[77] The growth of the global peace movement, and the war mongering of the United States, was *Pravda*'s leading international news story between September 1948 and the summer of 1949. They occupied over a third of a page of the paper every day and made up about a quarter of all international

[72] McKenna, *All the Views Fit to Print: Changing Images of the U.S. in Pravda Political Cartoons, 1917–1991* (New York, 2001), 43–4.

[73] *Pravda*, 19.09.47, p. 3; 28.09.47, p. 3.

[74] *Pravda*, 18.05.48, p. 1; 21.05.48, p. 3.

[75] See: *Ogonëk* 07.1948: 29, p. 12; 08.1948: 33, p. 12.

[76] *Pravda,* 29–31.08.48; 21–30.04.49; *Ogonëk* 06.1949: 19, p. 7.

[77] *Pravda,* 29.10.48, p. 1; 02.04.52, p. 1.

Fig. 4.1 'European Cooperation'. I. Semenov (1952). Western 'collaboration' masks 'deception in your thoughts and a knife behind your back!'

news. Meanwhile American warmongering became a staple of the Soviet screen. In Alexandrov's *The Meeting at the Elbe* (1949), the American soldiers were depicted planning a new war against Russia before the last one was even over. Chiaureli's *The Fall of Berlin*, presented to Stalin on his birthday in 1949, went even further, suggesting that Britain and Germany had cooperated against the USSR during World War II.[78] In the literary field, Ehrenburg's *Ninth Wave* (1950) described the plotting of Scotland Yard and the Pentagon to undermine a peace congress in Sheffield.[79] Having abandoned the rhetoric of Great Power collaboration, the USSR had repostured itself as the stronghold of global security in a world threatened by capitalist expansionism.

The successful Soviet atom bomb test and the Chinese Revolution in late 1949 shifted the geopolitical balance of power significantly in favour of the USSR.[80] The new-found strength of the Soviet Union resulted in a modification of the rhetoric of the 'Struggle for Peace'. From then on the military might of the USSR, joined the vigour of the global peace movement as the guarantee of global stability. References to the USSR as the 'stronghold' (оплот) of peace became more and more frequent.[81] Only Soviet strength was capable of holding back the warmongering aspirations of the capitalists and bringing security to all. This language of strength for peace enabled the USSR to reverse its anti-nuclear stance and declare the Soviet acquisition of the bomb as a 'victory in the cause of peace'.[82]

The Soviet Union could not rest on its nuclear laurels, however. The lecture organization, *Znanie*, had to rebuke a Moscow-based lecturer in March 1950 for suggesting that now the USSR had a nuclear capacity it was already mighty enough.[83] Soviet citizens were repeatedly encouraged to work hard and raise productivity as a means of securing the future strength of the USSR. Their ' . . . primary duty in the Struggle for Peace consists of the further strengthening of the might of the Soviet state as a stronghold of peace in all the world.'[84] By the spring of 1950, heroic feats of production were routinely described as 'on behalf of peace'

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[78] R. Taylor, ed., *Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany* (London, 1998), 100–12.
[79] Kiparsky, *English and American Characters in Russian Fiction* (Berlin, 1964), 175–6.
[80] Brooks, *Thank You*, 217.
[81] e.g., Pravda, 01.07.50, p. 1.
[82] *Pravda*, 16.01.50, p. 4; *Ogonëk*, 11.1949: 45, p. 31.
[83] GARF f. R9547, op. 1, d. 313, l. 165. (My thanks to Mike Froggatt for pointing out this document to me).
[84] *Pravda*, 30.06.50, p. 1.

even when there was no reference to peace in the rest of the article. The idea that might would make the USSR inviolable from external attack had been a part of the rationale for the crash industrialization of the 1920s and 1930s. The Peace Campaigns, however, projected the concept of preventative strength into the global community for the first time. Soviet strength became the guarantee of global security. The Peace Campaigns were not a pacifist, anti-war campaign. They were a muscular and robust call to activism. The labour and boldness of Soviet citizens would reinforce the might of the Soviet state, and therefore the security of the international community.

From Stockholm to Stalin's death: a moral state

The outbreak of the Korean War precipitated a further shift in both the strategy and the language of the Soviet 'Struggle for Peace in all the World'. In March 1950 the World Peace Congress launched its Stockholm Declaration, a petition calling for a universal ban on atomic weapons. However, the population of the USSR were not given the opportunity to sign the document for three months until 19 June, six days before the outbreak of the Korean War.[85] The signature-gathering campaign, timed to coincide with the conflict in Asia, signalled a rise in the level of individual involvement in the 'Struggle for Peace'. The Stockholm Petition was the first of three large-scale signature-gathering campaigns conducted in the last years of Stalin's life. The Warsaw Appeal of 1951 called for a peace pact between the Great Powers and the Vienna Appeal of 1952 called for disarmament. Approximately 85,000 local peace commissions were established, to carry out these campaigns and collect signatures throughout the USSR.[86] Hundreds of thousands of meetings took place in collective farms, factories, homes, and city squares. The 'Struggle for Peace' was one of the great mobilization campaigns of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Soviet citizens were no longer simply observers, or even producers on behalf of peace: they were mobilized participants in the global campaign to 'bind the hands' of the agitators for war.

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[85] The period was also the high point of anti-Soviet mobilization in the USA, including the famous 'Day Under Communism' in Mosinee, Wisconsin, when the town practised being taken over by communists. See: R. M. Fried, *The Russians Are Coming! The Russians Are Coming! Pageantry and Patriotism in Cold-War America* (Oxford, 1998), 67–73.

[86] GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, l. 6.

In between the periodic signature campaigns, when press coverage reached blanket levels, the 'Struggle for Peace' remained a dominant theme within Soviet mass media. In 1951 the Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* lecture bureau read more lectures about peace than any other topic.[87] By 1951, theatres were rejecting all new scripts on the topic of peace: their repertoires were overloaded with the topic.[88] City libraries staged exhibitions connected to the campaign, and even the Church was drawn in: in May 1952 Patriarch Alexei gathered left-leaning religious leaders from around the world to pray for peace.[89]

The language, as well as the strategy, associated with the Peace Campaigns shifted in mid 1950. Soviet might had not prevented war in Korea, and when the North Koreans confronted defeat later that year it was the Chinese, not the Soviets, who stepped in to help. The official press responded by emphasizing the moral, as well as physical, authority of the USSR. The evils of the American 'intervention' in Korea was the focus of outrage. Banner headlines screamed 'Hands off Korea!' and denounced the US government as 'Enemies of Humanity'.[90] A particularly brutal cartoon in September 1950 depicted General MacCarthur holding the severed arm of a dead Korean child saying 'This brings joy to my old eyes'.[91] This righteous indignation reached fever pitch in early 1952, with the publication of allegations that the USA had dropped plague fleas and other biological agents behind enemy lines.[92] The same era also saw the emergence of the American spy within popular fiction who, unlike the British spies who had dominated the pre-war genre, was a mean spirited and malevolent figure. Spy literature reached its peak of popularity in the 1960s in the work of Semenov, but the faceless, brainless, and violent American provocateur was already established in Stalin's time.[93] The Korean War played a vital and enduring role in shaping both Soviet and American identities in the Cold War. The Soviets chose the moralized rhetoric of peace as their discursive weapon; the USA placed their reliance on liberty. As a

[87] GAAO f. 4818, op. 1, d. 128, ll. 23–9.

[88] RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 415, ll. 34–9, 77–9.

[89] Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii, henceforth RGANI f. 5, op. 16, d. 640, l. 156; GARF f. 6991, op. 2, d. 90, ll. 4–62.

[90] *Pravda* 25.07.50, p. 4; 28.07.50, p. 3.

[91] *Pravda,* 21.09.50, p. 4.

[92] *Ogonëk*, 04.1952: 15, pp. 10–11.

[93] Kiparsky, *English and American*, 68–9; Stites, *Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society since 1900* (Cambridge, 1992), 120.

result, in late 1950 Stalin could engage in an obscure discussion about linguistics, whilst Truman, the leader of the 'Free World', spoke about bombing Asian villages.[94]

The accelerated 'Struggle for Peace' and the Korean War also stimulated the emergence of a renewed focus on the Soviet Union as a 'patron state'. Particularly after 1947, the Soviet press took great pride in contrasting Soviet support to post-war Eastern Europe with American 'enslavement' via the Marshall Plan.[95] Eastern European governments played their part by routinely thanking the Red Army for their liberation from fascist occupation.[96] The Chinese Revolution and the Korean War shifted the focus of Soviet benefaction to Asia. There was a wave of interest in all things eastern at the end of the 1940s. Lectures and newspaper articles dwelt at length on the sufferings of capitalist subjects in the Asian colonies and the joyful life of the People's Republics of China and Korea.[97] China received greatest attention and was the recipient of greatest benefaction in this period. The song 'Moscow-Beijing', penned in the last years of Stalin's rule, exemplified the extent to which the Chinese were the greatest amongst the USSR's little brothers:

> A Russian and a Chinese are brothers forever
> The unity of peoples and races is strengthening
> . . .
> Moscow-Beijing, Moscow-Beijing,
> The peoples are advancing,
> For the bright labour, for the lasting peace,
> Under the banner of freedom.[98]

Despite the seemingly egalitarian tone of the song, Soviet benefaction came at the cost of permanent performance of thanks to the mighty USSR. Speaking at the first All Union Congress of Supporters of Peace, the writer Ibragimov described how the peoples of the East had hope because the Soviet Union gave them a vision of the future.[99] *Pravda*

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[94] J. Brooks. 'When the Cold War Did not End: The Soviet Peace Offensive of 1953 and the American Response', *Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, Kennan Institute Occasional Papers Series*, 278 (2000), 5–6.

[95] *Ogonëk*, 08.1948: 32, pp. 6–8.

[96] *Ogonëk*, 05.1949: 21, p. 12.

[97] *Pravda,* 07.09.49, p. 3; *Ogonëk* 11.1949: 45, pp. 3–7.

[98] Cited in: A. Lukin, *The Bear Watches the Dragon: Russia's Perceptions of China and the Evolution of Russian-Chinese Relations Since the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2003), 118.

[99] GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 5, l. 4.

Fig. 4.2 'The People of the world don't want a repeat of the calamity of war.' I. Gaif (1949). A brave worker rebuffs Uncle Sam's attempts to bribe him with eggs in order to involve him in a conflict. In the background French workers demonstrate on behalf of the USSR.

informed its readership that the paper received thousands of letters every day, from around the globe, 'And in every letter there is an expression of warm gratitude to the Soviet Union'.[100] This orgy of thanks reached its peak during the celebration of Stalin's seventieth birthday in December 1950 when entire newspaper editions were devoted to the gratitude that humanity was pouring out on the great global leader.[101] At least one recent work argues that the roots of the Sino-Soviet split lay in Moscow's insistence that the Chinese continuously express their thanks to the USSR.[102]

By the late 1940s, the USSR was an independent global power with global interests. The Peace Campaigns were the lens through which Soviet citizens were to imbibe this new superpower self-consciousness. The enlightening impulse within the Soviet posture as a patron of the peoples of Asia shared some similarities with pre-Revolutionary

[100] *Pravda*, 17.10.48, p. 4.   [101] *Ogonëk*, 12.1949: 51.
[102] S. N. Goncharov, J. W. Lewis and X. Litai, eds., *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War* (Stanford, 1993), 203–18.

'imperial' discourse. However, it was articulated in explicitly anti-imperial terms and is best understood in the specific context of a decolonizing Cold War world, rather than by recourse to nineteenth-century Russian messianism. It was a specifically Soviet, twentieth-century, globally ambitious phenomenon rather than simply a reworking of Russian nineteenth-century nationalism.[103] The image of the USSR as a patron state was an inclusive identity that was accessible to all Soviet citizens. Ukrainians, Belarussians, and Turkmen were all patrons of the oppressed peoples of Vietnam and Korea. Soviet superpower identity developed further in the later 1950s with the acceleration of the arms race and decolonization. Nonetheless, the language of peace, moral authority, and patronage remained at the heart of what it meant to be Soviet until the Gorbachev era. The late-Stalinist Peace Campaigns played a vital role in the formation of this new Official Soviet Identity that was conscious of its greatness and global in its ambition.

'STRUGGLING FOR PEACE' OR PACIFISM? POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE PEACE CAMPAIGNS

An unusually successful campaign

In the eyes of those who propagated it, the 'Struggle for Peace' was a highly successful political campaign. This was particularly the case in relation to the petition campaigns after 1950. Participation was impressively high in numerical terms. The 1950 campaign in Arkhangel'sk and Kiev *oblasts* collected 98 per cent and 99 per cent of the signatures of local residents, a turnout as high as that for recent elections.[104] Local commissions spoke of reopening disused *agitpunkts* and mobilizing fresh agitators who had never spoken in public before.[105] About 14,000 (20 per cent) of the 70,000 agitators in Stalin *oblast'* who participated in the Stockholm campaign were speaking in public for the first time.[106]

Soviet agitators also reported that the signature-gathering campaigns were high on quality. The level of popular engagement surpassed even the normal enthusiasm for global news. One agitator noted that, 'There

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[103] P. J. S. Duncan, *Russian Messianism: Third Rome, Holy Revolution, Communism and After* (London, 2000).

[104] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 2, d. 1150 ll. 91; TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 1107, l. 57.

[105] Inf. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, l. 16.

[106] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 959, l. 68.

has not been in the last few years such a great activisation of the collective farmers of Ustvaenskii *raion* as there have been at the meetings' associated with the Stockholm Declaration'.[107] When no agitator visited Number 16, Bratskii Pereulok, Vinitsa, in the first few days of the 1950 campaign, the housewives of the residence went to the chairman of the local Soviet and demanded to sign the Declaration.[108] Report writers also occasionally commented that labour discipline had increased after meetings to popularize the campaign.[109] Very few people refused to sign the Declaration. A small number of individuals did not participate in the campaign on religious grounds, or because they had heard a rumour that the signature campaigns were covert attempts to force people to join a collective farm or pay more taxes.[110] However, such incidents were rare. The agitators and administrators who carried out the campaigns were pleasantly surprised at what they regarded as the unusually enthusiastic response to the 'Struggle for Peace'.[111]

Evidence of the campaigns' success can also be found beyond the reports of potentially self-congratulatory, agitators. Soviet citizens wrote in great numbers to the Committee in Defence of Peace and to *Pravda* to express their support for the movement.[112] Housewives and factory workers sent in money for the campaign budget. Retired Captain P. V. Navak from Khar'kov expressed his enthusiasm by stating that, 'I as a sincere son of the Motherland, in recognition of the defence of peace under the Stockholm Declaration, declare my desire to return in the ranks of the Soviet army for the defence of our Socialist Motherland from the Anglo-American aggressors.'[113] P. I. Sapezhko, from Saratov, offered a poem he had written in support of peace.[114] Young people wrote in to complain that they were excluded from the campaign. A group of Pioneers from Ordzhonikidze village in Moscow *oblast'* wrote that, 'We pioneers are very disappointed that our age does not allow us to sign under the declaration'. They sent in a 'list of the little strugglers for peace'.[115] Even prisoners wrote requesting the right to add their

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[107] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 8627, op. 1, d. 77, l. 70.
[108] Inf. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 316, l. 12.
[109] Inf. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, l. 29; d. 105, ll. 12–14.
[110] Inf. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 18, ll. 77, 81; RGASPI f.17, op. 88, d. 959, ll. 5, 6, 70, 80.
[111] Inf. See, for example, GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, l. 2.
[112] Inf. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, ll. 18, 83; RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 117, l. 40.
[113] Let. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, ll 2, 20.
[114] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 117, ll. 34–5.
[115] Let. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, ll. 22–42.

names. One complained that, 'it will be very shameful to me when my 12 year old son reproaches me because I did not sign this document, painful, very painful.'[116] These unsolicited 'letters of acclamation' are relatively unusual within the Soviet archives.[117] They reveal the discursive power of the Soviet state to structure the attitudes and behaviour of at least some of its population.

Soviet officials' claims about popular enthusiasm are reinforced by evidence from a number of other sources. An October 1950 *svodka* from L'vov, cited N. P. Miskidzhian commenting about the forthcoming Revolutionary Day march that,

Although I am already sick of being on duty, and celebratory days . . . it will be pleasant to march in the ranks of the demonstration carrying the slogans 'Peace in All the World' and especially to see the military parade as a witness not only to our words about peace but also the mighty military force ready to stand up for peace and to restrain the American aggressors.[118]

Several of my interview respondents, when asked if they remembered the 'Struggle for Peace', drew this same distinction between the enthusiasm they generated and the apathy that greeted many other political movements. Nadezhna Pavlovna remembered that unlike most campaigns, 'Everyone was for it . . . everyone was for peace.'[119] Other respondents, who described themselves as increasingly alienated from the Soviet regime at this time, spoke of the tensions the 'Struggle for Peace' generated for them. One interviewee, whose father had been arrested in the 1930s, explained how she felt she had to participate because 'every war is a crime'.[120] A Jewish interviewee, whose family and friends suffered persecution in the late-Stalin years, explained, 'It was very difficult, because on the one hand I was for peace always and everywhere . . . On the other hand when they began these manifestoes it was understood that it was some kind of awful Soviet game.'[121]

It is, of course, impossible to quantify the popular enthusiasm for the 'Struggle for Peace'. However, the evidence from a variety of different

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[116] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 291, l. 77.
[117] They do not fit neatly within any of Fitzpatrick's letter categories: S. Fitzpatrick, 'Supplicants and Citizens: Public Letter-Writing in Soviet Russia in the 1930s', *Slavic Review,* 55.1 (1996), 78–105.
[118] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 15, l. 15.
[119] Int. Nadezhda Pavlovna, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
[120] Int. Al'dona Vladimirovna, Moscow, April 2004.
[121] Int. Natalia Leonidovna, Moscow, June 2004. Also: Andrei Ivanovich, Moscow, May 2004.

sources suggests that it was an unusually successful political campaign. The participants signed their names, donated money and worked harder with distinctive enthusiasm. Like rumours, or wartime jazz music, this enthusiasm provides an example of successful behaviour that sheds light on how Soviet citizens engaged with official rhetoric and also how they imagined the world around them.

The power of official rhetoric

The success of the Peace Campaigns was due, in part, to the blanket coverage they received within the official press. The language and values of the campaigns seem to have resonated with a large number of Soviet citizens. There were some individuals who expressed concern that the USSR's posture as a patron state would be a drain on the Soviet Union, leaving the population at home over-worked and under-supplied. K.Sh. complained in 1952 that the USSR would sell a hundredweight of grain overseas for five roubles but that ordinary Soviet citizens had to pay hundreds of roubles for it.[122] However, the rhetoric of patronage seems to have gained more adherents than opponents. Naimark claims that the 'school-masterish, dismissive, and impatient' behaviour of Soviet administrators in East Germany reflected their sense of cultural superiority in relation to local residents.[123] For his part, Il'ia Ehrenburg glowed with pride as he viewed the Vah Valley in Slovakia, 'brilliant with electric lights' in 1950. He 'did not feel any regrets for the past' that had been replaced by Soviet-style modernity.[124]

Enthusiasm for the language of Official Soviet Identity was also evident in the unsolicited and highly enthusiastic 'letters of acclamation' from Soviet citizens to Molotov following the Berlin and Geneva Conferences in 1954, where peace was agreed in Korea and Indo-China. The emphases the authors placed on different parts of the official rhetoric demonstrate which aspects of the language of Official Soviet Identity were more accessible and perhaps meaningful to the 'Strugglers for Peace': 42 per cent of the letter writers drew on the idea of the USSR as a morally upright 'patron state' winning peace on

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[122] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 34999, l. 8; d. 36332, l. 1.

[123] Naimark, *The Russians In Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge Mass., 1995), 60–4.

[124] Mem. I. Ehrenburg, trans., T. Shebunina, *Post-War Years: 1945–1954*, vol. vi: *Men, Years, Life* (London, 1966), 153.

behalf of the peoples of the world.[125] As one writer explained, 'I think that my voice of thanks is sounding not only from me but also thousands and thousands of peace-loving people from the most far flung corners of the world, experiencing the same feelings of joy for our successes as I do.' Another wrote of how, 'You read the paper and there are shivers in your spine and in your throat there are involuntary tears of joy, pride and recognition that it is my—our—government that is leading this ceaseless struggle for justice and truth, for freedom, and sovereignty of all the peoples.'[126] The importance of the political authority and status of the USSR was emphasized by 29 per cent of the letter writers, who described the agreements as 'a victory of the Soviet Union', or commented that they 'raise the authority of the Soviet Union even higher'.[127] The rhetoric of Soviet might, as either the cause of the 'victory' or the precondition of further success, was much less commonly referred to; only 5 per cent of the letter writers mentioned it.[128]

This pride in the moral and diplomatic authority of the USSR is also demonstrated in a number of other letters sent to Soviet leaders in this era. Comrade Begisheva, a war invalid, wrote to *Izvestiia* following one of the USSR's annual price reductions to say that, 'Surely the people of the whole world must look with envy at a country which is turning itself into a genuine Motherland for the workers!'[129] Others worried that events such as the release of the Jewish Doctors, who had been accused of poisoning the Kremlin leadership in March 1953, had humiliated the USSR 'before the whole world'.[130] The 'educationally uncultured' representation of Soviet leaders in the film *The Fall of Berlin* also produced concern. One author worried that, 'Doubtless the film will be shown overseas and create an incorrect impression amongst viewers.'[131]

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[125] Let. RGASPI f. 82, op. 2, d. 1446, l. 1. From a sample of 38 letters. Unfortunately, since it was first consulted, this collection has been closed and I was not able to expand the size of the sample.

[126] Let. Ibid., ll. 46, 32.

[127] Let. Ibid., ll. 40, 48.

[128] Let. Ibid., d. 1470, ll. 32–48. Molotov's personal strength and resolve was praised by nearly everyone (84%). It is possible that he functioned as a symbol of wider Soviet might, or that this demonstrates the extent to which thanking and praising Soviet leaders had become an everyday act.

[129] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 114, l. 25.

[130] Let. RGASPI f. 82, op. 1, d. 1466, ll. 52, 57, 58.

[131] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 427, ll. 20–1.

These letters demonstrate that when they wrote to their leaders, late-Stalinist citizens found the rhetoric of Soviet greatness, though not necessarily physical might, an accessible and valuable medium via which to articulate their concerns. The rhetoric of the USSR as an authoritative, moral, patron state that stood up for peace seems to have resonated within the imagination of many Soviet citizens in this period.

Reappropriation: 'peace' into 'pacifism'

However, the enthusiasm generated by the 'Struggle for Peace' was not simply a product of the campaigns' rhetorical power. It also reflected the ongoing anxiety about war. There is significantly less evidence for war rumours after the summer of 1947. This may well reflect a decline in recording. The Stalin-era state recorded more 'negative' comments when it felt insecure: many fewer *svodki* were collected in this period. It probably also reflects the fact that Britain and America's seeming indifference to Soviet control in the borderlands or the existence of collective farms undermined the idea that they were on the verge of invasion.

Nonetheless, war anxiety did not evaporate overnight and war rumours remained a feature of the word-of-mouth network. Various *svodki* from Ukraine cited Soviet citizens interpreting official price or quota changes as a sign that war was imminent in 1948–53.[132] Several individuals also wrote to the *vozhd'* in this era advising the government to prepare more thoroughly for the inevitable forthcoming attack.[133] This period also saw a significant number of prosecutions for spreading rumours such as 'a war with America is inevitable and America will win'.[134] War anxiety was particularly acute after the outbreak of the Korean War. There were still cases of panic buying in the late 1950, particularly in areas close to the conflict, such as Vladivostock. However, rumours and panics also spread across the rest of the USSR. A wave of war rumours in Voroshilovgrad *oblast'* resulted in the sale of 400 tubs

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[132] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 5379, ll. 6–7, 48; op. 24, d. 1575, ll. 11–14.
[133] Let. RGASPI f. 558, op. 11, d. 875, l. 10; d. 877, l. 54.
[134] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36750. l. 14; d. 36346, ll. 30–1.

of agricultural flour in one day instead of the average of 15.[135] V.G.T.'s encouragements to his fellow villagers in Yaroslavskii *oblast'*, to stockpile in preparation for war, led to a run on salt which emptied the local shop.[136] A Senior Economist of L'vov *oblast'* trade organization described how, in late 1950, 'In anticipation of war nobody wants to do anything. They have harvested their kitchen gardens and the *kolkhoz* wheat and potatoes have still not been gathered.'[137]

As in the earlier period, some of these rumours were expressions of distaste for the Soviet regime. G.O.V. told his fellow villagers how the Americans would liberate the Moldavians from Russian oppression before Easter 1950 and that they would live as well as they had under the Romanians.[138] Others did not carry subservice intent. V. I. Saevich, an assistant at the L'vov Veterinary Institute, was recorded in 1951 saying, 'To think about a future war is simply awful to me. . . . You think that I might be able to work in the institute as an assistant under another power? I would never work, nor would they let me.'[139] Some over-zealous Communists even opposed the language of peace because they felt the USSR should pursue a more active and interventionist foreign policy. One individual in Pskov *oblast'* refused to sign a peace declaration because he claimed that only a global war would bring about the final Marxist eschaton and the destruction of the imperialists.[140]

Continued low-level war anxiety played a key role in the success of the 'Struggle for Peace'. However, those historians who have briefly examined the campaign have assumed this correlation was much simpler than is suggested by a close reading of the evidence. Zubkova depicts the Peace Campaigns as a sop to dampen down popular aspirations for change after 1945: (только что не было бы воины).[141] Gould-Davies argues that the rhetoric of peace was intended for a global, rather than domestic audience. Soviet citizens' enthusiasm was a symptom of 'pacifist blowback': they did not realize that their government was not really for peace.[142] Both these accounts present Soviet citizens engaging naively and passively with official rhetoric. However, a

[135] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 959, l. 6.
[136] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36578, ll. 6–7.
[137] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 15, l. 15.
[138] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 30466, ll. 5–7.
[139] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 786, l. 9.
[140] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 959, l. 58.
[141] Zubkova, *Poslevoennoe sovetskoe Obshchestvo*, 130–5.
[142] Gould-Davies, 'Pacifist Blowback?', 267–8.

close reading of the letters and speeches associated with the campaign reveals that some of the most enthusiastic participants were not simply passive participants in a government dupe. The official rhetoric of the Soviet press called for a robust and muscular struggle (борьба) against the capitalist powers. Soviet peace-loving had nothing in common with the passive spirit of bourgeois pacifism. However, the language Soviet citizens used, both in letters and at official meetings, owed far more to war anxiety than muscular activism. They were employing the 'tactic' of reappropriation to transform the 'Struggle for Peace' into a platform for the articulation of their personalized fear of war.

The Stockholm Campaign of 1950 was formally for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In practice both the official press and the speeches of participants at local meetings focused on the Korean War. When Soviet citizens stood up to denounce the American 'intervention' they were speaking in line with official rhetoric. However, a number of speakers went further, voicing their concerns that US meddling would spark a wider conflict. More than 50 per cent of the questions asked at village level meetings in Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* during the 1950 campaign were about the Korean situation. Half of those questions, such as 'Is it possible that we will intervene on behalf of the Korean Republic?', 'Is the USSR allied with Korea?', or 'Has the Soviet Union offered to help Korea?' sought to establish whether the USSR might get dragged into the conflict there.[143] The most common phrase located in the archival records of the Peace Campaign meetings is 'We do not want war'.[144]

Speakers at local meetings in defence of peace also tended to speak in pacifist terms, about the evils of war in general. They did not focus their criticism on capitalist aggression, nor did they articulate a robust confidence in Soviet might and moral authority. As was often the case within other anti-war movements, the rhetoric of motherhood played an important role in these public meetings.[145] E. P. Timonina, of Lomonosov *raion* Arkhangel'sk *oblast'*, reminded the crowd that 'During the war I lost my husband, I have had to live through many

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[143] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 8627, op. 1, dd. 26, 55, 77, 131, 208, 245, 308, 486. From a total of 57 questions asked.

[144] Sv. E.g., TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 786, l. 50.

[145] H. H. Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the US Movement for World Peace and Women's Right* (New York, 1993), 11–12. Fitzpatrick comments that this self-identification as a mother was a common feature of Soviet discourse. In the context of the Peace Campaigns, however, it became a dominant, and often emotional, language of self-expression. Fitzpatrick, 'Supplicants and Citizens'.

difficulties. I think that there is not one woman or mother in the whole world who would want war.'[146] Another woman wrote to the Committee in Defence of Peace saying, 'I am a mother. As a mother I want that our children live happily and so as a mother I am signing for peace.'[147] This personalized and emotionalized rhetoric of motherhood was rooted in a pacifist aversion to the horrors of war and had little in common with the robust confidence of the official language of Soviet might.

The Soviet government was not unaware of the fact that much of the enthusiasm for the campaign was motivated by pacifist sentiment. *Pravda* sometimes cautioned against failing to draw the distinction between robust struggling for peace and privatized pacifism: 'The current all people movement for peace does not have anything in common with bourgeois pacifism and with passive dislike of war. No! This is mighty movement of the peoples . . . prepared boldly and manly (мужественно) to stand up for their rights, for life, for peace and security.'[148] An October 1952 Agitprop report complained, however, that even some local newspapers demonstrated shortcomings in their treatment of the campaign. The author criticized the 'superficial' coverage of the 'Struggle for Peace' 'abounding in pacifist sentiments' and full of 'poems about white doves written in sentimental pitiful tones'. Speaking of an article in the Armenian republican newspaper, the report complained, 'The author of the article writes as a pacifist—against war in general, he does not underline the reactionary character of imperialist war.'[149]

The distinction between the struggling peace of a patron state and a pacifist aversion to war was also revealed in the manner in which Soviet citizens opposed the Peace Campaigns. Those individuals who did contest the 'Struggle for Peace' rarely challenged the idea of peace itself. One common complaint was that war was inevitable, whether or not the signature-gathering campaigns were carried out.[150] Others objected on religious grounds. As three former monks in Penza *oblast'* explained, 'We are for peace but we don't want to sign the Declaration.'[151] A few, more hostile, critics argued that the campaigns were a cynical exercise: the regime was mouthing the rhetoric of peace whilst pursuing an

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[146] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 296, op. 2, d. 1150, l. 29.
[147] Let. GARF f. R9539, op. 1, d. 58, l. 21.
[148] *Pravda*, 02.10.49, p. 1.
[149] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 507, ll. 13–17.
[150] Proc. GARF, f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 34939, l. 52.
[151] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 959, l. 5.

aggressive policy of foreign conquest.[152] F.A.Ia., of Kirovograd *oblast'*, observed in the autumn of 1950 that the radio spoke of disarmament, 'and at the same time we are increasing the armed forces'.[153] Only a small number of individuals criticized the campaigns because they actively hoped for a war that would bring them liberation.[154] Those who opposed the Peace Campaigns normally did so because they were not peaceful enough.

It is possible that official Soviet rhetoric itself contributed to this pacifist sentiment. The campaigns against capitalist warmongering might well have whipped up fear, rather than muscular righteous indignation. There is a limited volume of evidence that this was the case. A retired Red Army Major, Leonov, wrote a lengthy letter to Stalin in December 1948 in which he explained that at least some Soviet citizens doubted the USSR's capacity to resist the capitalist world.[155] However, he also noted that there were others who were excessively confident in Soviet strength. P. Bershadskii complained along exactly these lines to Stalin in March 1950. A report by Gottwald, of the Czech Central Committee had stated that any capitalist attack would be mathematical suicide. He asked 'in that case why is the struggle of the workers of the whole world for peace necessary? . . . This will make the workers mood placid.'[156] The rhetoric of the Peace Campaigns could lead to over-confident passivity as well as pacifism.

There is very little evidence that the meetings and slogans of the Peace Campaigns directly provided a stimulus for fresh waves of rumouring about war. News about international events and information obtained through the word-of-mouth network were far more likely to spark, via the process of *bricolage*, a fresh round of war rumours. The Peace Campaigns did not contribute to the climate of war expectation as much as they were driven by it. Participants in the campaign on a local level transformed the rhetoric of peace from a robust and muscular term into a pacifist aversion to war. Whether they deployed this 'tactic' of reappropriation intentionally or not is impossible to say. What is clear is that their enthusiasm for the Peace Campaigns was not a symptom of naive passivity, but rather of their capacity to transform

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[152] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 24, d. 786, ll. 9, 11.
[153] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 38158, l. 7.
[154] Proc. Ibid., d. 26657, l. 4.
[155] Let. RGASPI f. 558, op. 11, d. 875, ll. 88–120.
[156] Let. Ibid., d. 877, l. 31.

these public campaigns into platforms for the expression of their pre-existing anxieties.

Reappropriation: the Peace Campaigns as sites of mourning

Participants in the 'Struggle for Peace' also reappropriated the Peace Campaigns as a medium through which to articulate their grief from the last war. The official heroic narrative of the Great Patriotic War left little space for personal tragedy, loss, and mourning.[157] The official rhetoric of the 'Struggle for Peace' also sometimes referred back to the experience of the last war but in depersonalized and confident terms. However the records of the signature campaign meetings, and letters sent by Soviet citizens, reveal a powerful outpouring of personal emotion connected to the past war. Local meetings were often dominated by those who had lost loved ones during the war, and spoke in passionate terms about their personal tragedy.[158] Speakers regularly described the 'horrors' (ужасы) of the last war or the 'terrible grief' (страшное горе) they had endured as a result of it.[159] Letter writers to newspapers and public figures also told their tales of woe, whilst declaring their support for the 'Struggle for Peace'. A. Solomatina wrote to *Pravda* from 'before my portrait of my dead son', saying she had wanted to go to the Peace Congress to 'pour out a cry from the suffering mothers' hearts'.[160]

Injured veterans also played a prominent role in these local events. However, their narratives were not always the official heroic story of overcoming disability.[161] A number of veterans spoke of the 'burden' they suffered because of their invalidity or how they had 'lost their health' at the front.[162] M. I. Ponomareva emotionally described her frustrations at being unable to perform her duties as a mother without

[157] C. Merridale, *Night of Stone: Death and Memory in Russia* (London, 2000); N. Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York, 1994).

[158] For a similar process in post-Vietnam America, see J. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1992), 3–9.

[159] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 8627, op. 1, d. 55, ll. 1, 52; d. 131, ll. 46, 49.

[160] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 117, l. 33.

[161] B. Fieseler, 'The Bitter Legacy of the "Great Patriotic War": Red Army Disabled Soldiers under Late Stalinism,' in Fürst, *Late Stalinist Russia: Society between Reconstruction and Reinvention* (London, 2006), 47–60.

[162] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 8627, op. 1, d. 55, l. 58; d. 26, l. 3.

her lost arm in a letter to *Pravda*.[163] The July 1950 meeting in the Semzhinskii rural Soviet in Menzenskii *raion,* Arkhangel'sk *oblast'*, was typical of the Peace Campaign gatherings on a local level. The first speech was offered by a mother of several children who described in emotional terms the dangers of war, followed by a party worker, a war invalid, the chairman of the village Soviet, and then a woman who lost her husband in the last war.[164] Veterans, invalids, and mothers jostled for space alongside those who normally dominated public political meetings. Their speeches were rarely the heroic tales of victorious *frontoviki*, but rather the emotional narratives of those who had lost most in the previous war and so strongly supported a campaign to avert a fresh conflict. Yekelchyk argues that the Peace Campaigns were a failure because they failed to produce enough emotion. On a local level, the 'tactic' of reappropriation often meant that they generated too much emotion rather than too little.[165] A public campaign for production, might, and self-adulation was often transformed into a space for mourning.

SOVIET *MENTALITÉ* DURING THE EARLY COLD WAR: THE OUTSIDE WORLD AS A THREATENING PLACE

It is hardly surprising that speculative rumouring was widespread in the first post-war months: Soviet society was still undergoing an enormous amount of social strain. Reconstruction was slow and difficult. Living conditions in the cities were unsanitary and working hours long.[166] The Party Soviets in Odessa, Yaroslavl, Tambov, and Kursk were so overwhelmed with complaint letters that they simply stopped answering them in 1945.[167] Urban crime and petty theft became major problems after 1945, and in the countryside life was even more difficult.[168] The rural labour force had become increasingly aged and female during the

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[163] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 117, l. 40.

[164] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f 8627, op. 1, d. 486, l. 20.

[165] Yekelchyk, 'Civic Duty to Hate'. The emotion he discusses is hate rather than mourning.

[166] Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Late-Stalinism: Labour and the Restoration of the Stalinist System After World War II* (Cambridge, 2002).

[167] RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 111, ll. 74, 80; d. 112, l. 18.

[168] See: RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 118, l. 45.

war and all heavy machinery production had been redirected to the front.[169] The struggle of reconstruction was compounded by regionalized famines in 1946–7.[170] Wartime conditions, and the social stress that went with them, persisted into the middle of 1947 at least.

These social pressures were at their most amplified in the western borderlands. These regions had experienced the attempts of the Wehrmacht, Red Army, and nationalist partisans to resculpt society along their chosen lines.[171] In 1945–7 they were, once again, on the potential front line. The transfer of information within inter-personal networks, would have reinforced social cohesion in these traumatized communities in the post-war era. They also found other mechanisms for preserving unity, such as treating those who had worked in Germany or girls who had slept with German soldiers with disdain. Stories of returnees arriving with suitcases full of foreign goods also operated as an outlet for frustration and resentment.[172]

The official propaganda machine was also struggling to get its message out throughout the USSR between 1945 and 1947. Reports from these years bemoan the shortage of qualified political agitators. Even the navy struggled to acquire trained report readers.[173] Official agitation failed, in particular, to satisfy the widespread popular hunger for information about the outside world.[174] The Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* lecture Buro read only 16.5 per cent of their reports on political themes in this period; 44 per cent were on agriculture or medicine.[175] Information hunger became so severe during the elections in early 1946 that campaign leaflets were being sold on the black market.[176] The scarcity of

[169] A. Nove, 'Soviet Peasantry in World War II', in, Linz, *The Impact of World War II on the Soviet Union* (Totowa, 1985), 77–90; GAOPDiFAO, f. 296, op. 2, d. 398, l. 27.

[170] V. F. Zima, *Golod v SSSR 1946–1947 Godov: Proiskhozhdenie i posledstviia* (Moscow, 1999); Ganson, *The Soviet Famine in Global and Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2009).

[171] T. Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, 2003), 154–78; Weiner, 'Something to Die for, A Lot to Kill for: The Soviet System and the Barbarisation of Warfare, 1939–1945', in G. Kassimeris, ed., *The Barbarisation of Warfare* (London, 2006); W. Lotnik, *Nine Lives: Ethnic Conflict in the Polish-Ukrainian Borderlands* (London, 1999).

[172] Inf. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1478, ll. 2–29; d. 1479, l. 8; RGASPI f. 82, op. 2, d. 148, ll. 68–70.

[173] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 405, l. 30.

[174] Zubkova, trans. H. Ragsdale, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957* (Armonk, NY, 1998), 87.

[175] GAAO f. 5790, op. 3, d. 30, l. 5.

[176] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 1424, ll. 21b–22.

officially mediated information made it all the more likely that when news did arrive it would be seized upon, fused with other ideas within the word-of-mouth network, potentially misinterpreted, and acted on.

The official mass media was also suffering from the deepening credibility crisis that had engulfed it in after the Nazi–Soviet Pact of 1939–41. The failure of official newspapers to predict the outbreak of war or report defeats at the front in 1941–2 had further undermined the authority of the Soviet press. A large number of those who were prosecuted for anti-Soviet speech during the war were alleged to have stated that the Sovinformburo reports were not trustworthy.[177] This process only deepened in the post-war era. More and more Soviet citizens had also visited the outside world and were able to supplement the official press with their own independent observations.

The difficulty of post-war living and the weakness of the propaganda machine inform the context within which rumours flourished. However, they do not account for the prominence of specifically war rumours in this period. Dramatic rumours of social inversion may have been an expression of social anxiety in 1945–7 and also to some extent after 1948. Why, however, did they manifest themselves in the form of war rumours? Why, in particular, were they rumours about an Anglo-American invasion of the USSR?

War rumours flourished above all within the context of the Soviet experience of the wartime Grand Alliance as a betrayal. Rumours that the former Allies might invade the USSR after 1945 were credible because of the popular perception that they had been inconstant and unfaithful during the war itself. Distrust of 'Perfidious Albion', in particular, endured after the conflict was over. As the Roman Catholic priest Rikhte from L'vov commented in March 1946, Churchill and the English were 'worse than the darkest speculators'.[178] War rumours were at their most prolific in the period when Britain continued to be a major player in international affairs. Once America began to take over British interests after 1947, war rumours and war panics seem to have declined.

The Allies' use of nuclear weaponry at Hiroshima and Nagasaki also added to this climate of mistrust. The Soviet press largely attempted to ignore the nuclear attacks and stressed that Japan's collapse in August 1945 was due to the Soviet intervention.[179] Even when *Ogonëk* bucked

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[177] e.g., Proc. GARF, f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 93216, ll. 1–5; d. 21318, l. 27.
[178] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 2835, l. 97.
[179] *Pravda*, 15.08.45, p. 1; 26.08.45, p. 4.

the trend with a factual report on the explosive capacities of uranium, it contained only a brief discussion of the American bombs.[180] Despite these attempts to minimize the story, Werth remembered that 'the bomb was the one thing everybody in Russia had talked about that whole day . . .'[181] Many people interpreted the dropping of the bomb as an attempt to intimidate the USSR. A former artillery officer revealed his perceptions in answering his own question: 'Why did the Allies drop the bomb on Hiroshima? . . . They wanted not to defeat the Japanese but to show us their strength.'[182]

However, Hiroshima does not seem to have spawned a great deal of anxiety about the threat of nuclear attack. The danger that the Allies would wipe out the USSR with its superior weaponry featured surprisingly rarely in the state prosecution files. A small number of individuals pointed to the bomb, and US technology in general, as the means by which the Soviet regime might be overthrown.[183] However, nuclear destruction does not seem to have featured particularly highly in Soviet citizens' war anxieties. Even during the campaign for the Stockholm Declaration against nuclear weapons, Soviet citizens spoke very little about atomic disarmament. The official mass media in the late-Stalin years was much more focused on the bacteriological warfare being waged in Korea. The threat of a biological attack or a long and arduous war, such as the one they had just fought against Nazi Germany, seems to have been just as important as nuclear warfare in the minds of many late-Stalinist citizens.[184] Reassurances about Soviet might did not stop war rumours spreading, but the Soviet press was quite successful at shaping its citizens' perceptions of what the foreign threat might look like.

War rumours also flourished because Soviet citizens believed that domestic events inside the USSR were of great interest to other states within the international community. Stories of invasion were a feature of the entire Soviet era from the 1920s to the 1980s.[185] By the 1960s and 1970s the most likely antagonist was considered to be China.[186]

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[180] *Ogonëk*, 09.1945: 35, p. 14.

[181] Mem. Werth, *Russia at War 1941–45* (London, 1964)*,* 1037.

[182] Int. Andrei Ivanovich, Moscow, July 2004.

[183] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 28460, ll. 8–9.

[184] Int. Igor Andreevich, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.

[185] Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad: Formirovanie vneshnepoliticheskix stereotipov v soznanii Rosiiskogo obshchestva pervoi polovini XX veka* (Moscow, 1998), 121–44.

[186] Lukin, *The Bear Watches the Dragon,* 141–3; A. Werth, *Russia: Hopes and Fears* (London, 1969), 280–1.

One of the threads that runs throughout these rumours was the expectation that foreign states might invade the USSR in response to seemingly small shifts in internal Soviet policy. Davies refers to an outbreak of war rumours, sparked by the expulsion of the Zinovievites from Leningrad, in 1935.[187] This domestic political event was interpreted—within the oral news network—as a potential catalyst for invasion. Many war rumours in the post-war period also reflected this implicit assumption that internal Soviet political events might precipitate an assault against the USSR. In early 1946 the rumour circulated in western Belarus that, by striking through the ballot cards, voters would cause the Anglo-Americans to apply pressure for the restoration of the old borders of Poland.[188] An entirely domestic act of protest was assumed to have reverberations on an international stage. The claim that the Allies were threatening invasion if the regime did not abolish the *kolkhozes* relied on this same assumption, that governments beyond the USSR were deeply concerned about Soviet domestic issues. At least some Soviet citizens operated under the assumption that their domestic lives were of profound interest to the world outside.

The presumption that other states were deeply concerned about events within the Soviet Union reflected the assumption that the USSR was the most important state within the world community.[189] This idea had been sponsored by the Soviet state itself. During the 1920s and 1930s the Soviet government had encouraged its population to consider themselves to be builders of a new and unique Socialist civilization. Rumours of allied wartime meddling and war rumours in the post-war period reflected the idea that the internal political life of the USSR was an important concern to the other leading powers. British agricultural workers or miners did not anticipate an external invasion to defend their personal interests or wages in this period. Much of the Soviet population, however, seem to have considered their lives to be part of an international drama, that was being carefully observed by the other leading powers.

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[187] Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror Propaganda and Dissent, 1934–41* (Cambridge, 1997), 94.

[188] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 88, d. 693, l. 21. Fitzpatrick records a similar rumour associated with the 1930 census. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivisation* (Oxford, 1994), 295.

[189] It may also reflect the assumption that other states would mimic the Soviet policy of interfering in domestic life overseas, as the USSR had via the Comintern in the 1930s.

Those Soviet citizens who anticipated an attack on these grounds had well-established historical precedents on which to base their fear. The foreign intervention during the Civil War and Nazi invasion of 1941 affirmed the idea that the outside world might seek to destroy the Bolshevik project. War rumours were most prominent in the USSR at moments of social tension such as 1945–7. But they thrived throughout the Soviet era because Soviet citizens were convinced that other powers might seek to interfere with, and even destroy, the USSR. The outside world, for Soviet citizens, was a threatening place.

The assumption that the outside world was a threat bolstered the success of the language of Soviet superpower greatness that emerged in the early Cold War. The USSR had become capable not only of defending itself, but also of extending its protective reach to the oppressed citizens of the colonial world. Whilst it may have evolved, the self-understanding that made Kira Pavlovna's son want to run off and fight for Che Guevara, and Viktor Dmitrovich speak of the pleasure he derived from supporting the Cubans and Vietnamese in the 1950s and 1960s emerged largely in the Stalin's last years.[190] That language may have begun to run out of credibility in the 1980s following the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan. However, the official rhetoric of the Soviet Union as a mighty patron of the oppressed, and as a moral force for good, continued until the fall of the USSR. Brooks' claim that the Soviet Union was 'subsidising an empire that its citizens did not value' is only half the truth.[191] The Soviet posture as a patron state was a potent source of identity in the late-Stalin years that endured long after Stalin's death.

CONCLUSION

The success of war rumours and the Peace Campaigns after 1945 depended on the widespread perception that the outside world presented a threat to the USSR. The responses of the Soviet population to the 'Struggle for Peace' also offer a fresh perspective on the late-Stalin years. A number of authors have emphasized the political disengagement and ossification of this period. However, Soviet citizens rallied

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[190] Int. Kira Pavlovna, Moscow, August 2005, Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, September 2004.
[191] Brooks, *Thank You,* 242–3.

passionately, and often emotionally, around the slogan of peace. For some, the language of moral authority and patronage provided an inspiring narrative of Soviet self-understanding. Others reappropriated the language and mechanisms of the Peace Campaigns to articulate their fears of war, pacifist sentiments, and traumatic memories of the recent past. The Peace Campaigns enjoyed such success because different individuals were able to reappropriate them to different ends. The late-Stalinist government could mobilize its population to 'Struggle for Peace', but it could not guarantee that they shared its definition of what 'peace' meant.

5

Subversive Styles? Official Soviet Cultural Identity in the late-Stalin years 1945–1953

In September 1943 G. Lebedenko, the head of the Soviet Red Cross mission in the United States, wrote an article for publication in the *Journal of the American Soviet Medical Cooperation Society*. Describing the advance of medical research, Lebedenko wrote, 'There are innumerable problems and we have not yet solved them all. And these problems should not be solved alone, by each nation in isolation . . . This must be done not by one people not by one nation but by all together, in unity for the betterment of life and for the future of all mankind.'[1] Lebedenko's article was written at the high-point of wartime enthusiasm about Western civilization. Anglo-American films, jazz music, science, and even to some extent foreign servicemen were welcome contributors to Soviet life. His unashamedly internationalist comments could not have been made in 1947. As the Cold War emerged out of the wreckage of the Grand Alliance, the Official Soviet Identity of the USSR as a civilization began to assert the distinctiveness and superiority of socialist as opposed to capitalist science, style, and culture.

Cold War Official Soviet Identity embraced the civilization of the communist world. The musical and intellectual contributions of the USSR's little brothers were widely celebrated, whilst they thanked the Soviet Union for its wisdom and guidance. However, the most important factor within Soviet identity as a civilization in this period was the capitalist West, and in particular America. As Britain's global power waned, American music, films, science, and culture played a growing role within Soviet self-identification. The new official line, that such things were the degenerate proceeds of a degenerate society, was dramatized via

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[1] GARF f. R9501, op. 7, d. 31, ll. 33–4.

a series of ideological campaigns that began in late 1946. These campaigns have largely been examined in terms of their impact on domestic politics. However, they also played a significant role in the creation of a new version of what it meant to be Soviet in relation to the outside world.

As this new identity began to take shape, the Soviet regime moved relatively quickly to cut off contacts between the citizens of the USSR and their former wartime Allies. At least in the Arctic ports, interpersonal relations had already begun to wane during wartime. The process accelerated after May 1945 and by mid 1947 an unexpected visit by some British diplomats to Suzdal and Vladimir, outside Moscow, precipitated a panic amongst local administrators and a flurry of anxious report writing.[2] In late 1947 the decisive step was taken when it became an offence to give information to foreigners, making the work of overseas newsmen extremely difficult.[3] The members of a Soviet chess team that visited Britain in September 1947 were not even allowed to speak to their relatives who lived in the UK without a commissar present.[4] Those who had had wartime relationships with foreign citizens also fell under suspicion; a number of women from Arkhangel'sk and Murmansk were sent to the Gulag. A popular prison song from the early 1950s related the tale of a Russian girl and an English sailor learning to say 'I love you' in each others' languages.[5] Diplomats who had worked in the wartime USSR were shocked when they returned in the late 1940s to discover the 'complete severance of any kind of ordinary human relations between Russians and foreigners'.[6]

This severance was reinforced by a widespread attack on the nature of capitalist civilization. America, in particular, was criticized for its economic and racial exploitation, sham democracy, soullessness, and lack of freedom. As a consequence the artistic and scientific products of this dark civilization ceased to be appropriate for use inside the USSR. Music, film, science, and personal style became some of the key sites at which the official version of Soviet identity was articulated. Many individuals, particularly within the scientific and cultural intelligentsia, embraced this new language of Sovietness. For some it provided a means to further their own interests, for others it resonated with their anti-

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[2] GARF f. 6991, op. 2, d. 60, ll. 26–60.
[3] Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years* (New York, 1971), 344–9.
[4] GARF f. 7576, op. 2, d. 351, ll. 76–80.
[5] *Poleznaia Gazeta* (Severodvinsk) 13.07.2001.
[6] Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (London, 2007), 492.

western sentiments. On the other hand, some Soviet young people intentionally adopted an 'American' lifestyle in order to mark themselves out from their peers. America and Americanness acquired a series of powerful overtones in the last years of Stalin's life that continued to shape what it meant to be Soviet until the fall of the USSR.

THE COLD WAR ATTACK ON CAPITALIST LIFE

During World War II the Soviet press held its fire for the first time on the evils of Anglo-American civilization. Britain and America were progressive and democratic powers first and capitalist states second. During the early post-war months, this narrative was largely sustained. It was not until the spring of 1946 that *Pravda* published its first, relatively small, post-war article about the activities of the Ku-Klux-Klan and *Ogonëk* began to cautiously criticize social inequality in Britain.[7] The attack on capitalist civilization grew steadily more strident but the head-on assault was not launched until the diplomatic identity of the USSR shifted decisively in the summer of 1947. From that point on, the culture and living conditions of the capitalist West, and America in particular, became daily targets for the Soviet propaganda machine.

The language of this anti-American campaign relied heavily on the historical precedents established by Gorky, Mayakovsky, and Blok in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each of these authors had visited America and returned to warn their audience of its soulless and exploitative nature.[8] These conclusions were mirrored in the famous travelogue of Ilf and Petrov, two satirists from the 1930s, who described the America they visited as technologically advanced but culturally backwards.[9] Nonetheless these criticisms were slight in comparison to the assault on American civilization that developed in the late 1940s. Soviet cartoons depicted American presidents, generals, and capitalists as either overweight, cigar-chomping gangsters or grotesque, subhuman animals.[10] Meanwhile the Soviet stage and screen were

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[7] *Ogonëk*, 03.1946: 10–11, pp. 30–2; Fateev, *Obraz vraga v sovetskoi propagande: 1945–54* (Moscow, 1999), 29–45.

[8] C. Rougle, *Three Russians Consider America: America in the Works of Maksim Gor'kij, Aleksandr Blok, and Vladimir Majakovskij* (Stockholm, 1976).

[9] Ilf and Petrov, *Little Golden America: Two Famous Soviet Humourists Survey the United States* (London, 1944).

[10] e.g., *Ogonëk*, 07.1950: 32, p. 19.

flooded with anti-American stories depicting the evils of domestic life inside the USA.[11] The assault on US culture was formalized in a 1949 Agitprop 'Plan of Measures for the strengthening of Anti-American propaganda' but it had been well under way for some months before-hand.[12] This depiction of the evils of American civilization reinforced how healthy Soviet civilization was. Once the subtle language of wartime alliance had been abandoned, Western civilization, and America in particular, became the embodiment of everything that the USSR was not.

The assault on Western civilization focused in three key areas. The first of those stressed the economic and racial exploitation of capitalist life. The piteous lives of workers, who were struggling to get by in the post-war period, became a staple of the Soviet press.[13] In December 1948 *Krokodil* carried a cartoon entitled 'Western Europe without change' depicting the year 1948 passing away, but crisis and unemploy-ment remaining unaltered.[14] Meanwhile the mainline Soviet news-papers reported at length on racial inequality, lynching, and oppression of African-Americans.[15] Capitalist societies' workers and ethnic minorities were not themselves evil. They were the honest victims of the system they lived in.[16] The poverty and grind of capitalist workers stood in sharp contrast to the constant improvements in living standards in the USSR. As *Pravda* explained in August 1949, the idea of a wonderful 'American way of life' was a myth.[17]

The second major target of Soviet propagandists was capitalist dem-ocracy. The British Parliament was under the control of a group of aristocrats who took almost no interest in the real issues affecting their nation.[18] Washington was in the grip of the capitalist monopolies who bought seats in Congress and ran it for their gangsterish interests.[19] In April 1951 *Ogonëk* ran a cartoon depicting the Statue of Liberty being strapped to an electric chair by American rightist forces.[20] Democratic freedoms had ceased to be a reality in the capitalist West. American

[11] A. Hanfman, 'The American Villain on the Soviet Stage', *Russian Review*, 10.2 (1951), 131–45.
[12] RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 228, ll. 48–52.
[13] *Ogonëk*, 04.1948: 14, p. 12; 03.1951: 11, p. 12.
[14] *Krokodil*, 30.12.1948, p. 3. See also: 30.12.1951, p. 6.
[15] *Pravda*, 02.04.49, p. 3; *Krokodil*, 10.04.50, p. 6; *Ogonëk*, 09.1950: 39, p. 30.
[16] On the 'good America', embodied by these victims, see *Ogonëk*, 04.1951: 16, p. 19; *Pravda*, 02.01.1948, p. 4.
[17] *Pravda*, 18.08.49, p. 4.   [18] *Ogonëk*, 06.1948: 25, p. 20.
[19] *Krokodil*, 20.07.1952, p. 10.   [20] *Ogonëk*, 04.1951: 16, p. 32.

В СТРАНАХ КАПИТАЛИЗМА   В СТРАНЕ СОЦИАЛИЗМА

ДОРОГА ТАЛАНТА...   ДОРОГУ ТАЛАНТАМ!

Fig. 5.1 'The way of talent in capitalist countries'; 'Show talent the way in the socialist countries.' V. Koretskii, 1948. Struggling artists in the West enjoy none of the opportunities of those in the socialist world.

politics, in particular, were a major target in the plays of the early Cold War. Simonov's *Russian Question* was the most successful play of late 1947, ultimately becoming a film in 1948. It told the tale of Harry Smith, a clear example of the 'good but exploited' American, who is forced by his newspaper bosses to write stories that suggest the USSR is about to attack America.[21] His fate mirrors that of the hero in Lavrenev's *The Voice of America* who falls foul of the House Committee on Un-American Activities for his refusal to make a speech on the radio denouncing the USSR. Only after the hero is fraudulently imprisoned are his eyes opened to the emptiness of American democracy.[22] Soviet citizens, on the other hand, enjoyed the benefits of the most democratic electoral system in the world.[23]

[21] *Pravda*, 17.03.1948, p. 3. For a brief synopsis, see J. Steinbeck, *A. Russian Journal* (London, 2000), 105–6.
[22] M. Gordey, *Visa to Moscow* (London, 1952), 149–51.
[23] *Pravda*, 11.01.1950, p. 1.

The third line of attack focused on the soulless, economically driven nature of capitalist society. As Iu. Zhukov explained after his trip to America, American workers are motivated by nothing other than money, hence their tendency to resort to gangsterism to improve their lot.[24] Capitalist citizens lived a life of gambling and sleeping pills in a desperate but empty struggle to strike it rich.[25] Everything was for sale in America, even the abilities of leading sportsmen such as Johnny Weismuller, an Olympic swimmer who performed in a number of *Tarzan* movies. His change of career was driven by the need to 'get a crust of bread for himself and his family'.[26] The principle of the dollar also underwrote journalism that was free only in the sense that the editors could choose to work for whoever offered them more.[27] The financial motivation behind capitalist society was vividly expressed in Vadim Sobko's 1949 play *Behind the Second Front* that depicted an American officer in wartime Britain working to stop the destruction of German armaments factories. When his British partner appeals to his patriotism, Sam Gibson retorts 'the dollar, that's my native country. And where it comes from I don't really care.'[28] The 800th anniversary of Moscow, on the other hand, provided an opportunity to celebrate the city as the 'centre of world culture and world civilization'.[29] Denigration of the capitalist West reinforced the superiority of the civilization that Soviet citizens were labouring to build in the post-war USSR.

Capitalist science, technology and music

This shift in official attitudes towards capitalist civilization as a whole transformed the status of capitalist-produced science and art in the post-war period. There were hints of a more negative attitude towards Anglo-American research and music towards the end of the war. However, on 9 May 1945 Leonid Utesov's Jazz Orchestra performed to the vast crowds celebrating victory in Sverdlovsk Square in Moscow.[30] A month later in June 1945, the Jubilee of the Soviet Academy of Sciences provided a pretext to invite a large number of

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[24] *Ogonëk*, 06.1947: 22, pp. 22–3.   [25] *Krokodil*, 30.09.1948, p. 3.
[26] *Ogonëk*, 06.1948: 23, p. 29.   [27] *Pravda*, 05.05.50, p. 4.
[28] Hanfman, 'American Villain', 131–45.
[29] *Pravda*, 04.09.47, p. 2.
[30] RGALI f. 3005, op. 1, d. 82, l. 250; Fateev, *Obraz vraga*, 20–5.

foreign researchers to Moscow. When they arrived, their hosts were 'so anxious to give away their results that they copied out tables and sketched graphs to present to the guests'.[31] During the first post-war months the Soviet state continued to allow, with some caution, its scientists to enjoy contact with foreign researchers and its citizens to have access to foreign mass media. The Soviet press also continued to comment on overseas scientific successes, particularly in the medical field.[32] The prospects of foreign science and art seemed bright after the end of World War II.

However, the summer of 1946 brought the first significant indications that the value of capitalist culture was being re-evaluated. In July 1946 *Ogonëk* carried a humorous story mocking a man who was inordinately proud of his foreign-made suit that he had brought back after the war. The suit turns out to be a disaster and falls apart.[33] This was followed up by an October article criticizing the interest in foreign fashion amongst Soviet women. The 'external tinsel' of these clothes often hid their 'extremely wretched internal content!'[34] Soviet women should be more savvy. More importantly, the summer of 1946 saw the launch of the *Zhdanovschina*, named after the Soviet leader who led the campaign, which began with an attack on the superficial content of the literary journals *Leningrad* and *Zvezda*. Within weeks the attack had broadened out to embrace theatre and film.[35] At this stage, the criticism was not directed explicitly at capitalist-produced culture per se, but the assertion that ideology, rather than entertainment, was the primary means through which art must be assessed inevitably threatened the position of foreign media within the USSR.

Meanwhile, access to foreign scientific journals and conferences began to be scaled back in the winter of 1946–7.[36] The shifting status of capitalist science was revealed in a serialized story that ran between January and May 1947 in *Ogonëk*. The story concerned a scientist called Stephen Popf, in an unspecified capitalist state, who discovered a new serum to make organisms grow faster. When Popf refused to sell the serum to a shady corporation who want to use it to breed a generation of fully grown, but mentally retarded, workers and soldiers he is beaten up

[31] Ashby, *Scientist in Russia* (New York, 1947), 135.
[32] *Ogonëk*, 02.1946: 8, p. 29; 03.1946: 12, p. 33.
[33] *Ogonëk*, 07.1946: 29, p. 38.
[34] *Ogonëk*, 10.1946: 40, p. 30.
[35] Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 206–11.
[36] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 441, ll. 88–113; d. 551, ll. 82–7.

and thrown in jail. Eventually he is liberated after the local workers strike on his behalf.[37]

Popf's tale provided a precursor to what was to come. In July 1947 the Central Committee circulated a letter to all Communist Parties concerning the misdeeds of two academics, Kliueva and Roskin.[38] Kliueva and Roskin had recently been propelled to stardom by their research to develop a cancer-fighting serum.[39] However, in May 1947 they were found guilty at an Honour Court by their fellow academics for leaking their research to the Americans. The circular letter, two months later, called on local parties to root out individuals with the same 'national self-disparaging' spirit.[40] Science was not a global phenomenon which served the interests of humanity, but rather the interests of particular states and political systems.

The K.R. (Kliueva and Roskin) discussions were held in secret, but by early 1948, with the new diplomatic identity of the USSR established, the attack on bourgeois science became public. Stein's 1948–9 play *Court of Honour* presented the evil American Professor Carter and his spying colleague Wood conspiring to steal a new anaesthetic from the 'humanitarian' Soviet scientist Dobrovortsev. This thinly veiled version of the K.R. story was rapidly translated onto the screen in a film that year.[41] Meanwhile, the papers began to call on academics to be 'fully liberated from the survivals of bourgeois ideology, and remember about the class origins of science'.[42]

The competition between bourgeois and Soviet science was definitively dramatized in the Lysenko Affair of August 1948. Lysenko's domination of Soviet agrobiology had been under attack during the late war years. However, in August 1948, with the direct support of Stalin, he affirmed that there were 'two worlds and two ideologies in Biology' at the gathering of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences. His 'Weissmanist and Mendel-Morganist' rivals relied on 'lying metaphysics and idealism'. Only the 'Michurinist', or materialist, position offered

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[37] *Ogonëk* 01–05.1947: 1–20.

[38] Krementsov, *The Cure: A Story of Cancer and Politics from the Annals of the Cold War* (London, 2000), 126–9.

[39] *Ogonëk*, 05.1946: 19, pp. 4–5.

[40] V. D. Esakov and E. S. Levina, *Delo KR: Sudy chesti v ideologii i praktike poslevoennogo Stalinizma* (Moscow, 2001), 251.

[41] Hanfman, 'American Villain', 131–45; Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society: From the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (London, 2001), 201.

[42] *Pravda*, 03.03.48, p. 2.

Fig. 5.2 'Chatter Aids the Enemy!' V. Koretskii, (1954). Capitalist enemies lurked malevolently inside the USSR during the early Cold War years.

the correct path for Soviet science.[43] On 12 August, secure in his fresh victory, Lysenko attacked his rivals, including Shmal'gauzen, Zhadovskii, Zhebrak, and Dubinin in *Pravda*: they had held back Soviet science.[44]

The struggle against Michurinism was then extended into all branches of the Soviet intellectual establishment with 'Mendel-Morganists' discovered in psychology, geography, medicine, and so on. Meanwhile the press explained that bourgeois science existed solely to serve the interests of the capitalist overlords. Mendelism and genetics provided the scientific underpinnings of racial ideology: they were directly connected to fascism, big business, and the Ku-Klux-Klan.[45] Capitalist science lacked true 'spiritual value' because it functioned to keep the workers in poverty and hunger.[46] It was as a Frankenstein-like perversion of the true science of the USSR, where researchers were

[43] *Pravda*, 04.08.48, p. 2; 05.08.48, pp. 2–3.   [44] *Pravda*, 12.08.48, p. 1.
[45] *Ogonëk*, 1949: 11 (03.49), pp. 14–16.   [46] *Pravda*, 03.06.48, p. 1.

'ready to give all the victories of science to the people'.[47] As Ilf and Petrov had commented a decade before, 'technology in the hands of capitalism is a knife in the hands of a madman'.[48] Even where capitalist science currently outstripped socialist production, it was spiritually inferior, and the successes of Soviet science were repeatedly celebrated, particularly in areas of American excellence such as automobile construction.[49] With such outstanding domestic products, there was no need to rely on technology or research from outside.

At the same time as the acceleration of the campaign against bourgeois science, the Soviet state was deepening the campaign against the cultural media of their wartime Allies. The number of copies of *Amerika* and *Britanskii Soiuznik* on public sale was cut back from 14,000 to 7,000 in August 1946 and then to 4,000 in December.[50] By late 1947 the journals had been squeezed to the point that they were hardly available beyond the confines of the Metropol and National Hotels.[51] In February 1948 *Ogonëk* carried an article entitled 'What to dance?' that stressed the importance of 'national dances' and criticized 'swing' and 'boogie woogie' as 'absolutely unacceptable'. They could 'hardly be counted as dancing at all'.[52] Meanwhile in May 1947 the Central Committee issued a decision criticizing the ongoing sale of capitalist 'boulevard' literature in Leningrad.[53]

In early 1948 the assault on bourgeois culture was brought home to the Soviet artistic elites. In February the Central Committee issued a formal statement against the Soviet composer Muradeli's opera, *The Great Friendship*. The opera was 'inexpressibly bad' and composed in the 'spirit of the contemporary modernist bourgeois music of England and America'. The same 'formalist' perversions were notable in the works of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Shebalin, Popov, and Miaskovsky.[54] As with the scientific campaigns, formalists were

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[47] *Pravda*, 04.03.50, p. 6; *Krokodil*, 30.09.1951, p. 16. See: Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad: formirovanie vneshnepoliticheskix stereotipov v soznanii rosiiskogo obshchestva pervoi polovini XX Veka* (Moscow, 1998), 142.

[48] Ilf and Petrov, *Little Golden America*.

[49] *Ogonëk*, 1947: 26 (06.47), pp. 4–5; 1951: 17 (03.51), p. 17.

[50] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 436, ll. 6–17, 40–2. See also: Pechatnov, 'The Rise and Fall of *Britanskii Soiuznik:* A Case Study in Soviet Response to British Propaganda in the Mid-1940s', *The Historical Journal*, 41.1 (1989), 293–301.

[51] RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 539, ll. 92–3.

[52] *Ogonëk*, 02.1948: 6.

[53] RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 317, l. 4.

[54] *Pravda*, 11.01.48, p. 1. See: Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years,* 350–79.

subsequently discovered in other branches of the Soviet creative media.[55] Music, like science, reflected the system within which it originated. Bourgeois culture was a 'weapon in the hands of the agitators for war...' to spread racism, violence, despair, and individualism.[56] It had no place inside the USSR and its achievements paled in comparison to the 'monumental productions' of Soviet art.[57]

The consequences of this turn against Western art was most visible within the jazz community. Glenn Miller style swing was played throughout the USSR in the early post-war months. However, in November 1946 Eddie Rosner, the jazziest of the leading figures and a Polish citizen until 1939, was sent to the Gulag. By 1947 *Evening Moscow* was complaining that the city had become a 'hotbed of all kinds of tangos, blues, one-steps and fox-trots'.[58] The decision against Muradeli's opera in 1948 heralded what even the official Soviet history terms the 'complex period' for Soviet jazz music. In 1949 the saxophone was banned, and those groups that continued performing, such as Utesov's, purged the jazzy tunes from their repertoires.[59] As the primary embodiment of capitalist music, jazz was the primary victim of the post-war shift towards the celebration of only domestically produced art and science.

The attack on capitalist influence was brought home to the wider population in 1948–9 via a vocal attack on 'rootless cosmopolitanism' or 'kowtowing before foreign imports'. The campaign reached fever pitch in January 1949 with *Pravda*'s report 'About the Anti-Patriotic Group of Theatre Critics'. Iu. Iuzovskii, A. Gurvich, A. Borshagovskii, and others had betrayed their 'responsibility before the people' and becoming 'followers of bourgeois aesthetics'. Their worship of all things capitalist was demonstrated by their cynical commentary on the Soviet theatre which had done nothing to inspire 'a healthy feeling of love towards the Motherland'.[60] Over the coming months 'obsequious worshippers' of bourgeois culture were exposed in all branches of the arts.[61] Cosmopolitanism was the antithesis of Soviet patriotism. It failed

[55] e.g., Writers Union: *Pravda*, 20.04.48, p. 3.   [56] *Pravda*, 05.11.48, p. 1.

[57] *Pravda*, 21.07.48, p. 3.

[58] Starr, *Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union 1917–1980* (Oxford, 1983), 208–14; Parks, *Culture, Conflict and Coexistence: American-Soviet Cultural Relations, 1917–1958* (London, 1983), 119.

[59] Uvarova, *Russkaia sovetskaia Estrada 1930–1945: Ocherki istorii* (Moscow, 1977), 331–6.

[60] *Pravda*, 29.01.49, p. 2.

[61] *Krokodil*, 28.02.1949, p. 11; RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 205, ll. 18–28; *Pravda*, 03.03.49, p. 3.

to recognize that distinct nations had distinct characteristics and threatened to make the Soviet people passive in the face of capitalist aggression.[62] All Soviet citizens from the greatest artist to the humblest worker needed to be on their guard against the bacillus of servility to the West.

Between January and April 1949 there were forty–two articles about the 'anti-cosmopolitan campaign' in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and nine major pieces in *Pravda*.[63] The campaign's volume decreased from April onwards only to return in an even more frenzied state in 1953 with the arrest of the Kremlin Doctors, who were accused of attempting to kill the Soviet leadership. The early version of the campaign had thinly veiled, though unacknowledged, anti-Semitic overtones; a significant number of the critics and artists singled out were Jewish. However, any pretence about the campaign's anti-Semitic character evaporated in 1953. The Kremlin doctors' Jewish origins was made clear for all to see. As Stalin allegedly explained to the Party Presidium, 'Jewish nationalists believe that their nation has been saved by the United States . . . They believe they are obliged to the Americans. Among the doctors there are many Jewish nationalists.'[64]

The logic that drove this series of attacks—the *Zhdanovshchina* against frivolous culture, the K.R. and Michurinist campaigns against worshipping foreign science and the anti-cosmopolitan campaign against kowtowing before all things Western—has been a topic of fierce debate. These shifts in policy, in particular the *Zhdanovschina*, were initially interpreted as products of the competition at the highest level of Kremlin politics.[65] However, that view is now largely discredited by recent research showing that the campaigns fell hardest against key figures within Zhdadnov's support base.[66]

A second, and more fruitful, interpretation regards the cultural and scientific campaigns as an attempt to 'put the genie back in the bottle' and regain control over Soviet society after the war.[67] The

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[62] *Ogonëk*, 04.1949: 17, pp. 22–3.   [63] Fateev, *Obraz vraga*, 111.

[64] Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945–1953* (Oxford, 2004), 155–6.

[65] Dunmore, *Soviet Politics, 1945–53* (London, 1984), 15–16; Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics* (London, 1982), 67–82.

[66] Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace*, 32–8.

[67] R. Stites, 'Soviet Russian Wartime Culture: Freedom and Control, Spontaneity and Consciousness', in Thurston and Bonwetsch, *The People's War*, 181–2. See also Werth, *Russia: Post-War Years,* 197.

intelligentsia's pro-Westernism is the most commonly cited 'genie' to be rebottled.[68] However, other scholars have suggested that, at least from 1948–9 onwards, the campaigns were targeted at a much wider audience.[69] The sheer volume of effort invested into the Michurinist campaign or the attack on cosmopolitanism indicates that they were intended to shape the thinking and actions of the Soviet community at large.

The third, less commonly argued, position suggests that the post-war ideological campaigns should be understood in relation to the global situation.[70] This viewpoint provides a valuable additional perspective on the shifting official attitude to foreign science and culture. The campaigns redefined the relationship between Soviet and capitalist civilization and they evolved in tandem with Official Soviet Identity in diplomatic terms. The Central Committee's closed letter about the K.R. Affair circulated the day before the vital June 1947 gathering of Council of Foreign Ministers and Lysenko's victory over his geneticist rivals took place against the backdrop of the Berlin Blockade in mid 1948.[71] The attack on formalist music also took place at the very point when the battle lines were hardening during the Czech coup. In the same way, the January to April 1949 assault on cosmopolitanism closely mapped the discussions in the West over the construction of NATO. The anti-Jewish undertones of the anti-cosmopolitan campaign also reflected this global context. Soviet Jewry provided, to some extent, a crude metaphor for global capitalism: their supposed domination of Soviet trade made them a domestic archetype of the external enemy.

These post-war ideological campaigns solidified the new Official Soviet Identity in cultural terms as the Grand Alliance collapsed. They reasserted the self-sufficient healthiness of the Soviet project as a whole and the alien nature of capitalism, in particular capitalist

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[68] Zubkova, trans. H. Ragsdale, *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945–1957* (Armonk, NY, 1998), 88–98, 117–29; J. Fürst, 'Introduction'—*Late Stalinist Russia: Society Between Reconstruction and Reinvention* (London, 2006)', 8–9; Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace,* 41–3; Krementsov, *Stalinist Science* (Princeton, 1997), 177–81.

[69] Van Ree, *The Political Thought of Joseph Stalin: A Study in Twentieth-Century Revolutionary Patriotism* (London, 2002), 201–6; Barghoorn, *The Soviet Image of the United States: A Study in Distortion* (New York, 1950), 265; Ball, *Imagining America: Influence and Images in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Oxford, 2003), 182.

[70] McCagg, *Stalin Embattled 1943–48* (Michigan, 1978), 16–17; H. Swayze, *The Political Control of Literature in the USSR* (Cambridge Mass., 1962), 26–7.

[71] Gorlizki and Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace*, 158–9, 289–90.

America. However, they have often been interpreted more narrowly as 'national' campaigns whose primary function was to revive the glory of the Russian past. The late 1940s were certainly characterized by the vocal celebration of a pantheon of Tsarist high achievers such as Mendeleev, Chaikovskii, and Pushkin.[72] However, their revival did not herald an uncritical celebration of the Russian past. As Vavilov, the Head of the Academy of Sciences, explained the Tsarist state had often struggled against true science and its legacy was ambiguous. The Russian past was also responsible for the Weissmanist hangovers that still bedevilled Soviet science. Only now, under Soviet power, had science truly flourished as it should.[73] Furthermore, the 'Russian heritage' that was imported into post-war Soviet identity was heavily shaped by contemporary Soviet requirements. Tsarist Russia's scientific achievements, were hardly celebrated as the foundation of nineteenth-century Russian identity. The fathers of Russian science and culture were co-opted to serve the Soviet present, rather than to celebrate the Russian past.[74] The non-Russian republics were also allowed to celebrate their own local artistic and scientific heroes. Russia's achievements were disproportionately discussed because the Russians had brought industrialization and modernization to the wider USSR. But it was the 'monumental productions' of Socialist Realist art and Soviet science that were celebrated above all.[75] Pride in Russian achievements served the wider process of bolstering Soviet patriotism, rather than competing with it.

The post-war ideological campaigns were above all about loyalty. The concern about external loyalties was vividly demonstrated in the various local discussions concerning the K.R. Affair. In Tblisi, speakers denounced the pro-Turkish leanings of certain individuals.[76] In the Karelo-Finnish Region it was connections with Finland, in Moldavia discussants complained of pro-Romanian sentiments and in Central Asia pan-Islamism was the prime target.[77] America and the West were not the only potential spheres of loyalty that Soviet citizens might become attached to. Each region of the USSR contextualized the

[72] *Ogonëk*, 02.1947: 7, p. 16; 11.1947: 47, p. 25; 02.1949: 7, pp. 20–3.
[73] *Ogonëk*, 10.1948: 43, p. 9.
[74] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science,* 223–4.
[75] *Pravda*, 21.07.48, p. 3. See also: 24.03.48, p. 2; 20.04.48, p. 3.
[76] RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 6, d. 468, ll. 25–30.
[77] Ibid. ll. 98–105, 114–16, 155–66; d. 469, l. 71; f. 17, op. 122, d. 283, l. 40.

campaigns into a language of loyalty, patriotism, and Sovietness that was meaningful to local conditions.

The focus on science and technology also reflected the specific circumstances of the Cold War rivalry. American success in technology, music, and film shaped Official Soviet Identity of the early Cold War. Genetics and jazz music were at the centre of the rhetorical battleground because the USA enjoyed undisputed world leadership in those areas. Physics might also have been a prominent target for rooting out Weissmanism but for its military importance to the bomb project.[78] America's strengths played a role in defining what it meant to be Soviet in Stalin's last years.

JAZZ, STYLE, AND SCIENCE: INTERACTING WITH POST-WAR SOVIET IDENTITY AS A CIVILIZATION

The intelligentsia and the post-war ideological campaigns

The Soviet intelligentsia was an important target audience for the post-war ideological campaigns. However, it is extremely difficult to study the manner in which they engaged with this new version of Official Soviet Identity. Beyond the large volume of reports generated by the K.R. discussions, there are few detailed case studies of their actions, such as those provided by the presence of Anglo-American sailors in wartime Arkhangel'sk. Their behaviour was reported less frequently than rumours about diplomatic events, making it more difficult to draw conclusions about how widespread particular 'tactics' of engagement were. Despite the relatively limited nature of the sources, however, it is still possible to triangulate the evidence for certain kinds of behaviour and draw some provisional conclusions about the 'tactics of the habitat' employed by the Soviet artistic and scientific elites in relation to this new version of Official Soviet Identity.

Soviet scientists had reacted with great enthusiasm to the wartime opportunities for closer contact with the outside world, and leading academics continued to bombard party leaders with requests to import foreign technology or travel for research after the war. The cancer

[78] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science,* 182–3, 282–3.

researcher, A. Lukin, appealed a number of times to Molotov in late 1946 for funding to study 'the great volume of foreign experience' in his area of work.[79] Others suggested that it was essential to mimic and import foreign expertise in centrifuging, electron microscopy, analytical chemistry, waste disposal, or simply to restock laboratories damaged during wartime.[80] In January 1947 a group of leading researchers wrote to the government suggesting the foundation of an Institute of Scientific Information to disseminate material published overseas.[81] At the heart of these letters was a working assumption that the West, and in particular America, would be a source of technological inspiration for years to come.

The voices and attitudes of Soviet scientists are not easy to find beyond this extensive body of letter writing. However, their enthusiasm for contact with the outside world is also evident, to some degree, from some of the accusations levelled during the discussion of the K.R. Affair. The rhetoric of such events is often formulaic and the denunciations may have reflected personal animosities. Nonetheless it is clear that some of the academics accused were genuine enthusiasts of global scientific interaction. Discussants at a Moscow higher education institute commented that a recent trip to the USA to study ship production had generated an unhealthy degree of enthusiasm amongst senior colleagues. Other speakers complained that dissertation writers were frequently advised to improve their work by adding more references to foreign literature.[82] Comrade Boleerne, of the Polytechnic Institute in Kiev, had allegedly stated that 'it was not important where a discovery was made, here or overseas, it was important that it was made'.[83] The complaints of Comrade Ratner at the Leningrad Institute Poligrafmash were typical of many others when he noted that, 'amongst us there are people who simply talk nonsense that in America everything is better'.[84] The evidence suggests that those respondents to HIP who later spoke of the frustrations of pre-war scientific isolation were not simply flattering their foreign interviewers.[85]

[79] Let. GARF f. R5446, op. 82, d. 181, ll. 202, 198–4.
[80] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 362, ll. 9–12; f. 82, op. 2, d. 1472, l. 36; GARF f. R5446, op. 82, d. 181, ll. 97, 187; op. 85, d. 1, l. 190.
[81] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 544, ll. 1–4.
[82] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 260, l. 46; d. 206, l. 128; d. 273, l. 46.
[83] Inf. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 4537, l. 25.
[84] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 260, l. 7. See also: d. 206, ll. 105, 108; d. 271, l. 34; d. 283, l. 22.
[85] HIP. B11, 426, 37; 139, 19.

When they wrote letters to Soviet leaders requesting research materials and goods from abroad, Soviet scientists demonstrated a finely honed ability to perform official rhetoric. The struggles within the scientific community over the legitimacy of foreign science in the 1930s had ensured that those who enjoyed senior research positions were astute navigators of the rhetoric of the current moment, as well as excellent scientists.[86] During the early post-war months they phrased their requests for access to capitalist science in terms of the danger of falling behind foreign scientific advances. Whether Professor Levin, a Stalin Prize winning engineer, who warned in October 1945 that, 'we have fallen far behind the leading foreign states in all areas of radio technology during the war', was simply performing official rhetoric or truly 'thinking Bolshevik', he employed the language of the current moment to secure both his, and the nation's interests.[87] Jazz musicians like Utesov and Renskii also performed officially legitimated, swinging tunes with great enthusiasm. When their research or musical interests coincided with official rhetoric, Soviet scientists and artists became enthusiastic performers of the language of Official Soviet Identity.

However, this enthusiasm for Western-made technology and styles did not result in widespread resistance to the post-war shift within Official Soviet Identity. In the original version of Solzhenitsyn's banned novel, *The First Circle*, set in the late-Stalin period, a Soviet diplomat phones the American Embassy to warn them that a Soviet spy is about to collect some nuclear secrets in New York.[88] In reality, very few individuals stood up against the ideas of Cold War Official Soviet Identity in this manner. A small number of academics objected during the K.R. Affair, that the government should not interfere in their research. Professor Potushniak, head of the Department of Archaeology and Ethnography in Transcarpathia, protested that Soviet scientists had to work 'to order' and not 'to inspiration'.[89] A small number of writers and musicians objected to the *Zhdanovshchina* in similar terms.

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[86] On the pre-war battles in science see: Krementsov, *Stalinist Science,* 30–51.

[87] Let. RGASPI f. 588, op. 11, d. 868, ll. 114–24; d. 885, ll. 65–6.

[88] A. Solzhenitsyn, 'The First Circle', in *The Solzhenitsyn Reader: New and Essential Writings: 1947–2005*, eds E. E. Ericson and D. J. Mahoney (Wilmington, Del. 2006), 105–48. The nine chapters excerpted from the original publication are reprinted almost in full here.

[89] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 285, l. 140.

Kopilenko, a member of the Presidium of the Ukrainian Writers Union, protested that, 'Pushkin did not give anybody the opportunity to read his works so why do Soviet writers have to do it?' The composer Barvinskii from L'vov also objected that 'Workers of art are not interested in politics'.[90]

Others resorted to abusing those who were criticizing them. Professor A. M. Tumerman, of the Technical Institute of Irkutsk, refused to concede that his admiration for Studebakers was inappropriate, whilst Associate Professor Ia. I. Sherlaimov said 'that he considered it chauvinism to struggle for the preservation of the priority of Russian science...'[91] Within the K.R. meeting files, at least, residents of the newly acquired territories of the western Soviet Union predominated amongst those who refused to perform the new language. They had not experienced the politicization of science in the 1930s and were still learning that their positions were dependent on successfully employing the 'tactics of the habitat'. However, the vast majority of Soviet scientists and artists responded to the post-war ideological campaigns by adjusting their lexicon, and began to perform the new sounds and rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity. They criticized past mistakes and vowed to improve in the future. Elsewhere in *The First Circle*, Nadia, a young scientist, has to 'weed out the foreigners' from her dissertation by removing all references to the work of overseas scholars.[92] Unlike the diplomat who phoned the American Embassy, Nadia's behaviour seems closer to the actions of most members of the Soviet scientific and artistic elites. Zhebrak, one of Lysenko's main targets in 1948, wrote to *Pravda* in early 1949 to declare his alienation from the American genetics community, whose outlook was antithetical to his.[93] Roskin himself performed a *mea culpa* at the end of his honour court observing that, 'After the war all sciences became military... cancer included.'[94]

However, performance was not the only 'tactic' employed by Soviet researchers in the changing climate of 1945–53. Scientists and institutes employed a whole range of other strategies to manoeuvre their way through the post-war ideological campaigns. Avoidance was particularly

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[90] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 403, l. 41; op. 122, d. 286, l. 5.
[91] Inf. Ibid., op. 132, d. 70, l. 1.
[92] A. Solzhenitsyn, trans., M. Guybon, *The First Circle*, 19th edn (1974), 339.
[93] Let. RGASPI f, 17, op. 132, d. 117, ll. 6–11.
[94] Krementsov, *The Cure: A Story of Cancer and Politics from the Annals of the Cold War* (London, 2000), 117. For other similar comments see: RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 256, ll. 79–81.

widespread. Party reports in 1947 complained that many of the K.R. discussions were vague. The speeches at the Ministry of Geology were 'declarative' and failed 'to make a critical review of the life of their collective . . . '. Even the secretary of the party Buro, Comrade Adamov, had 'limited himself to a general indistinct discussion'.[95] Discussants often avoided naming particular colleagues and took very general decisions that were then followed through with 'intolerable slowness'.[96] This inactivity and avoidance may have reflected a lack of clarity concerning exactly what the campaign required. However, it almost certainly also reveals a desire to deflect the force of the campaign away from possible targets within the department.

The academic response to the Lysenko Affair also demonstrated the expertise with which Soviet scientists had learned to live within the environment of Stalinist society. In the run-up to August 1948, Lysenko's opponents had waged a bold campaign against his institutional and intellectual monopoly within biology.[97] They had deployed what Kojevnikov dubs the 'game' of criticism and self-criticism (*kritika i samokritika*) to chip away at Lysenko's position, making his downfall seem increasingly likely.[98] Even after Lysenko's resounding victory in August 1948, the Soviet genetics community continued to deploy the strategy of reappropriation against him. They carried on writing letters to Soviet leaders and newspapers drawing on Bolshevik language in an attempt to undermine Lysenko's position. The Head of the Department of Physics at Kiev University, Fainerman, wrote to *Pravda* in September 1948 stating that Lysenko's report was full of 'groundless and incorrect statements'. He attempted to reappropriate the language of the campaign and divert it in a different direction by requesting that it be made clear that Lysenko's report was only a basis for discussion and not an authoritative statement.[99] In later years Soviet biologists increasingly turned to Malenkov for support against Lysenko, who faced two investigations in 1952 and 1958 before his final downfall, along with Khrushchev, in 1964.

Reappropriation was also evident in many other branches of the Soviet scientific community, as academics exploited the campaign

[95] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 271, l. 2.

[96] Inf. Ibid., d. 283, ll. 2–5; d. 260, ll. 19, 45.

[97] Let. RGASPI f. 588, op. 11, d. 875, l. 19; Krementsov, *Stalinist Science,* 105–11.

[98] A. Kojevnikov, 'Games of Stalinist Democracy: Ideological Discussions in Soviet Sciences', in Fitzpatrick, *Stalinism: New Directions* (London, 2000), 142–75.

[99] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 40, l. 69.

against Michurinism to seize the initiative in ongoing institutional and personal battles.[100] This 'tactic' did not always succeed. Shaw and Oldfield argue that Grigor'ev, the 'Lysenko of Geography', actually lost out from the round of discussion prompted by the Michurin campaign.[101] Scientists had to skilfully manipulate the rhetoric of criticism and self-criticism to secure their position. Gerovitch has argued that the attack on cybernetics was also a result of individuals seeking personal promotion by denouncing foreign pseudo-science, rather than the product of an official orthodoxy imposed from above.[102] A. F. Losev's letter to Zhdanov in May 1948 provides a clear demonstration of this 'tactic' of reappropriation in action. Losev complained that his path to advancement had been hampered by individuals who had been proved wrong by the new ideological directives. His letter was a transparent attempt to reappropriate the post-war ideological campaigns as a mechanism through which to advance his flagging career.[103]

It is possible that this kind of personal assault was not reappropriation at all, but rather an attempt to integrate oneself, and one's scientific research, within the narrative of Official Soviet Identity. There is no denying that some of these letter-writers may have been sincerely attempting to put themselves back into the rhetorical mainstream. However, at the very least, their letters reauthored the narrative of Official Soviet Identity to conform more closely with their personal views. It might also be argued that deploying the post-war ideological campaigns as a mechanism for a personal assault on a colleague was not reappropriation at all: it was merely directing the campaigns towards their intended goals. However, the various rounds of criticism rarely had an officially intended target at the level of individual departments and faculties. At the very least, they were often appropriated, and on some occasions reappropriated, by Soviet scientists, in order to pursue

[100] Hollway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy 1939–1956* (New Haven, 1994), 208–13; Fateev, *Obraz vraga,* 151–2; Kojevnikov, 'Games of Stalinist Democracy', 142–75.

[101] V. D. Shaw and J. D. Oldfield, 'Personal, Ideological and Institutional Rivalries among Soviet Geographers in the Late Stalin Era', paper presented at University of Birmingham (2007).

[102] S. Gerovitch, '"Russian Scandals": Soviet Readings of American Cybernetics in the Early Years of the Cold War', *Russian Review,* 60.4 (2001), 554–62.

[103] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 160, ll. 54–73.

their personal and institutional objectives with greater zeal than they demonstrated for the original objectives of the campaigns themselves.

Soviet scientists also responded to the pressures created by the Michurinist and Anti-Cosmopolitan Campaigns by deploying the 'tactic' of avoidance, just as they had done during the K.R. Affair. Official reports complained that figures such as Professor Beletskii of Moscow State University deliberately 'slowed down the destruction of the cosmopolitans in the Philosophical Faculty' and supported Jewish staff members.[104] Others, such as Professor Rubenstein of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, only recognized their mistakes 'coldly and without feeling'.[105] Such behaviour typified the creative capacity of Soviet scientists to sidestep the implications of the turn towards a closed world of Michurinist, Soviet science. Institutions were covered with a 'Michurinist veneer', but research carried on largely as it had before.[106] Soviet academics simultaneously performed, reappropriated, and also avoided the new language of Official Soviet Identity. They negotiated the new terrain with great skill, demonstrating their ability to deploy the full range of 'tactics of the habitat' in order to protect their institutional and personal positions of power.

Soviet musicians and artists also deployed the various 'tactics of the habitat' in response to the shifting rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity in this era. Prokofiev's written response to the 1948 attack on his music accepted the charges of formalism, which 'must have been caused through contact with certain Western currents'.[107] His Classical Symphony, which was his next major work, was a saccharine pastiche of Mozart-like tunes that perfectly matched up to official requirements. The element of 'performance' is so strong within the composition that some observers even wondered whether it was an ironic gesture to his critics.[108] Shostakovich also toed the line, making a point of complaining about 'tiresome American journalists' after his 1949 trip to the USA.[109] Soviet jazz musicians also learned to 'perform' the correct sound in this era, purging almost all jazzy tunes from their repertoires.[110] Leonid Utesov, eliminated the 'non-Soviet' elements in his set, and

[104] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 160, ll. 47–52.
[105] Inf. Ibid., d. 205, l. 26.
[106] Krementsov, *Stalinist Science*, 225–8.
[107] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 636, ll. 142–5.
[108] Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 373–5.
[109] Inf. GARF f. R5483, op. 21, d. 111, l. 132–42.
[110] Mem. S. Chernov, 'Istoriia istinnogo dzhaza', *Pchela*, 11 (St Petersburg, 1997).

continued to play throughout Stalin's last years. When Oleg Lund-
strem's 'Shanghaitsy' were arrested following a particularly 'hot' perfor-
mance at the Moscow Metropol in 1948, they relocated to Kazan. In the
slightly more relaxed environment of the provinces, they were able to
carry on playing some of their Big Band favourites at the House of
Officers. 'Gulag jazz' also became a common phenomenon in this
period, with artists like Eddie Rosner becoming local favourites amongst
officials in far-flung regions such as Kolyma.[111] All these performers,
even Lundstrem who probed the threshold of legitimacy more boldly,
adapted their sets and learned to 'perform post-war Bolshevik'. How-
ever, when the opportunity arose they were keen to expand the borders of
legitimate Soviet music once again. Only weeks after Stalin died, Utesov
launched an attack on the dullness of Soviet music and called for a
rehabilitation of the saxophone and Duke Ellington.[112]

However, when the opportunity presented itself, Soviet musicians
did more than simply perform the officially mandated sound. Utesov
retained one jazzy piece within his set, the satirical *Song of the Unem-
ployed American*, that mocked the decadence of life in the USA. The
tune was often requested as many as three times as an encore, and its
success demonstrates that the 'tactic' of *bricolage* operated even in
Stalin's last years.[113] The *Song of the Unemployed American* fused
Utesov's personal tastes with popular fondness for wartime sounds but
contained it within an officially acceptable format: the result was a
carefully choreographed hybrid style. When the crowd repeatedly re-
quested the song, they also showed an awareness of the balancing act in
process. It was performed, like many acts of *bricolage*, for the audience
more than for the Soviet power. The song both performed official
rhetoric by satirizing American society, but also engaged in *bricolage*
by demonstrating an awareness of the audience's preferences.

Avoidance and reappropriation were also widespread 'tactics' of
engagement amongst Soviet creative figures, like their scientific colleagues.
The head of the Composers' Union, Khrennikov, used his personal
authority to protect a whole swathe of music critics who were attacked
in the Anti-Cosmopolitan Campaign.[114] Soviet artists also deployed the

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[111] Starr, *Red and Hot,* 225–8.   [112] Ibid. 235–6.
[113] Chernov, 'Istoriia istinnogo dzhaza'.
[114] K. Tomoff, "Most Respected Comrade . . . ": Patrons, Clients, Brokers and Unof-
ficial Networks in the Stalinist Music World', *Contemporary European History*, 11.1
(2002), 60–2.

'tactic' of avoidance to such an extent that there was creative paralysis in some artistic sectors. A number of writers at *Literatura i Iskusstvo* decided that it was better not to publish at all following Zhdanov's 1946 attack on *Leningrad* and *Zvezda*. N. Gladkov also concluded that he would 'not give anything to the theatre since the demands are too high'.[115] In 1948 the composer V. O. Vitlin admitted he could not see any 'formalism in the opera of Muradeli' and wondered 'will I also be considered a formalist?'[116] This fear of producing unhealthy work was most widespread in cinema. Soviet film production was so limited in the late 1940s that the government had to resort to showing foreign-made movies once again. Party reports blamed lack of organization and quality scenarios, but it is clear that fear of criticism had encouraged the ultimate act of artistic avoidance: producing nothing at all.[117]

Some Soviet artists were also able to reappropriate the post-war ideological campaigns and exploit them for unintended outcomes. Shostakovich deployed the 'tactic' of reappropriation exquisitely when he refused an invitation to perform at an American Peace Congress because some of the repertoire suggested by his hosts had been criticized in the 1948 formalism decree. When news of this reached Stalin and Molotov, they personally intervened to reverse certain aspects of the decision and Shostakovich agreed to travel. Shostakovich had reappropriated the Peace Campaigns in order to undermine the campaigns in art or music.[118] Lachinov, a member of the Russian National Orchestra, also attempted to exploit the opportunities presented by the attack on Muradeli by appealing in March 1948 for greater prominence to be given to traditional instruments and styles such as those he played.[119] Alexander Werth also suggests that the manner in which Zakharov and others attacked the 'Big 4' (Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturian, and Shebalin) in 1948 reflected their personal 'hatred, intrigue and envy'.[120]

This description of Soviet scientists and artists deploying the 'little tactics of the habitat' has emphasized the strategic nature of this kind of behaviour. However, this is not to suggest that Soviet scientists and

[115] Sv. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 459, l. 23.
[116] Sv. Ibid., d. 636, l. 167.
[117] RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 427, ll. 52, 74–9.
[118] Tomoff, 'Most Respected Comrade . . .', 42–4.
[119] Let. RGASPI f, 17, op. 125, d. 636, ll. 184–95.
[120] Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 362.

artists were entirely immune to the language of Official Soviet Identity. At least some Soviet scientists understood their work as part of a global contest with foreign researchers. This seems to have been particularly the case amongst those working on the bomb project:

For all who realised the realities of the new atomic era, the creation of our own atomic weapons, the restoration of equilibrium became a categorical imperative. (Al'tschuler)

We believed our work was absolutely necessary as a means of achieving a balance in the world. (Sakharov)

The security of the country and patriotic duty demanded that we create the atomic bomb . . . The ancients had a point when they coined the phrase 'If you want peace, prepare for war'. (Dollenzhal)

Others such as Adamskii spoke in similar terms of the 'consciousness of performing a most important patriotic duty . . .', whilst Kurchatov often signed his memoranda, 'soldier Kurchatov'.[121] The post-war Soviet identity, which emphasized the struggle between Soviet and foreign science, provided genuine motivation to at least some Soviet scientists. When they deployed the 'tactics of the habitat', Soviet scientists and artists were not resisting, or stepping outside of, but rather embedding themselves within the environment of Soviet life. They were experts in Stalin-era living. When the official line on foreign culture and science changed, they fell back upon the tactical skills which had played a role in the development of many of their careers. Those who had only limited experience of Soviet life, such as the residents of the newly acquired western territories, were much more likely to behave untactically and expose themselves as non-natives of the habitat.

Post-war Official Soviet Identity and the wider population

The distinction between the intelligentsia and wider population in the post-war USSR was by no means total. However, it is clear that many ordinary citizens were not forced to engage in the same kinds of tactical behaviour in response to the early post-war ideological campaigns. Metal workers were not forced to root out Mendel-Morganists from their midst. The new version of Official Soviet Identity had a limited impact on their everyday lives before 1948. However, after 1948, with

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[121] Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb*, 204–6.

the crackdown on jazz, the new wave of films about Russo-Soviet scientific heroes, and the struggle to eradicate 'kowtowing' before the West, the new version of Official Soviet Identity began to have an impact beyond the scientific and artistic elites. Style, taste, and attitudes to American cars, rather than research and repertoire, were the battle-grounds on which these campaigns were fought on a popular level.

The Official Soviet Identity of this period, which asserted that Soviet civilization was superior to the capitalist West, had a profound influence over the thinking and behaviour of many Soviet citizens. This point was brought home in the unguarded comments of some female Soviet basketball players who visited France during the summer of 1946. The touring team conducted a spontaneous interview with *Elle* maga-zine without their commissar present. The absence of a commissar was no guarantee that the interview contained the women's unguarded perspectives. However, the substance of the interview was embarrassing enough for *Pravda* to demand that *Elle* publish an apology for falsifying its contents.[122] As *Elle* observed, the basketball players' answers were 'unpleasant but honest'. Mariia Kotlova admitted that, 'To speak openly, there was nothing that I liked in France.' Ol'ga Medvedeva remarked, 'What I have seen in France is not to my liking . . . Jazz? It is good enough for Americans but we love our civilization.' Ol'ga Voit declared, 'I love classical music and hate jazz . . . In Russia there is no shortage of chic things but the quality is much better.' Valentina Karkhinova complained that, 'They told me that French women are elegant. It is not true.' Only Zina Laguna and Liudmilla Zaitseva made positive comments about Parisian style.[123] The naive use of language which was appropriate for a domestic context, but entirely inappropri-ate for a foreign newspaper, reveals how deeply entrenched these women were within the rhetoric and cultural chauvinism of Official Soviet Identity.

A number of Soviet citizens also took offence at the foreign films that were screened in the post-war USSR. These isolated comments may well not be representative of the wider population, but they do provide an insight into the pride some individuals took in Soviet movies.[124] Vasili Ermolenko commented in his diary in March 1946, 'I saw the American

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[122] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 391, l. 81.   [123] Inf. Ibid., ll. 78–80.
[124] The fact that the Soviet government did not solicit comment on foreign films, and that some of these letters bordered on criticizing the government for being 'too soft' adds something to their authenticity as expressions of the views of the individuals concerned.

film *Edison*. It is the first foreign film which I have truly liked. It has no superficial chicness.'[125] In 1948 *Pravda* received a large number of objections to the domination of the Soviet screen by foreign films. Comrade Fedotov from Kiev wrote, 'I am angered to the depths of my soul by the demonstration on our Soviet screens of foreign films with intriguing names . . . We don't need old foreign junk.' Another writer described *The Rubber Hunter* as 'made with the dirty hands of the worshippers of the typical productions of Hollywood'.[126] A number of respondents to HIP also made disparaging comments about jazz music, which would hardly have endeared them to their interviewers:

Soviet people do not like jazz, they are not used to it.[127]

The Russians don't like this bum bum, tam tam.[128]

We do not want to hear some trashy American jazz; we have enough good music in the Soviet Union.[129]

Domestically produced classical music also remained hugely popular. The first performance of a Prokofiev symphony in December 1947 was a major event, with tickets exchanging hands on the black market for weeks beforehand.[130]

At least some Soviet citizens also took great pride in the achievements of Soviet science at this time. L. Kishnevskii wrote to Malenkov in 1947 suggesting that the USSR must invest in the future of its camera production. Failure to do so, he argued, 'might create a false impression about our incapacity to surpass the technical achievements of the leading foreign firms . . .'.[131] A number of my interview respondents also spoke with pride about the USSR's development of nuclear weapons in this period.[132] The successes of Soviet scientists in competition with foreign researchers, was a source of satisfaction to many late-Stalinist citizens. The prevalence of these attitudes draws attention to the discursive power of the Soviet propaganda machine, which structured the behaviour, speech, and perhaps thought of many Soviet citizens.

[125] Mem. Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik starshego serzhanta* (Belgorod, 2000). 245.

[126] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 92, l. 63.

[127] HIP. A. 1, 9. 78.

[128] HIP. A. 3, 25S, 38.

[129] HIP. A. 32, 1124, 37.

[130] Mem. Werth, *Russia: The Post-War Years*, 352.

[131] Let. GARF f. R5446, op. 80, d. 5, ll. 147–5. Once again, whether this is evidence of performance or 'thinking Bolshevik' is impossible to state.

[132] Int. Vasilii Ivanovich, Moscow, May 2004.

On the other hand, there is strong evidence from the NKVD *svodki* and state prosecution files that at least some individuals subverted the language of Official Soviet Identity in order to create a rhetoric of resistance. A large number of individuals were prosecuted in this period for praising specifically those aspects of American civilization that the Soviet press attacked. The democratic freedoms of the USA, where workers could strike and criticize their government, were frequent objects of praise. N.P.S. was prosecuted for saying 'Look in America there is democracy there you can speak out freely but in the Soviet Union they only talk about democracy, try to speak out and they will straight away arrest you.' Others, such as E.M.M., got in trouble for praising American living standards in comments such as, 'the average worker earns 400–500 roubles a month, however, they live worse than the unemployed citizens in America.'[133] Others were prosecuted for suggesting that 'There the workers work for one day a week and supply themselves with everything they need.'[134] The speed with which an American worker could save up to buy a suit and the omnipresence of cars for every worker in the USA were recurrent motifs.[135]

The NKVD *svodki* and state prosecution files from this period also demonstrate that at least some individuals doubted this idea of Soviet scientific greatness and a few also inverted it and transformed it into a rhetoric of resistance. A.Kh.N. told his fellow dock workers in the autumn of 1950 that the USSR would be defeated in a forthcoming war with the Anglo-Saxon powers 'because America and England have a strong fleet and aviation'.[136] V. V. Nezloa, of Shtepovskii *raion* Sumsk *oblast'*, explained to his friends that, 'The war will be an air war and America will win. The result will be decided by atoms and toxins.'[137] N.A.A., who claimed to have fought in Korea, was prosecuted in September 1951 for saying that American technological superiority was devastating Soviet troops. He claimed that: 'We have shot down 2–3 American planes but they have shot down 15–17 of

[133] Proc. GARF f. R8131a, op. 31a, d. 36308, l. 140; d. 36740, l. 7; d. 36324, l. 73.

[134] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 4557, l. 120.

[135] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36287, ll. 11–13; d. 36362, l. 22; Inf. RGASPI M. f. 1, op. 6, d. 467, l. 44.

[136] Proc. Ibid., d. 31773a, l. 15. See also: d. 36324, l. 72.

[137] Sv. TsDAHOU f. 1, op. 23, d. 4557, l. 102; d. 4490, l. 5; Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 289, l. 75.

ours . . . The pilots are dying like flies.'[138] M.O.A. went so far in 1951 as to say that 'Our academics can do nothing without the help of overseas, they can't discover anything.'[139] This somewhat dismissive view of Soviet technological greatness was embodied in the Khrush-chev-era joke that asked 'What are the key components of the Soviet space program? Answer: German technology, Czech uranium and Russian dog.'[140]

However, it is very difficult to assess how many of these comments really were examples of resistance. As argued in the Introduction, these comments, recorded by the state observing organs, were not the unoffi-cial 'truth' that Soviet citizens uncritically believed because it inverted the official 'lie'.[141] Instead many of them seem to have originated within the everyday practice of *bricolage*, whereby Soviet citizens fused infor-mation gathered from different sources. One of the most important sources in this period, that may well have accounted for the recurrence of ideas about the availability of suits and cars, was the Voice of America (VOA). The VOA was a Russian language radio broadcast that began in February 1947 and was soon joined by its British equivalent from the BBC. Listening to the VOA appears as part of the indictment for a very significant number of people in this period. However, it was rarely enough, in itself, to render individuals guilty. Their response to the broadcasts was more important. Indeed listening to the VOA or BBC seems to have been an extremely widespread practice. P.K.L. even brought his radio into work at the Kharkov Home of Officers and 'listened to these stations as long as the workers in the artistic unit did not prohibit it'. He defended himself by stating that 'I don't deny and did not deny that I listened to the radio transmissions of VOA but that is hardly a crime.'[142] These Russian language broadcasts provided an alternative source of information about the outside world. Many Soviet citizens drew information from there, as they did from the Embassy

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[138] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36284, l. 69. In reality Soviet aircraft acquitted themselves well in Korea: Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge Mass., 1996), 71.

[139] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 32456, ll. 17–8.

[140] Lewis, *Hammer And Tickle: A History Of Communism Told Through Communist Jokes* (London, 2008), 165. The dog referred to is Laika, who became the first animal to orbit the Earth in 1957.

[141] This is the approach taken by Magnusdottir: Magnusdottir, 'Keeping up Appear-ances: How the Soviet State Failed to Control Popular Attitudes Towards the United States of America 1945–1959', PhD Diss. University of North Carolina (2006).

[142] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 33063, ll. 10, 46.

journals whilst they were still available. They then deployed the 'tactic' of *bricolage* and fused it with information from other sources to create a composite, and sometimes disturbing from the point of view of the state, vision of the outside world . D.M.G. admitted that he had seen a 'portrait of a well dressed American worker' in *Amerika* and told his colleagues 'on this basis, that workers were better dressed there than our engineers'.[143] He was prosecuted for anti-Soviet agitation but that hardly seems to have been his intention. He was simply doing what many Soviet citizens did, gathering the information available to him about the outside world, engaging in *bricolage*, and passing it on. At least some of those recorded as 'resistors' in the *svodki* and procuracy files do not seem to have considered their behaviour in that light.

It was also entirely possible for Soviet citizens to point to capitalist scientific and technological success as a means of chiding the government, without losing faith in either Soviet power or socialism. Major Sakharov wrote to *Krasnaia Zvezda* in August 1946 to complain about the quality of provision for demobilized soldiers: 'In *Britanskii Soiuznik* there has been printed an article by Priestly (a famous English writer) about how they are providing for English demobilised soldiers. In particular he wrote that they are receiving orders to purchase (or for free receipt) of a civilian suit.'[144] He went on to describe how he had not even received a pair of shoes since his demobilization. An anonymous author to Kalinin in 1945 wrote in similar terms, claiming to be 'a young man who is loyal to the USSR' but was ashamed of the backwardness of the Soviet Union in comparison to the other countries he had seen. The author demanded that the government work harder to improve the conditions of the workers.[145] These authors were not objecting to socialism, or Stalin's government, but to the failures of socialism and Stalinism to meet the needs of the population. Some of those prosecuted for praising American living conditions also appealed against their convictions on the grounds that their complaints had been motivated by genuine material difficulties.[146] Individuals who spoke in terms that were antithetical to the rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity were not necessarily seeking to subvert Soviet power. Many of them

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[143] Proc. Ibid., d. 43281, l. 85.
[144] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 125, d. 425, ll. 158.
[145] Let. GARF f. 7523, op. 30, d. 790, ll. 19–22.
[146] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 36607, l. 14.

were simply trying to make sense of the world as best they could or attempting to spur the government on in its quest for material success.

The polarities of support or resistance, that define the state-created sources of this period, mask the ambiguities that shaped the way most Soviet citizens engaged with the new Official Soviet Identity of the early Cold War. Indeed it is doubtful that the complex terminology of the post-war ideological campaigns made much sense to many ordinary workers. Even highly educated students were unclear what 'idealism', 'Mendel-Morganism' and 'cosmopolitanism' actually meant.[147] I. I. Kantor, a Muscovite engineer, wrote to *Pravda* in the week following the Lysenko debate suggesting that, 'Readers unfamiliar with the serious questions of biology' would find it 'difficult to fully understand all the processes of the discussion'. He recommended publishing some articles in a 'sufficiently popular and accessible format'.[148] However, if nothing else, Soviet citizens were supposed to understand that the scientific produce of the USSR was spiritually and often practically superior to that produced in the capitalist West.

Many Soviet citizens' engagement with the rhetoric of scientific greatness was shaped by their personal experiences of direct interaction with foreign technology. As with the tanks and trucks in wartime, these personal experiences fed into the process of *bricolage* and often resulted in what the government regarded as a frustrating level of admiration for overseas-produced goods. Western-made medicines, in particular penicillin, were very popular with Soviet citizens who were prepared to pay high prices for them on the black market.[149] Contemporary evidence also suggests that the quality of Western automobiles remained an object of admiration in the post-war era. John Steinbeck's driver during his 1947 trip to the USSR would list off cars that he loved, '"Buick" he would say, "Cadillac, Lincoln, Pontiac, Studebaker," and he would sigh deeply. These were the only English words he knew.'[150] A significant number of those prosecuted for 'anti-Soviet agitation' in this period were supposed to have commented that 'Studebakers' were better than the Soviet Zis models.[151] However, such comments were rarely the centre of the case against them.

[147] Fürst, *'Stalin's Last Generation: Post-war Soviet Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism'*, (Oxford, 2010), 118–26, 134–43; 'Introduction', 8–9.
[148] Let. RGASPI f. 17, op. 132, d. 40, ll. 6–10.
[149] Inf. Ibid., op. 122, d. 283, l. 75.
[150] Steinbeck, *Russian Journal*, 113.
[151] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 72699, l. 109; d. 16088, l. 14.

Admiring American cars was not normally enough, on its own, to land you in jail. It was certainly not as serious as praising capitalist democracy or American living standards.

Some individuals' positive experiences of Anglo-American technology led them to assume that capitalism was synonymous with technological excellence. Captain Gnichev, of the Naval Medical Academy, complained during the K.R. discussions in 1947 that one of his students had commented about a high-quality new machine that, 'It is immediately clear it is foreign. If only we could make them like this!' It transpired to be Soviet-made.[152] The limitations and narrowness of the source base make it difficult to extrapolate too far with such references. However, it seems likely that, as they had during the war, at least some Soviet citizens concluded that pride in the Motherland and admiration for the American cars they had used were not incompatible.

A similar process often occurred when Soviet citizens interacted with artistic media from the capitalist world. The popularity of the Embassy Journals, foreign films, and jazz music was widely condemned at the discussions of the K.R. Affair. One speaker complained. 'We sometimes hear this kind of conversations amongst the youth . . . 'Are you going to the cinema tonight?' 'What is being shown there?' 'I don't know, some foreign film.' 'Ah then—let's go.'[153] Trophy films such as *Stagecoach*, *Sun Valley Serenade*, and *The Count of Monte Cristo* remained hugely popular amongst Soviet audiences into the post-war years.[154] The most popular film of the post-war era was the German made, *The Girl of My Dreams*, which created a sensation when it was released in the USSR in 1947. That year it outgrossed the top selling Soviet film by a factor of five to one.[155] One respondent to HIP remembered that cinema attendants had to be careful to clear the theatre after performances of foreign films, as some individuals attempted to stay behind in order to see the film again.[156] Discussants of the K.R. Affair complained of students

[152] Inf. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 6, d. 467, l. 128.

[153] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 1740, op. 1, d. 1112, l. 60.

[154] Fürst, 'Importance of Being Stylish: Youth, Culture and Identity in Late Stalinism', in J. Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia: Society between Reconstruction and Reinvention* (London, 2006), 213–14.

[155] M. Turovskaya, 'The Tastes of Soviet Moviegoers during the 1930s', in T. Lahusen and G. Kuperman, eds., *Late Soviet Culture: From Perestroika to Novostroika* (London, 1993), 104.

[156] HIP. A. 32, 1091, 27.

paying huge sums for black-market tickets to see *The Girl of My Dreams* and travelling long distances to see it.[157]

The condemning tone with which such behaviour was denounced creates the false impression that it was in some way subversive. These young people were simply watching, albeit with great enthusiasm, films that were being publicly shown in Soviet cinemas. The double-headed nature of Soviet rhetoric, which condemned enthusiasm for foreign movies but continued to show them, was brought into sharp focus in 1952 with the release of *Tarzan in New York*. The film generated the kind of sensational response that had not been seen since *The Girl of My Dreams*, with long queues for tickets and expressions of official concern.[158] Valentin Tikhonenko reminisced that, 'The first of May Demonstration was nothing in comparison with the queue for tickets when an American film opened.'[159] Sondra Kalniete's parents decided to call her the English-sounding name Sondra because her mother came across it in Theodore Dreiser's novel *An American Tragedy*. The name 'sounded so sublime, so unattainable!' to her mother. In the novel itself, written by a prominent left-wing author, Sondra was the daughter of a capitalist businessman, and the book was a damning indictment on the evils of capitalist civilization.[160] Kalniete's mother had not learned the appropriate lesson from the book, yet her enthusiasm for the name Sondra can hardly be counted subversive. The Soviet government itself had allowed *Tarzan* and *An American Tragedy* to be released in the USSR. The enthusiasm of young people for what the regime regarded as a necessary ideological compromise hardly constituted resistance.

Western styles of dancing also retained the affections of Soviet citizens despite official denunciations of swing and boogie-woogie. The USSR had been in the grip of a dance fever since the 1920s, and in the 1930s Moscow schoolgirls like Nina Kosterina returned home with 'aching feet' from huge street parties.[161] Red Army soldiers such as Vasilii Ermolenko and Pavel Iskovskii complained bitterly in their

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[157] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 1740, op. 1, d. 1112, l. 60; RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 6, d. 467, l. 70.

[158] Ball, *Imagining America*, 184.

[159] O. Guk, '*Tarzan* v svoem otechestve', *Pchela,* 11 (1997). V. Aksenov, trans., M. H. Heim and A. W. Bouis, *In Search of Melancholy Baby: A Russian in America* (New York, 1989)*,* 17.

[160] Mem. Kalniete, *With Dance Shoes in Siberian Snows* (Riga, 2006), 275.

[161] Mem. N. Kosterina, trans., M. Ginsberg, *The Diary of Nina Kosterina* (New York, 1968), 27, 41, 69.

wartime diaries about their failings at both folk and modern dance styles.[162] In the post-1948 period, club directors, such as those of Astrakhan *oblast'*, were strongly condemned for playing jazzy tunes and allowing Western dances. They had approached their responsibilities from a purely 'commercial' point of view.[163] Komsomol dances and public dance halls were hotly contested spaces, where official policy and popular taste jostled for space via the 'tactics of the habitat'. Komsomol dance organizers were forced to engage in *bricolage*, juggling the competing demands of official decrees and audience desires.[164] Ultimately it was very difficult to impose a particular style of dancing on a young crowd. Svetlana Ivanovna explained to me how much she had enjoyed Komsomol dances in the post-war years. 'They were fun. . . . alcohol was banned but we smuggled it in anyway and got drunk. [What kinds of dances did you dance?] Twist, ballroom, foxtrot, they were banned but we all did them. Boogie woogie was banned as well but we did it all the same.'[165] Svetlana Ivanovna and her friends had reappropriated these Komsomol events into arenas for the expression of their personal, though officially disavowed, tastes.

Soviet young people also demonstrated a worrying passion for foreign goods and clothing in the post-war era. A number of the discussants of the K.R. Affair noted that young people were prone to 'worshipping' 'foreign knick knacks'.[166] The popularity of clothing from overseas was, to some extent, a result of Soviet shortages. As Svetlana Ivanovna explained, 'we were making nothing of our own so they were very popular'.[167] However, the popularity of foreign clothes in the post-war period went beyond mundane necessity. Lieutenant Gritsai observed during the K.R. discussion in the Odessa garrison that, 'We have some who love to boast about foreign pens, knives, or any other kind of similar thing considering these trifles to be markers of high-bourgeois culture.'[168] Suits, watches, and shoes from overseas were

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[162] Mem. P. Iskovskii, *Stalingrad v serdtse moem* (Volgograd, 2002), 205–6; Ermolenko, *Voennyi dnevnik,* 97.

[163] Inf. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 6, d. 467, l. 113.

[164] Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish', 211–13.

[165] Int. Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004.

[166] Inf. GAOPDiFAO f. 1740, op. 1, d. 1112, l. 60.

[167] Int. Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004. On the shortage of clothing in the post-war USSR see: Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Late-Stalinism: Labour and the Restoration of the Stalinist System After World War II* (Cambridge, 2002), 42–3.

[168] Inf. RGASPI M-f. 1, op. 6, d. 467, l. 127.

particularly popular.[169] Prior to his arrest in 1949, A.A.A. ran a thriving business in Odessa selling American-made clothes and jewellery purchased from foreign sailors.[170]

The enthusiasm of many Soviet citizens, particularly young people, for foreign cultural products such as music, movies, and clothing generated disquiet amongst Bolshevik administrators during the post-war turn against capitalist civilization. However, to describe it as evidence of resistance against the Soviet state would be over-simplistic. When they had the personal opportunity to interact with foreign-made culture they judged it on its merits. Overseas-produced films, clothing, and music provided light relief in the otherwise bleak circumstances of the post-war USSR. They were also enjoyed a certain 'foreign chic' which added glamorous, but not necessarily subversive, overtones.

The most widely discussed example of the tactical negotiation of the post-war ideological campaigns, were the young people who structured their entire identities in relation to these glamorous overtones. The *stiliagi* (stylish people) were a largely urban youth subculture who appeared in the late 1940s.[171] Their existence and behaviour provide a clear example of the subtlety with which the post-war shift in Official Soviet Identity could be negotiated.

V.N.S., D.V.N., Ch.K.Sh., A.N.K., E.I.M., A.V.D., and I.V.K., were a group of musicians and students in Moscow who hung around the Aurora, Metropol, and National hotels drinking, partying, and dancing to jazz music. They were self-identifying *stiliagi* who strove 'above all in clothing and music to resemble Americans'. The group were devotees of jazz and had developed their own 'eccentric' dancing style. When they weren't hanging around glamorous restaurants they would walk along Gorky Street, which they dubbed 'Broadway', shouting 'America! Truman! Hoorah! Style!'[172] This Moscow circle, arrested in April 1950, bore all the hallmarks of many other *stiliagi* groups in the late-Stalin years. *Stiliagi* commonly sported padded shoulders in their jackets, broad ties with American motifs, narrow trousers, turned-back cuffs, and thick-soled shoes. Their haircuts were often swept back from

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[169] Inf. RGASPI f.17, op. 122, d. 273, ll. 7–8. Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish', 209.

[170] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 31773p, ll. 37–8.

[171] See: Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish', and M. Edele, 'Strange Young Men in Stalin's Moscow: The Birth and life of the *Stiliagi*, 1945–1953', *Jarhbucher fur Geschichte Osteuropas*, 50.1 (2002), 37–61.

[172] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 19091, ll. 56–134.

the front and curled at the back, in the style of Johnny Weissmuller from the 1951–2 *Tarzan* movies.[173] Female *stiliagi* were less widespread and usually wore short skirts and heavy lipstick.[174] The groups made a point of loving jazz, dancing the foxtrot and boogie woogie, and littering their speech with English words such as 'Cool' and 'Baby'.[175]

The term *stiliagi* was coined by the Soviet press and the 'stylish youths' were publicly criticized in the late-Stalin years. In March 1949 *Krokodil* compared them to heads of wheat that stand taller than the rest in the field but have no corn in them. Its description of a pair of young *stiliagi* stressed their ridiculous clothing and effete mannerisms.[176] The journal's depiction of two *stiliagi* dancing closely mirrored the almost deformed postures shown in an October 1951 *Ogonëk* article about American soldiers in Britain.[177] *Komsomolskaia Pravda* also joined the attack opining that

narrow pants do not make a *stiliaga* but those who along with narrow pants narrow their honour and their conscience. These people parade their scorn for work, for life, for all that is holy . . . Like a case of the flu the frightening thing is the risk of complications. The complications of the *stiliagi* I consider parasitism, hooliganism, and banditism.[178]

Such heavy-handed criticism could create the false impression that the *stiliagi* were a coherent trans-local social movement. The styles and subcultures associated with a *stiliaga* lifestyle were, however, very localized. Vladimir Feiertag describes how in late-Stalinist Leningrad 'each block, each region had its own hero and *stiliaga* whom it admired'.[179] The *stiliagi* of Riga dressed in a very different style from those of Moscow, sporting caps and jackets with zips rather than suits and ties.[180] Vasili Aksenov's friends in Kazan had done 'everything they could to ape American fashion'. However, his first contact with Moscow *stiliagi* wearing 'genuine article, made in the USA' clothing, came as

[173] Mem., A. Kozlov, *Kozel Na Sakse* (Moscow, 1998), 78–81.
[174] Ball, *Imagining America,* 185, Edele, 'Strange Young Men', 43.
[175] Mem. Chernov, 'Istoriia istinnogo dzhaza'; M. Ruthers, 'The Moscow Gorky Street in Late Stalinism: Space, History and Lebenswelten', in Fürst, ed., *Late Stalinist Russia,* 260–2.
[176] *Krokodil*, 10.3.1949, p. 10.
[177] *Ogonëk*, 10.1951: 44, p. 13.
[178] Zubkova, *Russia After the War,* 192–3.
[179] Mem. Chernov, 'Istoriia istinnogo dzhaza'.
[180] A. Troitsky, *Back in the USSR: The True Story of Rock in Russia* (London, 1987), 4.

quite a shock.[181] The *stiliagi* were also not the first young people to face criticism for their style of hair, clothing, and make-up in the USSR. 'Flappers' had attracted censure in the 1920s, and Nina Kosterina wrote scathingly about the 'Young Ladies' in her class with 'Hair fluffed up (a permanent), stocking torn, narrow skirt (latest style!), circle of interests as narrow as her skirt' in 1938.[182] A group of senior-year students at the 1st Secondary School in Riga in 1947 also exhibited many of the characteristics later associated with the *stiliagi*. They were 'fascinated with foreign rubbish' and constantly whistled German tunes 'with a foxtrot motif'. Their language was littered with Spanish, English, and German words and they wore their hair long, with stylized moustaches and rings on their fingers. At school dances these students performed 'the perverted German dance—swing'.[183]

What distinguished the *stiliagi* from these other groups was their almost exclusive reliance on America as a palette from which to construct their identities.[184] The *stiliagi* were generational rebels, self-consciously rejecting the masculinity of the wartime *frontoviki* or the conformity of their parents: many of them were 'Golden Youths' whose parents were members of the Soviet elite.[185] What tied them all together, however, was the aspiration to dance and dress to the same American ideal. In reality, they had very little idea what American young people were like. Their *Tarzan* haircuts and shoulder pads mimicked an imaginary America, rather than their contemporaries across the Atlantic. Nonetheless, within the symbolic world of post-war Stalinism, they were associating themselves with the glamorous West in a manner which was instantly recognizable to everyone around them.

The *stiliagi*'s decision to dress, dance, and talk in a manner which explicitly associated them with the despised Cold War enemy might be considered an act of anti-Soviet subversion. They drew on the iconography of America, in part, because it was the target of official opprobrium.[186] In that sense, the celebration of all things Western and American was a

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[181] Mem. Aksenov, *Melancholy Baby,* 13.

[182] Mem. Kosternia, *Diary of Nina Kosterina* 100; A. Gorsuch, 'Flappers and Fox-trotters: Soviet Youth in the "Roaring Twenties"', *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, 1102 (1994).

[183] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 283, l. 105.

[184] Mem. Kozlov suggests that there were some who invoked British, Italian, or Social Democratic styles but this was certainly much less common: Kozlov, *Kozel*, 82–3.

[185] Mem. Aksenov, *Melancholy Baby*, 12; Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish', 224; Edele, 'Strange Young Men', 38–9.

[186] J. Hough, *Russia and the West: Gorbachev and the Politics of Reform* (London, 1990), 28.

direct challenge to the language and categories of the official press. Aksenov described his *stiliaga* experience in these terms: 'When you think about it the *stiliagi* were the first dissenters.' He claims that they were caught up in the 'romance of counterrevolution'.[187] Valentin Tikhonenko shared that assessment, describing his *stiliaga* lifestyle in the later 1950s as a 'sharp political protest'.[188]

However, there may be an element of romantic post-rationalization in both Aksenov's and Tikhonenko's assessments. Their lifestyles did not necessarily put them outside of the Soviet habitat, but rather on a continuum with many other Soviet young people who enjoyed American movies or jazz, without dressing as *stiliagi*. If enjoying foreign cultural media was resistance, then almost all Soviet youths were resistors. Many *stiliagi* only 'styled' at the weekend and lived as conventional Soviet citizens the rest of the time. Not many of them took the definitive step of changing their hairstyle on a permanent basis.[189] Natan Leites recalled that his appreciation for jazz in the 1950s did not undermine his sense of affiliation to the Soviet state: 'The music was attractive. I was a pretty "red" person, or pink. At any rate I believed in socialism.'[190]

The *stiliagi* lifestyle was largely a social, rather than political statement. Out of 20,000 case summaries in the state procuracy files from 1945–53, the term 'style' only appears twice; jazz appears once. The Moscow circle described above are the only group of *stiliagi* in the entire collection, and their prosecution may well have been launched in connection with the attempts by some members to find employment at the US Embassy.[191] *Stiliagi* were more likely to be confronted in the street by regular Soviet citizens than the police.[192] Valentin Tikhonenko claims that the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and *militsia* related to them as 'naughty children'. They did not 'beat people for having thin trousers'.[193] Boris Pustyntsev's description of his run-ins with the local Komsomol, who patrolled the streets cutting the hair of *stiliagi*, sound more like youthful inter-gang violence than political protest.[194]

[187] Mem. Aksenov, *Melancholy Baby,* 18–19.
[188] Mem. Guk, '*Tarzan* v svoem otechestve'.
[189] Mem. Kozlov, *Kozel*, 81.
[190] Mem. Chernov, 'Klub Kvadrat: Dzhaz Shmaz i normalnye lyudi', *Pchela,* 11 (St Petersburg: October-November 1997).
[191] Proc. GARF f. R8131, op. 31a, d. 19091.
[192] Troitsky, *Back in the USSR,* 3.
[193] Guk, '*Tarzan* v svoem otechestve'.
[194] F. Kaplan, 'Soprotivlenie na nevskom prospekte', *Pchela*, 11 (St Petersburg, 1997).

The *stiliagi* inverted societal conventions primarily in order to assert their distinctiveness from other Soviet citizens.[195] Their invocation of American style and public self-parading expressed their disdain for the conventionality of their peers, rather than a renunciation of the values of the Soviet system. Aksenov described the experience as a 'great carnival', Valentin Tikhonenko claimed that the 'primary issue was spectacle', and Kozlov claims that the main purpose was to show how different you were from the rest of the population.[196] His father disapproved of his lifestyle but was also prepared to buy some of the clothes he wore; dances such as 'foxtrots and tangos were not quite banned but not recommended'.[197] The centrality of social rather than political comment is also demonstrated by the emergence of new subcultures in the early 1950s, as the *stiliagi* became increasingly 'mainstream'. The 'Shtatniki', whose name derived from the Russian for United States, were a newly exclusive group who attempted to recapture the counter-cultural spirit of the early *stiliagi*.[198] When the rock movement arrived in the 1960s, the *stiliagi* became clichéd and outmoded.[199] The Soviet rock movement was a 'visceral rather than political experience' and, in the same way, the *stiliagi* were communicating primarily with their peers rather than making political statements about Soviet power.[200]

If there was a political element to the *stiliagi* lifestyle it was in the assertion that their conduct was not political. They enjoyed American style, music, and dance without stepping outside of the Soviet habitat. It is tempting to argue that their behaviour was a struggle over the boundaries between public and private.[201] Some of my interview respondents, both *stiliagi* and non-*stiliagi* remembered post-war events in these terms.

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[195] On the place of shopping and clothing within identity construction see: A. Tomlinson, ed., *Consumption, Identity, and Style: Marketing, Meanings, and the Packaging of Pleasure* (London, 1990).

[196] Mem. Aksenov, *Melancholy Baby,* 17; Guk, '*Tarzan* v svoem otechestve'; Kozlov, *Kozel,* 76–84.

[197] Mem. Kozlov, *Kozel,* 70, 80–1.

[198] Mem. Ibid. 82–3; Fürst 'Importance of Being Stylish', 218.

[199] Troitsky, *Back in the USSR,* 12–13; Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (Oxford, 1990).

[200] Ryback, *Rock Around the Bloc,* 34.

[201] On the challenges of using the 'public' 'private' dichotomy within Soviet history see: M. Garcelon, 'The Shadow of the Leviathan: Public and Private in Communist and Post-Communist Society', in J. Weintraub and K. Kumar, eds., *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy* (Chicago, 1997), 303–31.

It was totally stupid. An instrument cannot be bad; it can only be played badly.[202]

It was idiocy . . . Only here in Russia did they try to tell people what music they were allowed to dance to.[203]

Music and dancing was my space and nobody can take it away from you.[204]

However, the parading nature of the *stiliagi* lifestyle suggests that their behaviour would be better described as a contest over the boundaries of Sovietness. They were not retreating from the view of Soviet power into private space. Instead they visibly asserted that the definition of what could and could not be Soviet should be broad enough to embrace their lifestyle.

SOVIET *MENTALITÉ* DURING THE EARLY COLD WAR: FOREIGN CHIC AND FOREIGN QUALITY

Post-war cultural and scientific disengagement from the Western world did not remove America and the West from the symbolic arena of Soviet life. On the contrary, America, in particular, was discussed more often and with greater vigour in the Soviet press once it became an object of denunciation in the post-war years. American characters became archetypal negative types in Soviet movies at the same time as Soviet citizens were being isolated from real Americans themselves. Western and American culture became more, rather than less, important within the symbolic and cultural world of late-Stalinism.

The appeal of capitalist-made movies, music, clothes, and cars reflected to some degree the scarcity of these resources in the post-war Stalin-era. However, by physically isolating its population from capitalist culture, the Soviet regime contributed to its exotic associations. Wartime contact with Anglo-American servicemen and mass media had reinforced pre-existing ideas about the glamorous nature of the Western world. These associations did not simply evaporate in the face of the new version of Official Soviet Identity. For some individuals this resulted in little more than simply enthusiasm for foreign

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[202] Int. Igor Pavlovich, Moscow, August 2005.
[203] Int. Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004.
[204] Int. Kira Pavlovna, Moscow, August 2005.

movies. Others, in the comparative isolation of the post-1947 USSR, seized on any means they could in order to associate themselves with the glamorous capitalist West. The *stiliagi*'s Tarzan hairstyles asserted the glamorous exclusivity and distinctiveness of both the individual and their social group. America became a marker for exoticism, despite, or maybe because of, the limited information they actually had about it.[205]

The comments of several individuals at the K.R. discussions demonstrated an awareness that the success of foreign films relied to some extent on these glamorous associations. V. G. Skokorokhod observed that, 'Amongst us many people praise the external beauty of foreign films...'[206] Comrade Kabanov of Minsk noted that amongst the youth you often heard comments like, 'They have the ability to take a light theme, entertaining people, helping them to relax, they are able to foster in a person a sense of recognition of the beautiful.'[207] A number of my interview respondents reiterated the same theme. Natalia Leonidovna reminisced about foreign movies that, '... everyone wanted to look at something beautiful and bright, it was pleasant'.[208] Svetlana Ivanovna also remembered that '... the foreign films had beautiful costumes and people in them. They were very good.'[209] One respondent to HIP described how they had loved foreign films when living in the USSR. However, they lost some of their appeal once the respondent emigrated to the USA.[210] The world beyond the border is often imbued with exotic and exciting associations and foreign chic became a powerful and exotic aspect of the late-Stalinist collective *mentalité*.[211]

It is also clear that, at least some Soviet citizens continued to assume that the West was technologically more advanced than the USSR.

[205] On the exotic other, see Arenas, *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil* (London, 2003); Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400–1600* (Ithaca, 1988).

[206] Inf. RGASPI f. 17, op. 122, d. 285, l. 60.

[207] Inf. RGASPI M. f. 1, op. 6, d. 468, l. 10.

[208] Int. Natalia Leonidovna, Moscow, May 2004.

[209] Int. Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004. See also: Fürst, 'The Importance of Being Stylish', 213–14.

[210] HIP. A. 32, 1123, 18.

[211] See: M. R. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing 400–1600* (Ithaca, 1988), 47–65; S. Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (London, 1994), 23–4.

This idea was not, in itself, contrary to at least some of the comments of the official press, which called for improved output to catch up with and overtake the West. Nonetheless, the idea of Western technological excellence could also be employed as a language with which to critique the Soviet regime. The widespread nature of this idea of Western scientific brilliance may have owed something to the influence of *Amerika*, *Britanskii Soiuznik*, and the VOA. However, it also dated back to the nineteenth century and earlier.[212] The post-war ideological campaigns were aimed, in part, against this long-term assumption about Russo-Soviet technological backwardness. They were at least partially successful in reinforcing civic pride in the achievements of the Soviet science. However, the idea that the Western world was technologically further ahead continued to influence the thinking of many Soviet citizens from scientists, who desired access to foreign research, to admirers of American trucks. It was not exclusively associated with resistance, but existed in an uncertain relationship with Official Soviet Identity, as an important aspect of the late-Stalinist collective *mentalité*.

CONCLUSION

The actions of Soviet scientists, musicians, dancers, cinema watchers, and even counter-cultural *stiliagi* demonstrated the whole array of 'tactics of the habitat' in operation. Once again this behaviour almost always implanted the individual within the infrastructure of Soviet power more than it extracted them from it. In order to reappropriate an ideological campaign, or delicately balance the demands of official policy and popular taste at a jazz concert, one had to be a highly skilled resident of the late-Stalinist 'habitat'. Even the *stiliagi*, who ostentatiously inverted official rhetoric, did so in public and on show before their peers. Fashionable young people, Soviet scientists, and jazz lovers lived their lives creatively and carefully within the confines of Soviet power. Their strategic behaviour was the mechanism by

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[212] Rogger, 'America Enters the 20th Century: The View from Russia', in I. Qverbach, A. Hillgruber, and G. Schramm, eds., *Felder und Vorfelder Russicher Geschichte: Studein zu Ehren von Peter Scheibert* (Rambach, 1985), 165–7; Borisov et al., *Rossiia i Zapad*, 142.

which the Soviet state's attempts to refashion Official Soviet Identity
were embedded within everyday life. As with the Struggle for Peace,
the post-war ideological campaigns were often most popular amongst
those who reappropriated them for other objectives, such as advancing
their career or launching a wholesale attack on the Jewish popula-
tion.[213] Soviet propaganda campaigns seem to have been most suc-
cessful when they were open to multiple interpretations, and perhaps
even deliberate misinterpretations.

[213] Yekelchyk, 'The Civic Duty to Hate: Stalinist Citizenship as Political Practice and
Civic Emotion (Kiev 1943–53)', *Kritika*, 7.3 (2006), 554.

Conclusion

What it meant to be Soviet changed dramatically between 1939 and 1953. The Nazi–Soviet Pact, Great Patriotic War, occupation of Eastern Europe, Cold War, and the rise of communist China could not fail to transform Soviet self-understanding. Official Soviet Identity on the international stage was primarily articulated in two spheres: the diplomatic posture of the USSR and the global significance of Soviet civilization. America and Britain played leading roles within that official version of what it meant to be Soviet throughout this period.

By the end of the 1940s a new version of Official Soviet Identity had crystallized that established the broad parameters for the relationship between the USSR and the outside world until the end of the Bolshevik project. At its heart was a diplomatic vision of the USSR as a global superpower, standing up for peace and justice in a divided world. It also contrasted the greatness of Soviet science and art with the economic exploitation and spiritual emptiness of the capitalist West. This version of Soviet identity proved successful and resilient.[1] When they looked beyond their borders, Soviet citizens, of whatever nationality, derived status from being members of a great, peace-loving state that extended its patronage to the world's oppressed.

One of the core arguments of this book has been that the official rhetoric of Soviet identity played a powerful role in shaping the way ordinary citizens imagined the world around them. A small number of individuals understood the world exclusively through the categories of state-sponsored films, plays, and newspapers. An equally small number of individuals sought to subvert the rhetoric of the Soviet state and 'resist' Soviet power. Most people did neither.

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[1] See Yurchak on the popularity of Soviet and socialist values in the late-Soviet years: Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, 2006), 8.

The vast majority of ordinary citizens responded to the ebb and flow of Official Soviet Identity by deploying a number of creative 'tactics of the habitat'. They melded together information from official sources, foreign radio stations, rumours, and pre-existing assumptions about international affairs via the 'tactic' of *bricolage*. They also reappropriated the campaigns associated with Official Soviet Identity to gain promotion, pursue vendettas, or express their personal grief; and they deployed the tactics of avoidance and performance in order to create the impression of conformity whilst pursing their personal agendas. This list of 'tactics' is not exhaustive. However, it provides a model for how Soviet citizens engaged with Soviet power that escapes the false dichotomy of 'support' and 'resistance'.

This creative, tactical behaviour did not undermine the Bolshevik project in Stalin's time. It took place within the Soviet 'habitat' and it defined what it meant to 'be Soviet' just as much as the rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity. Indeed 'tactical' behaviour reinforced Soviet power in this period. It made up for shortfalls in food, friendship, entertainment, and information. State-sponsored mass media and the 'tactics of the habitat' were not necessarily in competition.

However, the 'tactics of the habitat' did eventually play their role in the destruction of the USSR. The seeds of that collapse were sown, to some extent, via the steady erosion of the authority of the Soviet mass media. The volte-face of the Nazi–Soviet Pact in 1939, failure to admit to the difficulties of the Finnish War, denial that war was imminent in June 1941, refusal to discuss the defeats at the front in 1941–2, and claims that the USSR were not in any way engaged in the Korean War steadily undermined the credibility of the Soviet press. This process was often reinforced by the contact ordinary Soviet citizens had with the outside world after 1939. Whilst it cannot be demonstrated empirically, it is clear that by 1953 ordinary Soviet citizens relied more on information obtained by word-of-mouth when constructing their image of the outside world. The Soviet press retained an important place within their thinking: there was no simple dichotomy between rumour 'truth' and press 'lies'. However, its authority was starting to ebb away. As a result, Soviet citizens resorted more and more to 'tactics' like performance, *bricolage*, and avoidance.[2] By the 1980s rumours, rock and roll, and

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[2] Yurchak talks of a 'performative shift' that began in the 1950s. This process began earlier and involved a much wider series of 'tactics of the habitat'. Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 26.

reappropriation had grown out of all proportion. In time the 'tactics of the habitat' simply overwhelmed the government-sponsored version of reality. Rather than the 'habitat' defining the 'tactics', the 'tactics' began to structure the 'habitat' of Soviet life. Eventually the 'habitat' collapsed.

The weakest link within the rhetoric of Official Soviet Identity transpired to be the Cold War language of the USSR as a civilization. The language of peace, might, and patronage was broadly successful. Certain aspects of it have outlived the USSR in the rhetoric of contemporary Russian foreign policy. However, the cultural aspect of what it meant to be Soviet was less compelling. In that regard, the Soviet leadership were unfortunate to find themselves confronted by America, rather than Britain, as their post-war opponent. America presented a much more difficult enemy. American movies, music, and culture exerted a powerful appeal throughout the world in the second half of the twentieth century.[3] When Soviet citizens listened to rock and roll, and enjoyed American-made movies they were not resisting the Soviet state. However, over time such behaviour sapped the power of official claims about the greatness of Soviet civilization. America and American civilization presented a much more challenging opponent than dour perfidious old Albion.

The collapse of the USSR was not brought about by nationalism. Nationalists simply exploited the collapse of a bigger supranational idea of Sovietness. Supranational states such as Britain, China, or the USSR are forced to present a compelling ongoing narrative of what it means to 'be British', 'be Chinese', or 'be Soviet'. The diplomatic posture of those states, and the vigour of their shared civilization, need to be constantly affirmed. As long as the language of Britishness, Chineseness, or Sovietness is persuasive, then alternative micro-identities can complement, rather than compete with, the bigger supranational identity. When that wider rhetoric starts to fail, alternative micro-identities such as Scottish, Uighur, or Ukrainian nationalism are ripe for exploitation by those who wish to resist the supranational state. By 1991 Eastern Europe was no longer under Soviet benefaction, American culture was in the ascendant, and the USSR's economic infrastructure was groaning. At that point the population of the USSR, or at least some of their leaders, decided that they no longer wanted to be Soviet. Nationalism was the beneficiary rather than the cause of the USSR's fall.

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[3] R. Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, 1994).

The collapse of Bolshevism rendered the finely honed 'tactics of the habitat' irrelevant. In order to succeed in Soviet society, academics, writers, war veterans, and musicians, built their careers on their 'tactical' as well as professional abilities. They were the ones who lost most when the USSR collapsed. Those who succeeded in the 1990s were those who learned most quickly how to deploy the tactics of the new, non-communist 'habitat'. Being Soviet normally proved to be of little use in a post-Soviet world.

APPENDIX

Interview Technique and Questions Used

Respondents were told I was interested in 'culture, society, and life 1939–53'. They were asked to narrate their life experiences in this period for up to an hour. A set series of fixed topics were then discussed before the interview was allowed to develop its own momentum. At the beginning of each section the questions were intentionally 'open' and informational such as: 'Do you remember any films that were showing in the post-war period?' The interviews focused on this kind of discussion, rather than large political themes. However, a number of the respondents were keen to discuss their attitudes to political events a long time ago. Their answers are only cited when they triangulate strongly with a number of other source groups.

This 'semi-structured' technique allows for a two-way dialogue which was vital to establishing trust with the respondents.[1] Most interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents. Their anonymity is preserved through the use of their first name and patronymic but not surname. A total of twenty-four interviews were conducted, lasting between one and three hours. Respondents were found via various routes. Some were friends or personal contacts. Two institutions: *Memorial,* a Moscow-based human rights agency which provides support for victims of Soviet political repression, and the Moscow Veterans Society also provided a number of contacts. The two organizations were chosen, in part, because they served very different groups and so might balance each other out. Three further interviews were conducted with British veterans of the Arctic convoys to Northern Russia for Chapter 3. Their details were obtained through the 'North Russia Club'.

Respondents were asked questions in three sections.

LIFE

Where were you and what were you doing during the war and post-war era?
How did life change for you after the war was over?

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[1] On semi-structured interviewing, see B. Mikkelsen, *Methods for Development Work and Research: A Guide for Practitioners* (London, 1995), 98–115.

Culture

Do you remember any films that were showing in the war and post-war period in the USSR?
What music do you remember from this period? Did you enjoy dancing to it and if so what style?
Did you have any friends who were *stiliagi* in this period?

Society

What was it like living in the USSR in the post-war period?
How did you hope life would be after the war?

These initial questions provided a launchpad for more detailed discussion that often began by asking them to expand on comments they had made earlier.

List of Respondents

Vladimir Andreevich, Moscow, April 2004.
Ol'ga Mikhailovna, Moscow, April 2004.
Al'dona Vladimirovna, Moscow, April 2004.
Viktor Iosifovich, Moscow, May 2004.
Mikhail Borisovich, Moscow, May 2004.
Vasilii Ivanovich, Moscow, May 2004.
Il'ian Lvoevich. Moscow, May 2004.
Natalia Leonidovna, Moscow, May 2004.
Galina Sergeevna, Moscow, May 2004.
Vladimir Mikhailovich. Moscow, May 2004.
Igor Pavlovich, Moscow, June 2004.
Andrei Ivanovich, Moscow, July 2004.
Svetlana Ivanovna, Moscow, July 2004.
Nikolai Vasil'evich Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
Igor Andreevich, Arkhangel'sk, August, 2004.
Aleksander Grigorevich, August 2004.
Nadezhda Pavlovna, Arkhangel'sk, August 2004.
Boris Romanovich, Moscow, September 2004.
Viktor Dmitrovich, Moscow, September 2004.
Sergei Vladimirovich, Moscow, August 2005.
Liia Borisovna, Moscow, August 2005.
Mira Borisovna, Moscow, August 2005.

Nina Ivanovna, Moscow, August 2005.
Kira Pavlovna, Moscow, August 2005.
Percy Price, Oxford, September 2005.
Ronald Phelps, Oxford, September 2005.
Robert Turly, Oxford, September 2005.

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f. R5446 op. 80 Letters to People's Commissar Malenkov
f. R5446 op. 82 Letters to People's Commissar Molotov
f. R6991 op. 1, 2 Council for Religious Affairs to Sovmin
f. R7523 op. 29, 30 Letters to President of the Supreme Soviet Kalinin
f. R7523 op. 31, 32, 39 Letters to President of the Supreme Soviet Shvernik
f. R7523 op. 46 Commission for Foreign Affairs and Nationalities to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
f. R7576 op. 2 Committee for International Sporting Connections
f. R8131 op. 37; R8131a, op. 31 State Prosecutor of the USSR
f. R8581 op. 1 Sovinformburo
f. R9396 op. 1, 2 Ministry of Higher Education
f. R9170 op. 1 Editors of the Newspaper *Slaviane*
f. R9401 op. 2 Special Reports to Stalin
f. R9501 op. 7 Red Cross and Red Crescent Society of the USSR
f. R9526 op. 1 Council for Repatriation Affairs
f. R9539 op. 1 Soviet Committee for the Defence of Peace
f. R9547, op. 1 All Union Society for Spreading Political and Scientific Knowledge (Znanie)
f. R9612, op. 1 Inturist

RUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVE OF SOCIAL-POLITICAL HISTORY. ROSSIISKII GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV SOTSIAL'NO-POLITIHCESKOI ISTORII (RGASPI)

f. 17, op. 88 Central Committee Department for Organisation and Instruction.
f. 17, op. 122 Central Committee Department for Checking Central Organs.
f. 17, op. 125, 132 Central Committee Department for Agitation and Propaganda.

f. 82, op. 2 Letters to Molotov
f. 588, op. 11 Letters to Stalin
f. 599 op. 1 Editors of *Bolshevik/Kommunist*
M-f. 1, op. 3 Komsomol Central Committee Buro
M-f. 1, op. 5 Komsomol Central Committee Department for Special Gatherings
M-f. 1, op. 6 Komsomol Central Committee Department of Organs
M-f. 1, op. 32 Komsomol Central Commitee Department for Agitation and Propaganda
M-f. 1, op. 46 Komsomol Central Committee Department for Students.
M-f. 4, op. 1 Antifascist Committee of Soviet Youth

RUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVE OF RECENT HISTORY. ROSSIISKII GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV NOVEISHEI ISTORII (RGANI)

f. 5, op. 15 Central Committee Department for Party, Trade Union, and Komsomol Organs
f. 5, op. 16 Central Committee Department for Agitation and Propaganda
f. 5, op. 30 Central Committee General Department

RUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVE OF LITERATURE AND ART. ROSSIISKII GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV LITERATURY I ISKUSSTVA (RGALI)

f. 600, op. 1 Editors of the Newspaper *Krokodil*
f. 1702, op. 4 Editors of the Journal *Novy Mir*
f. 3005, op. 1 Personal fond of Leonid Utesov

STATE ARCHIVE OF ARKHANGEL'SK *OBLAST'*. GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV ARKHANGEL'SKOI OBLASTI (GAAO)

f. 1649, op. 1, 2 International Club, Arkhangel'sk
f. 4816, op. 1 Arkhangel'sk *Oblast'* Department of Culture Lecture Buro
f. 5790, op. 3 Arkhangel'sk *Oblast'* Executive Committee Department of Cultural Enlightenment

STATE ARCHIVE OF SOCIAL-POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND FORMATIONS OF ARKHANGEL'SK *OBLAST'*. GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV OBSHCHESTVENNO-POLITICHESKIKH DVIZHENII I FORMIROVANII ARKHANGEL'SKOI OBLASTI (GAOPDIFAO)

f. 3, op. 1 Central Committee, Maimaksanskii *raion*, Arhkangel'sk city
f. 296, op. 1, 2 Central Committee, Arkhangel'sk *oblast'*
f. 834, op. 2 Central Committee, Arkhangel'sk city
f. 1740, op. 1 Komsomol Central Committee, Arkhangel'sk *oblast'*
f. 8626, op. 1 Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* Society for the Spreading of Scientific and Political Knowledge (*Znanie*)
f. 8627, op. 1 Arkhangel'sk *oblast'* Committee for the Defence of Peace

STATE ARCHIVE OF THE AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC OF CRIMEA. GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV V AVTONOMNOI RESPUBLIKE KRYM (GAARK)

f. 1, op. 1 Central Committee Crimea *oblast'*

CENTRAL ARCHIVE OF PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS OF UKRAINE. TSENTRAL'NYI DERZHAVNYI ARKHIV HROMADS'KYKH OB'IEDNAN' UKRAINY (TSDAHOU)

f. 1, op. 23, 24 Central Committee Ukraine
f. 1, op. 70 Central Committee Ukraine Department for Agitation and Propaganda

PERIODICALS

Krasnaia Zvezda
Krokodil
Ogonëk
Pchela
Pravda

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