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- Approaches to Globality -



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“THE LITTLE CITIZENS OF A BIG COUNTRY”

**Childhood and International Relations
in the Soviet Union**

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Preface

PEECS is proud to be able to present this paper from Dr Catriona Kelly, an eminent Oxford scholar of Russian literature and cultural history. Dr Kelly's paper is the second piece in our subseries devoted to issues pertinent to the study of the modern experience with globality and processes of a transnational and trans-systemic nature. It is a preliminary version of Dr Kelly's contribution to PEECS' project on "Discourses of Global Ambitions and Global Failures: Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in State Socialist Russia and East Central Europe" funded by the Norwegian Research Council. An outline of the paper was presented at the international workshop "Across and Beyond the East-West Divide" arranged by the Program on East European Cultures & Societies, Trondheim, December 14, 2001.

György Péteri

Trondheim-Dragsvoll, March 2002.

“THE LITTLE CITIZENS OF A BIG COUNTRY”¹
Childhood and International Relations in the Soviet Union

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¹ The title is borrowed from M. Ilin, The Little Citizen of a Big Country (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1939), a propaganda text about the wonderful life of Soviet children produced for Anglophone readers in the West.

As is stated in the proposal for the “Discourses of Global Ambitions and Global Failures” project, an essential part of the assertion of difference by socialist regimes was their attempt “to redefine the cultural-anthropological codes” and thereby produce “an entirely new type of human behaviour [...] a new ethos described as ‘the new Socialist Man’.”² A crucial part of the formation of this ‘new ethos’ was the state campaign to socialise children in appropriate ways. Yet to date this subject has been curiously neglected, at least in the context of Russian history. General histories of the Soviet period, and essays on Soviet identity, often fail to mention children at all, or refer to their situation only *en passant*. Even studies of education generally adopt a top-down approach, concentrating on institutionalisation, educational policy, and pedagogical theory, rather than upon classroom practices (*didaktika*, to use the Russian term), upon children's experience of the teaching situation, or upon the practical content of the syllabus (set books and textbooks, etc.).³ An exception is Felicity O'Dell's 1978 study of official children's literature, but this concentrates for the most part on one specific era of Soviet history, the 1970s, without much attempt at broader historical contextualisation.⁴

² See György Péteri, “Discourses of Global Ambitions and Global Failures: Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in State Socialist Russia and East Central Europe” (Project proposals, ms, Trondheim, 2000). Accessible at: <http://www.hf.ntnu.no/peecs/GlobDiscPro.htm>

³ See e.g. S. Fitzpatrick, The Commissariat of Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921-1934 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); L. E. Holmes, The Kremlin and the Schoolhouse: Reforming Education in Soviet Russia, 1917-1921 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); J. Dunstan, Soviet Schooling in the Second War (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997); M. V. Boguslavsky, Razvitie obshchego srednego obrazovaniya: problemy i resheniya: Iz istorii otechestvennoi pedagogiki 20-kh godov XX veka ed. Z. I. Ravkin (Moscow: Rossiiskaya Akademiya Obrazovaniya, 1994). For an instructively different approach by a historian of early modern England, concentrating on pupils' own experience of school-teaching, see Keith Thomas, Rule and Misrule in the Schools of Early Modern England (The Stenton Lecture, 1976) (Reading: University of Reading, 1976).

⁴ Felicity O'Dell, Socialisation through Children's Literature: The Soviet Example (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). O'Dell makes some attempt at

To be sure, there has been some recent work addressing globalization in contemporary children's culture, but this has taken a very narrow, even partial, approach. Here the central topic is “what [...] is being lost [...] in the rush to use Western images to express the new reality of Russian life”, the so-called ‘contamination’ of established children's culture via imported material such as Disney cartoons, Barbie dolls, comic strips, Nike trainers and brightly-coloured imported backpacks.⁵ Such is the moralising tone adopted that one would think that the Soviet Union had never produced any consumer goods for children, an interpretation that (despite the system’s infamous failures in terms of manufacturing and distributing such items in adequate numbers) would be utterly misplaced.⁶

It is, evidently, time for Soviet children’s culture to be seen rather differently: not as a stable, unchanging and totally nationally specific haven for humans under the age of about 12 (and not, on the other hand, as some kind of labour camp overlaid in gold paint for them either),⁷ but rather, as one part of

sketching in a historical context (her chapter 5 compares the young children’s magazine Murzilka in 1928, 1938, 1958, and 1971), but does not discuss the evolution of didactic literature in any systematic way.

⁵ See for example E. K. Zelensky, “Popular Children's Culture in Post-Perestroika Russia: Songs of Innocence and Experience Revisited”, in A. M. Barker (ed.), Consuming Russia: Popular Culture, Sex, and Society Since Gorbachev (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. 138-60. Quote here is on p. 139.

⁶ The production of consumer goods for children started to be given intensive political attention in 1935, the year when “life became jollier” for citizens in general, according to Stalin's famous dictum. In this year and 1936, Pravda gave an unprecedented amount of attention to toy production and the manufacture of children's clothes, etc.

⁷ The former line has been eloquently criticised by Aleksandr Belousov, a specialist in children’s subculture: “Many people forget what growing up was like when they become adults. They have a sort of artificial image of childhood, which excludes strashilki [horror stories], sadistic poems or jokes. People of this kind take a very negative view of children's folklore because it destroys their shiny political-poster view of childhood.” (E. Golubev, “ ‘Zhizn’ -- eto les beskonechnykh plutanii [...]’ ” [Interview with A. F. Belousov], Argumenty i fakty no. 35 (September, 1999), p. 10). For a text expounding the latter line (the Soviet Union as a system exploiting children while hypocritically pretending to treat them especially well), see A. Sokolov and S. Zhuravlev, “ ‘Schastlivoe detstvo’ ”, Sotsial'naya istoriya: Ezhegodnik 1997 (1998), pp. 159-203.

the broader history of what one might term the history of children's culture in the West (meaning here, the industrialised world with strong ties to Europe) during the twentieth century. My contribution to the 'Discourses of Global Ambitions and Global Failures' is based on work for a large-scale cultural history of childhood in twentieth-century Russia (beginning in the 1890s, since that decade marked a breakthrough in the prominence of childhood as a subject of public concern, as manifested, for instance, in the founding of philanthropic and medical institutions, the growth of the nursery school movement, pressure for changes in family law, etc.)⁸ As I have described elsewhere, early Soviet propaganda for kul'turnost' (culturedness) directed at adults was in many respects profoundly unoriginal in terms of its basic tenets (the need for hygiene, efficiency, neatness, etc.), all of which had been recommended to readers of Western behaviour literature since the Enlightenment: however, the point was that values and strategies were recontextualised in order to present them as part of a uniquely Soviet identity -- until, that is, the post-Stalin era, when confidence in the exceptionality of "Soviet man" began to break down.⁹ In many respects, much the same can be argued about the indoctrination of children: high-Soviet attitudes to this were made different as much as anything else by an assumption of difference, by the idea that the treatment of Soviet children was unique. This assumption was particularly strong in the middle phase of Soviet history, lasting from the 'Great Retreat' of 1935-6 until the Khrushchev thaw. As the boundaries just

⁸ Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890-1991 (to be published by Yale University Press in c. 2006/7). Two small-scale studies which make some attempt to historicise childhood are Lisa A. Kirschenbaum, Small Comrades: Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia (London: Routledge Falmer, 2001) and F. Markowitz, Coming of Age in Post-Soviet Russia (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

⁹ See my Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture, and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin (Oxford University Press, 2001), ch. 4, ch. 5. An abridged version of the discussion here is available in my "'Kul'turnost' as ideal and reality", in G. Hosking and B. Service (eds.), Reinterpreting Russia (London: Edward Arnold, 2000).

mentioned suggest, there was a close tie between attitudes towards children and broader patterns in Soviet mythology: one can see this in the shift from a focus on the ‘child activist’ in the ‘long 1920s’ (Pavlik Morozov, murdered in 1932, followed, rather than initiating, this type),¹⁰ to a focus upon the child as grateful beneficiary of the state's largesse in the period of high Stalinism.

At the same time, one should not see attitudes to children as driven only by incidental shifts in Soviet ideology and internal policy. The history of Russian childhood conformed to an international pattern according to which childhood was ‘modernised’ according to transnational principles. The term ‘modernisation’ is placed in inverted commas because I have some scepticism about the universalist way in which it is sometimes used, which glosses over the contradictory and haphazard local histories of processes such as industrialisation, the expansion of education, the rise of the welfare state, and the mechanisation of agriculture, and ignores cultural inertia in countries such as France, Britain, or the USA in order to label Russia a ‘neo-traditional’ society in which modernity was imperfectly achieved.¹¹ However, the term ‘modernisation’, like allied terms such as ‘progressiveness’, has some value as a concept that was relentlessly invoked by historical subjects themselves in order to name the historical changes that they witnessed and sought to inculcate, in Russia just as much as anywhere else. In terms of the history of childhood, the essential features of the utopian desire to make human experience more ‘modern’ include the following: 1. the enhanced involvement of the state in child-rearing, not only via education in the ordinary sense, but via institutionalised child-care for pre-school children, the creation of ‘child inspectorates’ monitoring

¹⁰ As is discussed in detail in my “Pavlik and His Team: Pioneer Heroes in Early Soviet Russia”, Working Paper of the Russian Centre, St Antony’s College, Oxford (forthcoming online at <http://www.ox.ac.uk>...).

¹¹ As, say, in Terry Martin, “Modernization or neo-traditionalism? Ascribed nationality and Soviet primordialism”, in S. Fitzpatrick (ed.), Stalinism: New Directions (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 348-67.

parents' treatment of their offspring, and the provision of subsidies to families, offset by explicit requirements that those families conduct themselves in appropriate ways; 2. the growth of market-driven provision of necessary or desirable items for the maintenance of children, from diapers to educational toys to children's books; 3. a spreading association between political legitimacy and concern for children's welfare, as expressed (at the most frivolous level) in baby-kissing propaganda put out by politicians, and (rather more seriously) by the huge prominence given to educational and child welfare issues in political manifestos, statutes, and political congresses; 4. an intense emphasis on training children as loyal citizens from an early age.

The history of childhood in Russia witnessed all these different aspects of 'modernisation', though it is fair to say that changes in ideology tended to outstrip practical change. Child-centred propaganda was expertly employed from the early 1920s in order to popularise the regime with the new generation,¹² but changes in approach to health care came more slowly. From the 1920s, Soviet mothers were being urged to conform to the new, 'modern', ethos of scrupulous physical and emotional hygiene, yet much of the equipment that was branded essential to the hygienic regimen was unavailable outside large cities (and scarce even there) into the second half of the twentieth century, and subject to chronic shortages well after that.¹³ Even at the level of ideology, there was sometimes resistance to change. Wet-nurses were used far more widely in early twentieth-century Russia than they were in France, Germany, or Britain at the same time. Artificial formula milk (which some Western

¹² As discussed in e.g. Evgeny Steiner, Stories for Little Comrades: Revolutionary Artists and the Making of Early Soviet Children's Books, trans. J. A. Miller (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999).

¹³ On propaganda for the health and hygiene ethos in the 1920s, see Elizabeth Waters, "Teaching Mothercraft in Post-Revolutionary Russia", Australian Slavonic Studies 1: 2 (1987); one typical manual is G. Speransky, Ukhod za rebenkom rannego vozrasta (see e.g. 4th edn., Moscow, 1929). On childcare practices in the countryside, see esp. D. Ransel, Village Mothers: Three Generations of Change in Russia and Tataria (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2000).

commentators saw as superior to the human product) was -- at least until 1910 or so -- barely mentioned in advice to mothers, and deemed at best an inferior substitute; the modern parent who had to look beyond mother's milk was one who used the wetnurse-vetting service offered by the city lying-in hospitals for poor women.¹⁴

However, this paper will mainly be concerned with ideology, and here globalisation is absolutely central. The transformation of child-care practices in order to make these more hygienic was uniformly believed, in the 1900s and 1910s, both by medical professionals and by educated mothers, to be an appropriate and desirable goal, and a way of raising Russia to the standards of the civilised West. The agonised discussion of the rate of survival in infants aged under one year was one crucial issue, with figures in Russia invariably compared unfavourably to those in a range of other countries, normally including France, England, Germany, and especially Scandinavia (with Norway winning the prize for low infant death rates).¹⁵ As indeed had been true of Russia since the late seventeenth century at least, the process of 'modernisation' was essentially one of globalisation, and strongly associated with aspiration to the standards of the so-called 'civilised world': as children began to be considered a national treasure, it became a matter of national pride to treat them as well as they were being treated anywhere else. It was taken for granted that the West was more advanced than Russia, and represented a model for Russia's development. Russian jurists, pedagogues,

¹⁴ For a mildly disparaging reference to "Nestlé milk powder", see e.g. Dr A. P. Popova, "Ukhod za novorozhdennymi i det'mi shkol'nogo vozrasta", in Pervyi zhenskii kalendar' 7 (1905), p. 279; for details of the "wet-nurse hostel" (priyut dlya kormilits) in St Petersburg, see *ibid.*, no. 6 (1904), p. 88. (The updated version of Popova's article published in 1909, however, observed that Nestlé milk was of "good quality", though it was perhaps the appearance of advertising sponsored by Nestlé in the calendar that had caused the change of heart! See Pervyi zhenskii kalendar' 11 [1909], p.13 -- the ad. is opposite.)

¹⁵ See e.g. the section devoted to infant mortality in the authoritative Brockhaus-Efron encyclopedia, vol. 30, pp. 510-2 (keyword Smertnost' -- though here the emphasis is more on the superior traditional practices, such as long-term breast-feeding, adopted by some ethnic groups (e.g. the Jews, the Norwegians).

psychologists, artists and writers, to name only a few of the more obvious professions, took a close interest in Western publications and in news about legislative change, educational institutions, theories of child development, teaching methodology, child creativity, and so on.¹⁶ There was energetic translation and discussion of key texts: for instance, the first Russian translation of Montessori's Il metodo della pedagogia scientifica applicato all'educazione infantile nelle case dei bambini (Rome, 1913), came out in the same year as the first Italian edition.

'Globalisation' could also mean first-hand contact with the West, such as had become a real possibility for well-off families by the early 1900s. The French resort Biarritz was the preferred holiday destination of the very rich, such as the family of the writer Vladimir Nabokov,¹⁷ (Certainly, throughout the nineteenth century, Russian adults had travelled abroad, but the exportation of children for touristic purposes appears to have been something new.) Families with more modest means also made efforts to bring their children into contact with foreign languages and cultures. The list of periodicals parents could subscribe to for their offspring included French, German, and English ones (for instance, Petit Français illustré, The Boys' Own Paper, The Girls' Own Paper) as well as Russian magazines. By the 1900s, there was a Russian branch of the International Pen-Pal Society (under the patronage of no less than Leo Tolstoy), and Russian sources reported excitedly on the possibility of sending your children on international exchanges (though it is not clear how many Russian children had pen-pals, and whether any of them ever took part in foreign exchanges).¹⁸

¹⁶ See e.g. M. N. Gernet (ed.), Deti-prestupniki (Moscow: Knigoizdatel'stvo V. I. Znamenskoi, 1912), substantial portions of which are dedicated to a literature review of Western legal systems' handling of juvenile delinquency.

¹⁷ V. Nabokov, Speak, Memory (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), pp. 115-9.

¹⁸ For the list of journals, see Pervyi zhenskii kalendar' no. 11 (1909), p. 77, and on the pen-pals and exchanges, *ibid.*, p. 82. The information here states that 166 exchanges had taken place over 9 months of 1908, but none of the children listed as taking part was Russian at this stage.

Internationalism was not of course the only direction in Russian children's culture at this time: for example, a good many voices spoke in favour of maintaining national elements in the school curriculum, particularly in the study of literature and history. A new literature programme drafted by officials attached to the Ministry of Education in 1905 attracted sharp criticism from some observers because of its attempt to slim down the amount of pre-1800 Russian literature studied, and to introduce more Western material.¹⁹ Inevitably, too, isolationist tendencies were reinforced by the outbreak of the First World War, which made international exchanges seem a ridiculous dream, rather than an ideal to be realised in the near future, and saw not only a rush of nationalist propaganda of all kinds, but also of studies seeking to explore how propaganda might be effectively targeted at children, and to investigate the thoroughness with which children had absorbed its messages. Children and the War, published by the Froebel Society in Kiev in 1915, for example, contained an article on 'The War and Character Education' which recommended 'deepening and correcting' children's normal tendency towards hero-worship so that they began to admire not just anyone (for instance, Ned Pinkerton and other figures from pulp literature), but, for example, "that unknown soldier captured by the Germans who was shot because he did not wish to give away a military secret". A report also published in the collection revealed with a degree of unease that good numbers of younger children (under 9) were very unsure which nations were involved in the war or even where it was happening: one child had replied, "somewhere very far from Kiev". More reassuring, perhaps, to nationalist sensibilities were the drawings produced by children and recording thrilling battles between the Russians and other

¹⁹ For the programme, see Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya 8 (1905), section I, 40-79 and 114-44; for a protest about national content, see e.g. V. M. Istrin, "Novaya programma kursa russkoi slovesnosti v sredneuchebnykh zavedeniyakh", Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya 6 (1906), section IV, 86-7.

forces (usually the Austrians), and setting out vivid caricature images of Germans in pointed helmets and epaulettes.²⁰

At the same time, it should be emphasised that even at this crisis-laden stage of Russian history, there were voices that spoke out against chauvinistic brainwashing. The volume on Children and the War, for instance, emphasised that Belgium should be cited as the epitome of national heroism, and advocated attempting to explain, so far as was possible, the real causes of the war to children, and suggesting to them that victory would come about for moral as well as military reasons.²¹ And the wide-ranging reforms of the secondary school system initiated by Minister of Education Count P. N. Ignat'ev in 1915 were intended to give modern languages a much more significant place in the syllabus of the prestigious gimnaziya than they had traditionally had, with more attention also given to the study of recent foreign literature. One extraordinary detail is that Tennyson's The Charge of the Light Brigade (whose subject is a death-defying, albeit unsuccessful, assault by the British cavalry against their adversaries in the Crimean War, the Russians) was now to be compulsory reading for the intermediate levels of the school. The admiration widely felt in the Russian cultural elite for the moral world of 'the English gentleman', with its supposed values of unquestioning self-sacrifice and commitment to social duty above all else, overrode the political affiliations that had shaped the world of that elite only sixty years previously.²²

²⁰ Deti i voina: sbornik stat'ei (Kiev: Kievskoe frebelovskoe obshchestvo, 1915), p. 25 (heroes), p. 53 (young children's views of the war), plates I-XI (children's drawings; see also the glosses on pp. 97-100: the caricatures are, for example, described on pp. 109-10).

²¹ Deti i voina, p. 27 (Belgium), p. 33 (causes of war), p. 22 (moral victory). It is notable also that on p. 28, a caricature of a Turk with the caption "down with the pig's ear" is described as "vulgar".

²² For the prescription of the Tennyson, see Materialy po reforme srednei shkoly: Primernye programmy i ob'yasnitel'nye zapiski, izdannye po rasporyazheniyu G. Ministra Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya (Petrograd: Senatskaya tipografiya, 1915), p. 126. For eulogistic comments on the "English gentleman", see e.g. O. D., "Shkol'noe vospitanie angliiskogo dzhentel'mena", Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniya 10 (1906), section IV, 196-203 (a section of "The Charge of the Light Brigade", "Theirs not to make reply,/Theirs not to reason why,/Theirs but to do or die", etc., is quoted on p. 197 of this piece).

Much the same ‘mixed signals’ continued to be heard in the first years after the Bolshevik Revolution. To be sure, the imposition of harsher political censorship and, from the 1920s, the closing of the borders so that travel became possible only for a narrow political elite, made ventures such as exchanges practically impossible (they would also have been considered undesirably ‘bourgeois’ in character). But at the same time, Soviet Russia remained an outward-looking culture in many ways, and internationalism was as pervasive at the level of attitudes to children as in every other area of politics. Advocates for children's rights and ‘free education’ (svobodnoe vospitanie) at first revelled in the opportunity to modernise attitudes to children in Russia, and took reforms in the West as the model for their endeavours.²³ In his From Two to Five, the critic and children's writer Kornei Chukovsky not only borrowed heavily from Western writers such as Sully (whose discussions of children's language he appropriated as well as cited), but also argued that “in countries where illiteracy has long been liquidated -- Denmark, Germany, and England -- there is a thousand times more interest in children's language than there is here.”²⁴ The indoctrination of Soviet children was strongly internationalist at this period, as manifested not only in the content of the school syllabus (which included foreign languages and foreign literatures, integrated into the thematic-based curriculum of the time),²⁵ but in the activities of the Pioneer movement, as exemplified, for instance, by “International Children’s Week”, a sort of junior version of the Communist Youth International., held for the first time from 26

²³ As, for example, in E. Vekker, Deti i sovetskoe pravo (Izlozhenie detskogo prava USSR) (Khar’kov: Trud, 1925), p. 8-9, which represents the English Children’s Act of 1908, and the children’s inspectorates (detskie vedomstva) of England, Germany, and Belgium as pioneering beacons in the development of modern attitudes to child-related legislation.

²⁴ See Ot dvukh do pyati (4th edn.; Leningrad: Izd. pisatelei), p. 79.

²⁵ See Programmy dlya pervogo kontsentra shkol vtoroi stupeni (5, 6 i 7 gody obucheniya) (Moscow and Leningrad, 1925: Gosizdat), esp. pp. 5-7.

June-3 July 1921. A brochure setting out model plans for the ninth such Week, held in 1929, indicated the ambitious levels at which children were supposed to participate in the celebrations. They were to organise a special exhibition, or “corner” (ugolok Mezhdunarodnogo detskogo dvizheniya), holding a poster, a letter to the foreign children’s organisation which came under their supervision, information about how much money they had managed to collect to support it, a map showing the town, district and country where it was located. A slogan in a foreign language was also to be displayed.²⁶

At this stage, too, the Soviet press fairly frequently carried reports about the activities of Pioneer groups outside the country, particularly in Germany and America.²⁷ News was usually presented with a strong emphasis on the suffering and heroism of foreign Pioneers, and their vulnerability to aggressive action on the part of the states where they lived. In 1929, Pionerskaya pravda highlighted the case of Harry Eisman, an American Pioneer who had been jailed for his activities; after a campaign at the international level, the boy was eventually freed, and triumphantly exported to the USSR.²⁸ Also in 1929, large-scale protests were organised in Soviet societies against the shooting of 270 Chinese Pioneers in Manchuria.²⁹ Pioneers also organised charitable collections on behalf of suffering children in other countries, such as the offspring of miners during the British General Strike, or children in Germany enduring poverty and deprivation.³⁰ At the same time, there was

²⁶ 9-ya Mezhdunarodnaya detskaya nedelya (Moscow: Molodaya gvardiya, 1929), p. 20. For the early history of the movement, see Z. K. Shenkendorf, “Internatsional’noe vospitanie detei v pionerskoi organizatsii”, Sovetskaya pedagogika 5 (1972), 36-8.

²⁷ For a rare item about Britain, see “Krasnye galstuki v strane skautov”, Novyi Robinzon 14 (1925), 20-21 (this concentrates on the expanding forces in the British Pioneer movement, allegedly 2000 strong by the time of writing).

²⁸ See Istoriya VLKSM i Vsesoyuznoi pionerskoi organizatsii im. V. I. Lenina, ed. V. Sulemov (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1983), p. 164.

²⁹ Zori sovetskoi pionerii: ocherki po istorii pionerskoi organizatsii (1917-1941) (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1972), p. 260.

³⁰ See e.g. the report on a collection for German children in Pioner 1 (1924), 36.

relatively little reporting about aggressive acts against Pioneers in the Soviet Union: documentation of this was patchy and concentrated on low-level incidents, such as the beating of a female Pioneer by ‘kulaks’ in the countryside after she had exposed their activities in the Pioneer group’s wall newspaper.³¹ Pioneer heroes might come from anywhere, but Pioneer martyrs uniformly came from outside the Soviet Union.

As this last instance shows (Pioneers might suffer in Russia, but not as much as they did elsewhere), internationalism had its limits even at this early stage. It was uniformly emphasised that children lived better in the Soviet Union than they did outside it; few publications about child-care could avoid boasting about the country’s advanced status in this respect. A report on the Institute for Child Analysis in Leningrad published in the late 1920s, for example, not only underlined that the institute possessed all the latest equipment for scientific assessment of young patients (Binet tests, Gizet apparatuses to test reaction speed, Blumfeld cubes, etc.), but also pointed out that foreign visitors had commented the institute was unique in the world. This distinction was natural, given that “only Soviet power makes pedagogy the basis of pedagogy, and is striving to create a new man, a warrior for communism.”³² In literature for children, equally, the Soviet Union’s openness to change and its political leadership of the world were sources of national triumphalism, even if the backwardness of old Russia was not. As a children’s poem by Mayakovsky put it in 1928:

The Kremlin, as we know,
is the centre of the earth.
Over sea,
 over land,
Communists are heard.³³

³¹ “Izbitie pionerki“, *Pioner* 9 (1924), 21.

³² E. P. Punina-Griboedova, *Desyat’ let defektologicheskoi i pedologicheskoi raboty* (Leningrad: Izd. Detskogo Obsledovatel’skogo Instituta im. professora A. S. Griboedova, n. d. [c. 1928]), pp. 11-12.

³³ Note also a ‘there’ and ‘here’ item in *Drug detei* 3 (1932), 13-17.

Moreover, Soviet Pioneer groups (like their counterparts at Komsomol and Party level) were ‘first among equals’ at the international level.³⁴ But foreign pioneer groups had a high degree of autonomy, and propaganda placed a greater weight upon the need to free children from backwardness than on the Soviet Union's achievements in improving their lives.

By 1932, the end was already in sight for this period of what one could call ‘suprematist internationalism’, where the Soviet Union was represented as a country aware of other systems’ provision for children, prepared to acknowledge the need for improvement, but confident of its own leadership in some (many) areas. A Party decree of August that year brought to an end nearly 15 years of controversy over appropriate teaching methodology and syllabus content, during which the upper echelons of Narkompros (the education and culture commissariat) had retained their commitment to project work and to the ‘brigade system’ of collectively organised lessons, with individual competition given little place, and where national history had had almost no place in the timetable.³⁵ The 1932 decree, on the other hand, spoke in alternate breaths of “significantly strengthening historicism in the social studies, native language and literature, and geography programmes”, and of the need to disseminate “the most important knowledge relating to the national cultures of the peoples of the USSR”.

³⁴ Cf. the observations on shefstvo in 9-ya MND, p. 20.

³⁵ Syllabus content in the first years of the Soviet school gave space to “social study” rather than to “history” in the ordinary sense, and though nineteenth-century literary texts were studied, these were analysed according to the abstract Marxist-Leninist paradigms of the so-called “sociological school”. See e.g. Programmy dlya pervogo kontsentra shkol vtoroi stepeni (5, 6 i 7 gody obucheniya) (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosizdat, 1925). As mentioned above, the massive literature on the Soviet school is strongly biased towards institutional history, and relatively little material is concerned with day-to-day practices or even with syllabus content in detail. However, more informative than average on this is Holmes, The Kremlin and the Schoolhouse, and especially the same author’s Stalin’s School: Moscow’s Model School No. 25, 1931-1937 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999). Kirschenbaum’s Small Comrades contains some material on the syllabus of nursery schools up to 1932.

From the first, then, the return of ‘historicism’ to the school syllabus went in step with a new emphasis on patriotism.³⁶

In 1932 as well, internationalism in Pioneer agitation and propaganda began to be challenged by a new emphasis on stranovedenie, or “knowledge of the Soviet Union”. This year saw the first of a number of high-profile mass expeditions by Pioneers to outlying parts of the Soviet Union, under the title “Let’s Get to Know Our Country!” (at around this time too, adult turizm, or exploration/rough travel, was being encouraged by the production of a special advice literature).³⁷ The international Pioneer movement began to fade out of view, and with it the Pioneer martyrs who had formerly occupied attention: instead, as Soviet culture turned in upon itself, there was a new and vivid interest in Pioneer martyrs from within the Soviet Union. These included Kolya Myagotin, murdered in the far North-East on October 25 1932, and Valya Dyko, from the Moscow region, who died a natural death but was translated to martyr status by her refusal to obey her parents and make the sign of the cross on her deathbed (she preferred to give the Pioneer salute), and whose last moments were the subject of a melodramatic poem by the well-known Soviet poet Eduard Bagritsky.³⁸ They also included Pavlik Morozov, murdered on 3 September 1932 in Gerasimovka, a few hours’ journey away from Sverdlovsk (Ekaterinburg), on the eastern fringes of the Urals. Pavlik’s murder, and the show trial of its alleged perpetrators, was covered extensively in the local press, and also in Pioneer periodicals, above all Pionerskaya pravda.³⁹ From late 1933,

³⁶ For the text of the decree, see Izvestiya 29 August 1932, p. 2.

³⁷ On the expeditions, see Zori sovetskoi pionerii, p. 262; and note also the founding of special journals around this period, such as Ural’skii sledopyt (The Urals Scout), founded in 1935. For examples of the adult advice literature, see e.g. Pogrebetsky, V pomoshch’ turistu (1935); Turizm zimoi (1935). (These two brochures were among many published by OPGE (The Proletarian Tourism Society), founded in 1930 in order to propagandise collective expeditions).

³⁸ “Smert’ pionerki” was first published in Pionerskaya pravda [henceforth PP] 105 (1932), 2, and Kolya Myagotin’s death was reported in the same newspaper, 124 (1932), 1.

³⁹ See especially PP 102 (1932), 4, 116 (1932), 1, and 123 (1932), 1.

however, it was the subject of much more intensive publicity, which appears to have been triggered by the provincial journalist Pavel Solomein's presentation to Maksim Gorky, then probably the single most powerful figure in Soviet cultural politics, of his pseudo-documentary biography of Pavlik.⁴⁰ From now on, Pavlik began to be presented as a figure of national importance: discussion at the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934 touched on his name, and the urgency of constructing a memorial to his memory, on several occasions. In 1936 and 1938, 'retouched' biographies of the boy (by Aleksandr Yakovlev and by Elizar Smirnov) were published, and during the late 1930s and the 1940s, numerous sites, buildings, and objects associated with the Pioneer movement and children's culture more broadly were named after him (including the children's culture and rest park in Krasnaya Presnya district, Moscow, an area of the capital associated with glorious revolutionary struggle, and a pleasure-boat at the most prestigious Pioneer camp in the Soviet Union, Artek).⁴¹ Pavlik's most famous (or infamous) mythic identity is as the fearless denouncer of his father to the Soviet authorities, the boy who placed allegiance to Party and country above family ties; but it is important to recognise also his character as a national hero. His very name, 'Pavlik Morozov' (not unlike a Russian version of 'John Bull'), touched off the Romantic association between Russia, the frozen north, and the Russian people's capacity for tough resistance (in almost all official versions of the boy's life, the fact that he was ethnically Belorussian, and hence from a semantically distinct part of the Soviet empire, was suppressed). It is certainly no coincidence also that the two most heavily promoted Pioneer martyrs, Morozov and Myagotin, both came from ethnically mixed areas of the Soviet Union, but ones that had substantial populations of Russians and were undergoing intensive 'Sovietisation' in the early 1930s. Their martyrdom

⁴⁰ For more details of this and Pavlik's history generally, see C. Kelly, "Pavlik and His Team".

⁴¹ On the boat, see Paul Thorez, Les enfants modèles (Paris: Lieu Commun, 1982), p. 98, p. 120.

therefore could be made to seem to stand for the cultural leadership of the ‘big brother’ nationality within the Soviet world, and for the Soviet plan to civilise the Northern wastes of the country.⁴² The fact that child martyrdom was such an important aspect of the heroic ethos in the 1930s also had national roots -- child saints had since the early medieval era been a particular focus of national identity, and Pavlik’s cult from 1934 represented a classic case of Soviet syncretism, with the boy being promoted as a secular child-martyr in answer to the popular cults of Boris and Gleb, the eleventh-century saints allegedly martyred by their wicked brother Svyatopolk, Tsarevich Dmitry, son of Ivan the Terrible, murdered in 1591, supposedly on the orders of Boris Godunov, and (most threateningly for Soviet power), Nicholas II’s son Alexei, executed by the Bolsheviks in 1918 in the city of Ekaterinburg, capital of Pavlik Morozov’s home region.⁴³ The most famous rupture in Soviet history involving children is the shift from seeing the family as an oppressive institution, as in the first decade and a half of Soviet power, to regarding it as the essential glue of social stability, as from the mid-1930s onwards.⁴⁴ But the shift from a ‘suprematist internationalist’ to a national suprematist view of childhood was equally important.

⁴² Another Pioneer hero, Kolya Gordienko, given widespread publicity in the mid-1930s for his work in denouncing kulaks, also came from a ‘colonial’ area, the Northern Caucasus. For a tribute to him, see V. Lyadov, “O geroyakh v detskoj literature”, Pravda 25 February 1934, p. 4.

⁴³ It should be noted, though, that the Pavlik legends make no attempt to play up the ‘Christian martyrdom’ resonance of his murder. Rather, especially in early versions of the story, Pavlik appeared as a Bolshevik anti-type to the most inflammatory type of child martyr in recent Russian history, the victim of an alleged ritual slaughter by Jews. The early reports in the Pioneer press made obvious efforts to present Pavlik’s supposed murderers as equivalents to the Jewish murderers of popular fiction (a photograph of Pavlik’s grandfather taken at the trial was distorted to make it look as though he had a hook nose, etc.), while at the same time implying that they were anti-semitic (Pavlik’s grandfather was reported to have said at his trial, “I will keep silent, as Jesus Christ did in the Judaic Court.”). Again, a full discussion of this history is available in my “Pavlik and His Team”.

⁴⁴ This subject has been exhaustively explored in Western historiography, from Isaac Deutscher onwards. For recent specialised gender-historical studies with material of relevance, see e.g. Mary Buckley, Women and Ideology in the Soviet Union

By the mid-1930s, then, children were subjected to an education which increasingly emphasised patriotic motifs, and propaganda for them had developed a new kind of hero, the martyr who died for his or her country, preferably in the ‘debatable land’ settled by Russians in relatively recent times. This second theme was linked with an increasingly insistent emphasis on borderlands in literature and propaganda for the nursery. Articles in the Soviet press in 1935 and 1936 praised the achievements of Pioneers who had spied suspicious figures lurking in border areas, or brought law-breakers to the attention of the Soviet police.⁴⁵ In Agniya Barto’s long poem At the Border Post (1937), a boy was rewarded for alerting guards to a marauder with the gift of an Alsatian puppy.⁴⁶ The theme of the ‘enemy without’ (who was especially dangerous when he was also ‘the enemy within’) began to resound with particular urgency during the years of the Great Purges. Children’s supposed malleability, the characteristic which was held to make them the ideal material of Soviet indoctrination, also raised anxieties that they might be easy meat for ‘enemies of the people’. Juvenile crime, that ‘extraordinary anomaly’ in Soviet society, was now seen as the product not of the environment or of individual psychopathology, but primarily of adults’ evil influence upon children. Many, if not most, such adults had sinister foreign links. As an article published in Sovetskaya yustitsiya argued in 1938, “It is essential to remember that the intelligence organs of foreign countries use their Trotskyite-Bukharinist agents to exploit juveniles, even going so far as to

(Beckenham: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), and Wendy Z. Goldman, Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936 (Cambridge: CUP, 1993).

⁴⁵ Pravda 27 April 1936, p. 6 (border-infiltrators), 26 September 1936, p. 6 (lawbreakers). It is striking, though, that both these items were published in a modest position on the newspaper’s back page, an indication of the marginality of child activists.

⁴⁶ Agniya Barto, Na zastave (Moscow and Leningrad: Detskaya literatura, 1937)..

inveigle them into spying.”⁴⁷ Equally, official literature now hammered home to children themselves that foreign spies were everywhere. Sergei Mikhalkov’s textbook poem “The Enemy” (alternatively known as “The Spy”) showed a stranger (whom the reference to “our girls” suggested was also an alien in ethnic terms) insinuating himself into the bosom of the family and abusing its hospitality and trust:

He came like the boss into our home,
And sat down where he liked,
He drank and ate along with us
And joined in all our songs.

He showered flowers and smiles
On all our girls,
And like an old friend
He used everyone's first names.

‘Read me that. Tell me that.
Take me along too.
Let me look at your blueprints.
Let me know your dreams.’

He slept next to us at night,
And, like a thief, concealed
That he was opening our drawers
And then closing them again.

And suddenly that same year
We had floods in our mines,
And the chemical factory burned down,

⁴⁷ SYu 8 (1938), 11. An instance cited to support this assertion was a “small girl” (devochka) who was allegedly involved in the Yudenich plot of 1919. The article also mentioned a case where a girl “under the influence of threats [from adults] began to occupy herself with snatching berets off people’s heads”. Even what in some cultural circumstances might have been considered harmless pranks were manifestations of machinations by ‘enemies of the people’.

And the electricity system burned out.⁴⁸

Children were now taught to see globalisation in purely Soviet terms: official children's literature represented the Soviet Union as a world in miniature, with Siberia, for instance, replacing the America of popular Western writers such as Maine Reid and Fenimore Cooper.⁴⁹

'One nation globalisation' was not purely a question of emphasising to children the horrors beyond the Soviet border, or the necessity of defending the country of their birth with the last drop of their blood. The proclamation of Soviet citizens' right to a "prosperous life" in 1933 was accompanied by a propaganda campaign aimed at children, as well as adults, underlining how well Soviet citizens now lived.⁵⁰ Themes of this kind reached their height in 1935, which one might describe as the Stalinist 'year of the child'. At this point children's affairs began to be given an unprecedented prominence in the Soviet press, and the theme of 'a happy childhood', the juvenile equivalent of the 'merry existence' that Stalin was promising adults at the same time, began to be heard with insistence. By 1936, the notorious slogan, "Thank You Dear (or alternatively, 'Great') Stalin for a Happy Childhood" began to be adopted by children's magazines, and to be part of 'thanking rituals' at children's festivities.⁵¹ The idea that children lived better in the Soviet

⁴⁸ S. Mikhalkov, "Vrag" (also published as "Shpion"), *Izbrannoe* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1947), p. 17.

⁴⁹ As, for instance, in Arkady Gaidar's popular adventure story "Chuk i Gek". Cf. two didactic children's games thought up by Maxim Gorky in 1936, and meant to teach children about geography: a papier-mache globe showing the physical features of the world (but not its political geography), and a jigsaw puzzle of the Soviet Union. [Zametki o detskikh knigakh i igrakh], *Sobranie sochinenii v 30 tomakh* vol. 27 (1953), p. 518.

⁵⁰ See e.g. the article, "Zazhitohnaya zhizn' – zhizn' kul'turnaya" in PP 123 (1933), 4-5.

⁵¹ See e.g. the front cover of *Kolkhoznye rebyata* 10 (1936), and the scenario for a children's parade in A. M. Zelenko, *Detskii karnaval. Letnii prazdnik dlya detei srednego vozrasta* (Moscow: Tsentral'nyi dom khudozhestvennogo vospitaniya detei, 1939), p. 2, p. 17.

Union than they did anywhere else was now trumpeted everywhere. “In not a single country of the world is there such enormous concern for children, a concern felt by the broadest strata of the labouring people”, claimed a lead article in Sovetskaya yustitsiya, published in mid-1935, one of many such items appearing in 1935-6.⁵²

Second War and Cold War propaganda were to give a still greater weight to patriotic motifs, which also emerged forcefully in education. A significant moment came with the reprinting of K. D. Ushinsky’s Slavophile writings on education in 1945, with their emphasis on the role of great men in history, and on the centrality of the ‘native tongue’ to intellectual development.⁵³ “Martial education” (voennaya podgotovka) played a central role in the school syllabus and in Pioneer work not only between 1941 and 1945, but afterwards as well.⁵⁴ In 1944, military and

⁵² “Likvidirovat’ prestupleniya nesovershennoletnikh”, Sovetskaya yustitsiya 14 (1935), 1. The boast was, of course, a rhetorical manoeuvre to legitimise the main content of the article, which dealt with the embarrassing fact that juvenile crime still persisted in the USSR, despite the loving care lavished upon children. But it set out what was soon to become a governing myth in Soviet society. See also SYu 13 (1935), 11, SYu 20 (1935), 2 (“V nashei strane, edinstvennoi iz vsekh stran mira, sozdany vse predposylki dlya polnoi likvidatsii detskoj besprizornosti i prestupnosti”, so that “sushchestvovanie u nas nesovershennoletnikh pravonarushitelei yavlyaetsya velichaishei anomaliei”), SYu 24 (1935) 8 (“v Sovetskoi strane rebenok -- budushchii aktivnyi uchastnik sotsialisticheskogo i kommunisticheskogo obshchestva v tsentre vnimaniya vsej sovetskoi obshchestvennosti”), SYu 10 (1936), 10 (“Deti nashei strany ne dolzhny byt’ na ulitse. Ikh zhizn’ dolzhna byt’ svetloi i radostnoi”); SYu 8 (1938), 9 (“velichaishey zabota sov. vlasti o podrastayushchem pokolenii”; “SSSR -- edinstvennaya strana v mire, gde sozdany usloviya dlya polneishei likvidatsii detskoj pristupnosti”).

⁵³ See e.g. K. D. Ushinsky, Izbrannye pedagogicheskie sochineniya (Moscow, 1945), p. 137: “esli my ne opravdyvaem tot poddel’nykh patrioticheskikh vozglasov i dazhe prednamerennykh patrioticheskikh nepravd, kotorymi napolnena nasha staraya literatura i nashi starye uchebniki, to, tem ne menee, nam smeshno i zhalko, bol’no i dosadno slushat’ i chitat’, kogda kakoi-nibud’ literator ili nastavnik usilivaetsya dokazat’, naprimer, chto frantsuzov v dvenadtsatom godu pobili morozy, chto v istorii nashei vse dostoino nasmeshki i prezreniya, ili s naslazhdeniem razvenchivaet Derzhavina, Karamzina, Pushkina, Zhukovskogo, Gogolya, pokazyvaya detyam, kakie eto byli melochnye, poshlye natury”.

⁵⁴ On this, see Dunstan, Soviet Schooling in the Second World War, p. 201. For ‘martial education’ at the level of the Pioneer movement, see Istoriya VLKSM, p. 197. Pioneer ‘bases’ (bazy) in schools were renamed by the old Russian word druzhina (a lord’s entourage) during the War, and run on military lines by a shtab

naval cadet schools -- decried during the early Soviet period as anti-humanitarian institutions redolent of ancien-régime values -- were refounded as “Suvorov Colleges” (for the army) and “Nakhimov Colleges”) for the navy, admitting boys from as young as 13. Thereafter, the “Suvorov cadet” began to be promoted as the model for all right-thinking Soviet boys, a particularly prestigious embodiment of patriotic values.⁵⁵ Naturally, propaganda for and about children remained just as fervently patriotic as it had before the war, with defence of the borderland remaining a governing motif. The difference now was that specific national names could be given to the barbarians at the border and to the sinister “resident spies” insinuating themselves into the bosom of the Soviet family. The victimisation of children under hostile regimes was stressed as vehemently as was the joyful existence led by Soviet children. If Second World War propaganda hymned the martyrdom of young partisans (most famously, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya) at the hands of the “fascist invaders”, Cold War propaganda repeatedly accused Western countries (above all America) of allowing the systematic corruption of young minds via commercial culture. Characteristic was a series of articles in which Kornei Chukovsky (who had earlier done so much to popularise Anglophone writing for and about children) used his reading knowledge of English in order to attack the content of American comics. He asserted that these glorified violence, represented their idiotic heroes (for instance, Superman) as

(general staff), with even symbolic ‘elections’ to positions such as team leader suspended in favour of appointments by the adult Pioneer leader (taking the role of military commander) (see *ibid.*)

⁵⁵ On the cadet schools, see the decree of 21 August 1943 in КПСС в резолюциях и решениях съездов, конференций, и пленумов ЦК (8th edn.; 15 vols.; Moscow, ‘Politicheskaya literatura’, 1970-1984), vol. 6, pp. 98-104. 9 schools, each with 500 pupils, administering a 7-year programme, were founded: the decree explicitly stated that they were modern equivalents of “the old cadet corps”. See also Dunstan, Soviet Schooling in the Second World War, p. 202. For a propaganda image of a Suvorov cadet, see Fedor Reshetnikov’s narrative painting, “Home from the Holidays” (1949, where the boy salutes his elderly and delighted, if bemused, grandfather, while his small sister beams from her homework at the spotless dinner-table. Bown, Socialist Realist Painting, plate 270.

invulnerable gods, and had a distasteful line in kiddie porn as well (this last point was supported by a reference to a frame where Donald Duck ogled a young woman in a bikini). As Chukovsky summed up: “The manufacturers of this poisonous pulp so damaging to children's consciousness go further and further each year in their criminal ‘activities’. [...] Hiding themselves behind the fetish of ‘freedom of the press’, the publishers of this toxic, vulgar drivel [*yadovitaya poshlyatina*] carry on calmly with their murky business, not in the least embarrassed by the fact that, thanks to their efforts, the numbers of juvenile criminals in their country are growing day by day.”⁵⁶

An intriguing insight into the atmosphere of the times as experienced by children themselves is given by the memoir of Paul Thorez, son of the French Communist leader Maurice Thorez, who visited Artek Pioneer camp three times between 1950 and 1953. Thorez was struck by the way in which Russia was presented as the most advanced country in the world, and credited with pioneering many of the most important inventions of the twentieth century, including radio, television, and heavy-duty aviation. He sat in tormented boredom at patriotic historical films, and was amazed at his Russian companions’ view of the West: they honoured Western Communist heroes and writers that Thorez had never heard of, yet had no idea that many central figures of his childhood world, such as Babar, Tintin, or even the heroes of French Communist children’s strip cartoons, even existed. ‘Internationalism’ now meant a readiness to accept non-Russians on equal terms, provided they made efforts to russify themselves (child etiquette accepted that it was proper to question a Brazilian girl about what nationality she was to have such a funny accent, but not that a boy with a Jewish name

⁵⁶ K. Chukovsky, “Vospitanie gangsterov”, *Znamya* 8 (1949), 188 (the reference to the Donald Duck cartoon is on p. 187). See also Chukovsky’s “Rastlenie detskikh dush”, *Literaturnaya gazeta* 22 September 1948, and “Rastlenie amerikanskikh detei”, LG 15 October 1949. Given that US comics were attracting similar strictures from some quarters in the West at the time when Chukovsky was writing, the piquant possibility exists that these tirades were essentially ‘translations’ of foreign material as well. (My thanks to a member of the audience at the PEECS Seminar in Trondheim, December 2001, for this point).

could be questioned about what his nationality was). The sole place where a concessive view of potential superiority in the Western world flourished was in a clandestine admiration for material goods, such as the ‘trophy’ clothes or gadgets looted from German cities, or a Buick glimpsed at the camp when dignitaries from Moscow had called.⁵⁷

Of course, this sense of absolute isolationism is very much a child’s-eye view, and a naive one. Suspicion of foreigners (hostility to global influences) did not go in step with suspicion of modernity. Even at its most isolationist, this regime was never precisely a ‘Slavophile’ or ‘Panslavic’ one: rather, like the tsarist regime in the late Imperial era, it combined a great deal of chauvinist rhetoric with a certain discreet openness to foreign influences and a good portion of explicit commitment to ‘progress’.⁵⁸ This division explains some otherwise bizarre occurrences, such as the translation into Russian of The Captains of Willoughby School, a boarding-school story of the ‘play up, play up, and play the game!’ kind written by the moralistic nineteenth-century British writer, Talbot Baines Reed, best-known in the West for his novel The Fifth Form at St Dominics.⁵⁹ Official policy had other loopholes as well. Omry Ronen has argued vehemently, and with some degree of persuasiveness, that Socialist Realist authors working for children could get away with a far greater degree of oblique

⁵⁷ Thorez, Les enfants modèles, p. 92 (inventions), p. 141 (Tintin, etc.; Thorez also points out that the Russians did know Tarzan, however, from films, presumably because he was a kind of model of zakal [an ethos of muscular, manly fitness and resolution much propagandised in the Soviet Union]), p. 107 (tedious films), p. 68 (Brazilian accent), p. 91 (assimilation), p. 138 (Buick).

⁵⁸ On intellectual Slavophiles’ rather more consistent (though even so, often contradictory) identification of ‘Western’, ‘modern’, and ‘undesirable’, see the discussion in my Refining Russia, ch. 2.

⁵⁹ The novel, published in 1946, was known in Russian as Starshiny Vil’baiskoi shkoly. To be sure, Detskaya literatura publishing house was viciously denounced a year later for issuing it (see A. Vitman in NM 7 (1947), 275-9; cf. Literaturnaya gazeta, 26 April 1947), but the book remained in circulation, and at least two informants born in the mid-1930s have told me it was one of their favourite boyhood books.

social criticism than their counterparts working for adults, and that internationalist motifs persisted for longer among official Soviet children's writers than they did among their 'senior' counterparts.⁶⁰ More to the point, there are some indirect indications that the Soviet government was vividly aware of the condition of children elsewhere, and used some innovations in foreign countries as models for its policy. For example, the official promotion of child martyrs beginning in late 1932 may well have been a response to the appearance of Karl Aloys Schenzinger's Nazi propaganda novel about a child martyr, Der Hitlerjunge Quex, published in 1932 (and turned into a successful film in 1933), which was extremely popular in Germany and would certainly have come to the attention of Soviet foreign monitors via their Social Democrat contacts.⁶¹ And one central brand of child propaganda, the icon of the Soviet leader (above all Stalin) with a small child seems also to have been modelled on foreign precedent. The 'Stalin-with-child icon' first appeared in Russia in July 1935, when Pravda printed a story, "I gave a bouquet to Stalin!" Here, pioneer Nina Zdgorova excitedly recounted how she had been thanked for her tribute with a kiss and "We're going to be friends, you and I", as well as chocolates and a bag that turned out to contain cherries ("I checked later"); in August, a picture of the leader with his own daughter Svetlana appeared in the paper.⁶² On 29 June

⁶⁰ O. Ronen, "Detskaya literatura i sotsialisticheskii realizm", in E. Dobrenko (ed.), Sotsialisticheskii kanon (St Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2000), esp. pp. 975-7. Ronen's argument is more persuasive at the level of what may have been intended by writers such as Arkady Gaidar, whose attitudes had been shaped by youths spent fighting for the Bolshevik cause and activism in the Komsomol at its most idealistic and internationalist phase, than it is in discussing the reception of literature. On p. 976 he asserts, without producing any evidence whatever, that Gaidar's "Sud'ba barabanshchika" was not seen as a book about spies when it first came out. But, as we shall see below, there is plenty of evidence for 'spy mania' among children themselves.

⁶¹ K. A. Schenzinger, Der Hitlerjunge Quex (Berlin and Leipzig, 1932). Aiga Klotz, Kinder- und Jugendliteratur in Deutschland 1840-1940: Gesamtverzeichnis der Veröffentlichungen in deutscher Sprache (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 1999), no. 6265/2., indicates that there were 6 editions of Quex between 1932 and 1941.

⁶² Pravda 1 July 1935, 2; Pravda 3 August 1935, 3.

1936, “Happy Childhood Day”, a photograph of Stalin embracing Gelya Markizova, who had presented him with a bouquet when a delegation from the Burat-Mongolian ASSR visited the Kremlin, was published on the front page of Pravda.⁶³ In the absence of serious research on the comparable genres of ‘Hitler-and-child icon’ and ‘Mussolini-and-child icon’, it is difficult to be certain that the Stalin genre was imitative: however, no comparable type of Lenin image was disseminated in the 1920s, and it seems significant that the earliest Soviet prominent figure regularly to be photographed in the company of radiantly smiling, deferential small children was Maksim Gorky, a long-term resident of Italy, who had perhaps had his mind turned to group photographs of this kind by Mussolini propaganda.⁶⁴

At the same time, the Soviet authorities were obviously not eager to advertise the source of their borrowings in cases like these. The isolationism of the Soviet Union from 1935 onwards may have been largely mythic, and the suggestion that Soviet ideology had exclusively national (most particularly Russian) roots may have been profoundly misleading, but the uniqueness and cultural autonomy of the nation were unquestionable tenets in propaganda, as was the country’s unshakable greatness, and as such shaped the world-view of countless citizens, including most or even all children who came within the purview of Soviet propaganda at all (with the expansion of the primary school network, this had reached at least 95 per cent by the early 1950s).⁶⁵ Indeed, the post-war

⁶³ Pravda 29 June 1936, p. 1.

⁶⁴ D. Mack Smith’s photo-album, Mussolini il duce: Quattrocento immagini della vita di un uomo e di vent’anni di storia (Milan: Fabri, 1983), contains a picture of the leader with a group of piccoli italiani (the Italian equivalent of the Pioneers) that seems to date from no later than 1933 (see p. 73: I say ‘seems to’ because sources and dates are not given in this curiously sloppy volume).

⁶⁵ The extent of primary school coverage is indicated by the government’s decision to introduce universal secondary education (up to the age of 15) in 1957, a step that would have been impossible had primary education not reached nearly 100 per cent at the time.

primary school syllabus itself made a formidable contribution to the sense of the Soviet Union as a universal power, with its emphasis on the Russian language, on carefully-chosen literary texts and songs (the Russian classics, favourite Soviet works for children such as Chuk and Gek, and songs such as “Comrade Stalin Gave the Order”, Boguslavsky’s “Song of the Soviet Border-Guard”), and study in history of “The USSR, Our Motherland”.⁶⁶ For example, the standard reading-primer for the ten year olds, Native Language, opened with a stirring poem by Mikhail Isakovsky about the supremacy of the Soviet Union:

Travel over seas and oceans,
And fly over the whole earth, --
There are many different countries in the world,
But none like ours is to be found.

Our radiant waters are deep,
Our earth is so wide and so free,
And our factories resound unceasingly,
And our fields rustle into bloom.

By a sensitive heart and a wise hand
A great friendship is given to us:
And we live in one unified family,
All the nations and all the tribes.

All of them are as dearly loved as brothers,
All have room to grow and bloom...
Yes, travel the seas and the oceans,

⁶⁶ See Programmy nachal'noi shkoly (Moscow: Uchpedgiz, 1945). Some foreign literature was suggested in the lists of recommendations as well, but of a fantasy-based kind that would not present Soviet children with an alternative image of reality -- abbreviations of Gulliver's Travels and Robinson Crusoe, Kipling's animal story Riki-tiki-tavi and Seton-Thompson's tale 'Chink'. The preference for Western colonial literature was no doubt an unconscious one.

You will not find a land that's more friendly.⁶⁷

As one would expect, the onset of the Thaw years saw a partial revival of internationalism in children's culture, as in most other areas of Soviet life. The need to expand and improve foreign language teaching, became an issue of central concern: it was highlighted in the 24 December 1959 decree, "On Strengthening the Links of the School with Life", which ushered in wide-ranging changes in the secondary school syllabus, and institutionalised via another decree of 27 May, "On Improving the Study of Foreign Languages", which called for 700 extra schools specialising in languages to be opened by 1965. These measures were fundamentally different in scale and ambition from a pilot scheme introduced in 1948, whereby a few selected metropolitan schools, such as the Romain Rolland secondary school in Moscow, had introduced teaching of mainstream subjects in a foreign language.⁶⁸ Literary and artistic culture shared in the translation boom of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, with Western children's classics such as Milne's Winnie the Pooh (Vinni-Pukh), Tolkien's The Hobbit, and Astrid Lindgren's Pippi Longstocking becoming favourite reading among Soviet children. Not since the early twentieth century, when Russian children gorged on Fenimore Cooper, Maine Reid, Jules Verne, and Frances Hodgson Burnett (often without thinking of them as 'foreign' writers at all) had there been such a significant influx of foreign-produced children's writing into the culture. The publication of a Russian translation of Dr

⁶⁷ E. E. Solov'eva, N. N. Schepetova, L. A. Karpinskaya, V. I. Volynskaya, A. A. Kanarskaya, Rodnaya rech': kniga dlya chteniya v III klasse nachal'noi shkoly (Moscow: Gos. Uch-ped. Izd. Ministerstva prosveshcheniya SSSR, 1946), p. 3.

⁶⁸ See the editorial, "Osnovatel'no izuchat' inostrannye yazyki", Sovetskaya pedagogika 2 (1961), 10-16, which lists the faults of the present system as: not enough hours compared with schools in other countries (e.g. Britain, France, etc); too narrow a choice of languages (Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Spanish should be added to the traditional French, German, and English); not enough qualified staff; and poor methodology, with too much emphasis on written use and not enough on spoken use. For a general discussion of special language schools, see John Dunstan, Paths to Excellence and the Soviet School (Windsor: NFER Publishing, 1978), pp. 92-106.

Benjamin Spock's Baby and Child Care in 1970 was an equally important landmark of rapprochement with Western ideas about infant management.⁶⁹ For its part, official propaganda for and about children, as with official youth culture, attempted to make some accommodation with the outside world, albeit in a hesitant and heavily ritualised way. Contemporaneously with the 1957 Festival of Youth, the most prestigious Pioneer camp in the Soviet Union, Artek, was transformed from a camp for the national juvenile elite (with occasional hand-picked foreign children of impeccable Communist provenance, such as Paul Thorez and his brother) into a forum for international "peace and friendship". Large cohorts of children from different parts of the world visited the camp for stays in the summer, and it became a venue for juvenile get-togethers celebrating peace and asserting children's rights to a safe future. From 1967 onwards, Artek housed the All-Soviet Pioneer Rallies, held in 1967 and 1970, and biennially thereafter, visited by foreign delegations, and invariably graced by demonstrations for peace. Already in 1962, the first of these rallies to be held in the post-Stalin era had included foreign guests, and incorporated a "Peace Defence Day".⁷⁰ The internationalist drive of the 1920s began to be respectfully commemorated, and "international education" became part of the Pioneer programme: "Rooms of International Friendship" were opened in Pioneer palaces during the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁷¹ It is scarcely surprising that the old 'spy mania' now began to be the subject of gentle irony, as in a story by Rady Pogodin, "The Rowan Branch", in which some boys are incited by one of their number into monitoring a likely 'saboteur' by the railway line, only to discover that he is a

⁶⁹ B. Spok, Rebenok i ukhod za nim (Moscow: Progress, 1970). According to the catalogue of the Russian National Library in St Petersburg, the book had gone into 37 editions by 1995, most of them, however, post-1990.

⁷⁰ See Istoriya VLKSM, p. 263. The First All-Soviet Pioneer Rally had been held in 1929, also with foreign participation; no further rallies were held at all during the Stalin era, and the next in the series was the 1962 event, thirty-three years later.

⁷¹ Shenkendorf, „Internatsional'noe vospitanie“, 35-42.

holiday-maker from a local dacha settlement who is searching for string so he can mend his broken sandal.⁷²

All the same, though, the inculcation of “an elevated sense of Soviet patriotism” and “readiness to defend the socialist motherland” remained among the primary tasks of the Soviet school, as specified, for example, in a 10 November 1966 decree “On Ways of Further Improving the Soviet School”, and also in the “Statutes of the General Secondary School” approved on 8 September 1970.⁷³ Soviet classics such as Gaidar’s War Secret (with its story-within-a-story narrating the heroic death of young Mal’chish in a war against the burzhuiny, or ‘Boorjooee’) were still retained on the school syllabus, and taught with attention to the patriotic theme.⁷⁴ And when Chukovsky’s From Two to Five reappeared in 1955 (the book had been kept ‘on ice’ since 1939), it was in a far more ‘Soviet’ variant. In later editions of From Two to Five, including those published in the 1960s and 1970s, the fairy tale (skazka), a genre originally championed by Chukovsky for its efficacy in stimulating the child’s imagination, was now seen as a means of instilling moral values and as “an ideal way of steeping the child in the elements of his native language” (p. 339). Where the 1933 edition of From Two to Five had argued that Russian was rather poor in verbs formed from nouns (p. 44), the 1970 edition asserted that “our language is exceptionally rich in verbs formed from substantives” (p. 288: my emphasis). The tireless Mikhalkov, once more acting as

⁷² Rady Pogodin, „Ryabinovaya vetka“, in his Murav’inoe maslo (Leningrad: Detgiz, 1957), pp. 21-8.

⁷³ For the text of this decree and statute, see Spravochnik direktora shkoly: Sbornik zakonodatel’nykh, rukovodyashchikh i instruktivnykh materialov (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1971), pp. 5-12 and pp. 13-24.

⁷⁴ The frame narrative, with its tale of threat from the enemy within (corrupt workers on a building project directed by the boy hero’s father) pulls in rather a different direction, but it was the narrative-within-a-narrative on which Soviet children were directed to concentrate when discussing “Voennaya taina” in schools. Cf. the model questionnaire given in E. G. Tuneva, “’Skazka o Voennoi Taine’ A. Gaidara kak sredstvo patrioticheskogo vospitaniya uchashchikhsya IV klassa”, in L. A. Khinkova, N. I. Rybakov, A. A. Frolov (eds.), Tvorchestvo A. P. Gaidara (Gorky: Gor’kovskii gos. ped. inst im. A. M. Gor’kogo, 1975, p. 200).

mouthpiece for official opinion, insisted that one need not look further than the Soviet borders for genuine civilisation:

Why do we need Washington
When we've got Moscow? !⁷⁵

And children were also read stirring lectures about the most grandiose form of Soviet expansionism -- into space itself. Mikhalkov's poem "Be Prepared!" demonstrated his topicality in this genre as well (while also ensuring this particular work a fairly short shelf-life, in the event, through a rare contribution to Khrushchev's short-lived 'personality cult'). Here the astronaut Titov was presented as a role-model for children, soaring off into space and then returning to receive the congratulations of the nation, not to speak of its delighted leader.⁷⁶ Now, it seemed, the global ambitions of the Soviet Union were unstoppable: the country was no longer seen as an alternative and autonomous cosmos, but rather, as entitled to moral dominance over not only the paltry globe, but over the universe itself.

This paper has set up a schema marking out three phases of shifting Russian attitudes to the question of children and globalisation. The first phase, beginning in the early twentieth century and continuing, with some qualifications, into the early Soviet period, was an explicitly internationalist one, according to which children were encouraged to develop foreign contacts, and efforts were made to assimilate child-care and child welfare arrangements to what were seen to be superior foreign standards. This was succeeded by a second phase, making itself felt from 1932, which I have described as 'one nation globalisation', when national pride became rampant, and children were encouraged to prepare for the likelihood of aggressive invasion and penetration of the motherland by sinister foreign agents. The third phase, evident from 1955-6,

⁷⁵ Mikhalkov, SS vol. 1, p. 325.

⁷⁶ Mikhalkov, SS vol. 1, pp. 320-9.

represented, on the one hand, a return to early Soviet internationalism (with the revival of celebratory rituals bringing together Russian and foreign children), and on the other, a perpetuation of national suprematism, via the persistence of propaganda about the Soviet Union as a unique children's paradise, and also the continuing dissemination to children of texts underlining the Soviet Union's moral right to world leadership. The biography of Kornei Chukovsky – who moved from adaptations of Anglophone literature for and about children into assaults on the corruption of children within the capitalist system, and who continued to express nationalist views while acting as a figurehead for the liberalisation of the Soviet system – expresses at a personal level the historical shifts within Soviet understanding of childhood and its relationship to the outside world.

On the face of it, the discussion here might seem to fit rather uneasily into the 'transnational' and 'global' preoccupations of the present project. However, the accommodations made by Chukovsky – which I would emphasise were not necessarily opportunist in the ordinary sense⁷⁷ -- also needed to be made by ambitious intellectuals in other Sovietised countries in Eastern and Central Europe. In György Lukács (the subject of György Péteri's contribution to this project)⁷⁸, one can also see an instance of an intellectual of this type, who seized favourable moments in order to articulate what were for him issues of principled belief held consistently over time. And in any case, as I have emphasised, a transnational perspective is essential to the correct

⁷⁷ Chukovsky was on at least two occasions the victim of public denunciations: in 1928 Nadezhda Krupskaya condemned his works as egregious examples of the then taboo genre of *skazka* (fairy tale), and in 1946, his poem *Bibigon* was assailed in *Pravda* as pernicious. And his hatred for popular-cultural forms went back well before the Revolution, when it was expressed, for example, in famous attacks on the popular children's writer Lidiya Charskaya and the romantic novelist Anastasiya Verbitskaya.

⁷⁸ György Péteri, "Before the Schism: On György Lukács's 'Plebeian Democracy' in a Global Perspective", draft paper presented at the international workshop "Across and Beyond the East-West Divide" arranged by the Program on East European Cultures & Societies, Trondheim, December 14, 2001.

understanding of the Soviet campaign to ‘modernise’ childhood, which not only followed similar lines to campaigns in other countries, but which was informed by acute awareness of policy in other countries, an awareness that did not disappear even at self-declaredly isolationist eras of Soviet history. Particularism is no more appropriate when discussing nationalist propaganda for and about children than when considering any other area of the Soviet ‘modernisation of childhood’. Other cultures -- Ireland, Italy, Scotland, to name but three -- have all congratulated themselves on the high value that they (like allegedly no other culture) place on children's welfare and happiness.⁷⁹ The patriotic values inculcated by the post-1935 Soviet system were disseminated with equal insistency in Western countries during the early twentieth century. In British classrooms, children heard about “the Empire where the sun never sets”, studied geography from maps covered in pink to represent imperial possessions, and learned by heart stirring poems by Kipling and other keepers of the patriotic flame. Even after two world wars had dampened patriotic fervour of this kind, protective xenophobia persisted all over the West. Spy mania was widespread in late 1940s and 1950s fiction, not just in ‘pulp’ (for example, Hergé’s comic strip King Ottakar’s Sceptre, in which the Belgian ‘boy reporter’ Tintin foiled the efforts of agents of the sinister Balkan totalitarian statelet ‘Borduria’ to overthrow the constitutional monarchy in a neighbouring country), but in quality material too (an example being Antonia Forrest’s British children's novel The Marlows and the Traitor (1953)).⁸⁰ It was only in the 1960s when the Soviet Union began to seem anomalous in international terms

⁷⁹ On Scotland, for example, see Lynn Abrams, The Orphan Country: Children of Scotland's Broken Homes from 1845 to the Present Day (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1998).

⁸⁰ To be sure, Forrest’s novel (published by the distinguished literary house, Faber, best-known for its association with T. S. Eliot) takes a rather different tack from most, if not all, Soviet writing about treachery: it attempts some insight into the traitor’s motives, which are seen to emanate more from disappointment and disillusion than from manipulation by a foreign power.

(or, to put it another way, comparable with the only other Western culture still harbouring global ambitions, the USA, where the national flag -- by the 1960s already something mostly used in Britain as a joke symbol on cheeky knickers and so on -- still had quasi-sacred status in the late twentieth century, and where patriotic education was still extremely live in school rooms).

If Soviet experience should not be seen as unique, it should not be seen as homogeneous either. Certainly, the vast majority of Soviet citizens were exposed to patriotic education and indoctrination of one kind or another: one has to posit a childhood spent in some remote rural outpost, beyond the reaches of the primary school system and outside the network of the mass media, in order to imagine an alternative.⁸¹ Equally certainly, it would be somewhat perverse to argue, as at least one commentator has, that Soviet children's literature was responsible for the liberal values of the Thaw generation,⁸² without also acknowledging its part in disseminating a sense of pride in the Soviet Union's global status -- from its supposed dominance in the world of culture and sport to its reputed championing of 'world peace'. Records of popular mentality, even those of a very lightly ideologised kind (such as the letters cited in V. Zenzinov's unique anthology *A Meeting with Russia*, 1944) suggest that patriotism was one of the few elements in official propaganda that did have widespread resonance among adults in the Stalin era. Even if they could not spell the official slogan, "we wish you sukses in feerless defens of our borders", many working-class and peasant letter-writers were willing to

⁸¹ Russian ethnographers doing field work in Siberia as late as the 1980s and 1990s were able to discover some such communities, for example, villages of Old Believers where the inhabitants were so out of touch with world events that they were not aware the Second World War had ever taken place. Religious prohibitions against new inventions such as radio and television, and against secular education, had insulated these communities against Soviet life in almost all its forms. But such villages were certainly exceptional, most particularly after the massive drive to develop access to television during the 1970s (on which see E. Mickiewicz, *Split Signals: Television and Politics in the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁸² Ronen, "Detskaya literatura i sotsialisticheskii realism", p. 678.

parrot the phrase.⁸³ Equally, there is evidence that patriotic propaganda could have its effects on children at the same period, though it was absorbed (as common sense would anyway suggest) in a haphazard and contradictory way. “I subscribed to Pionerskaya pravda and I subscribed to the magazine Zorka,” recalled Petr Kruzhin (b. 1921), who grew up in a village in Tver’ Province. “I swallowed at one gulp the articles that told how Pioneers of the border areas helped to arrest frontier-jumpers [...] I read a serial about little Pavlik Morozov’s murder and dreamt about unmasking kulaks myself. Once again, however, these ideas co-existed with my dislike of tattle-tales and informers, my admiration for many kinds of illegalities, and my belief in loyalty among friends.”⁸⁴ But tales about border-guards did not evoke the same kind of slightly queasy uncertainty and insecurity aroused by the tale of Pavlik Morozov did (“could I really betray my parents?”)⁸⁵ They fitted much better into children’s delatory culture, with its prohibition on betraying one’s own, but ingrained suspicion of outsiders; here, if nowhere else, official adult culture and children’s subculture were in some sort of congruence.⁸⁶

⁸³ See V. Zenzinov (ed.), Vstrecha s Rossiej (New York: no publisher given, 1944). Zenzinov’s anthology prints letters discovered on the bodies of Soviet Russian soldiers killed during the ‘Winter War’ of 1939-1940. Referring to a slightly earlier period, and using different sources (official reports of popular feeling, or *svodki*, from the mid-1930s), however, Sarah Davies claims that there is little evidence for much positive sense of Russian, or even Soviet, identity at this point. (Popular Opinion in Stalin’s Russia: Terror, Propaganda, and Dissent, 1934-1941 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 89-90).

⁸⁴ Petr Kruzhin in N. K. Novak-Deker (ed.), Soviet Youth: Twelve Komsomol Histories (Munich: Institute for the Study of the USSR, 1959), p. 191.

⁸⁵ As Yakov Avidon recalled feeling about Morozov: Leonard J. Kent, A Survivor of A Labor Camp Remembers: Expendable Children of Mother Russia (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997), p. 189.

⁸⁶ For a comparable instance, see Tito Kolliander’s account of how he and his brother were taunted and bullied at the skating-rink as ‘Germans’ (they were in fact Swedes) during the First World War (“Peterburgskoe detstvo”, Nevskii arkhiv issue 2 (1995), 22): had this happened after October 1917, they would probably have had received the same treatment for being burzhui.

But patriotic education was not always so obviously in harmony with children's culture, or with the fourth strand of socialisation (alongside peer-group impact, political indoctrination, and school education), the influence of parents and other adults on children. Among many historical subjects, the different elements in socialisation could come into conflict. An interesting individual example is given in the life history of a former Soviet orphanage inmate, the pseudonymous 'Nicholas Voinov'. Voinov himself felt a distant sense of gratitude to certain individuals within the Soviet system (if not to the system itself) for providing him with an alternative to life on the streets; this, and more importantly an affection for 'the motherland' made him feel that obedience was not in question when he was called up in 1941. For a friend of his, also from the orphanage system, but with closer ties to the world of the street, the whole idea of defending one's 'jail' was absurd – this man's sense of emotional link with his native territory went no further than a vague capacity to respond to the natural environment. And the polarised attitudes of these near-adults are still a great deal clearer and easier to define than the perceptions of younger children, such as the three-year-old boy who was to lisp in 1964, "I don't want to be Lussian. I want to be a person from Japan."⁸⁷

Even in the most isolationist phases of Soviet history, official nationalism was never the only instrument of national identity as this was experienced by the mass of the Soviet population. In her anthropological study *Russia and Soul*, Dale Pesmen has recently argued that popular concepts of national identity, while essentialist, owe more to the elusive concept of 'soul' (a shifting metaphor for concepts such as generosity, readiness to offer hospitality, indifference to material gain, and so on) than to the political status of Russia as nation.⁸⁸ While it might be risky to extrapolate this information back into historical eras when Russia enjoyed more political power than in the early post-Soviet era when Pesmen did her research, popular

⁸⁷ Valeriia Mukhina, *Bliznetsy* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1969, p. 144 (diary entry of 17 August 1964: Mukhina's twins were then three and a half years old).

⁸⁸ D. Pesmen, *Russia and Soul* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

ideas about ‘soul’ have been densely entangled with notions of personal and collective identity for at least the last century and a half,⁸⁹ and it seems reasonable to suppose that the identification of ‘Russianness’ and ‘soul’ might be equally old. If this provided some kind of counter-stimulus to the tenets of official propaganda to those without much education, people brought up in the cultural elite, with access since childhood to an international library of books, and (if they came from the old intelligentsia) sometimes parents who had travelled to Western Europe as well, were capable of forming a different, more internationalist view of Russia’s place than that propounded in propaganda from the mid-1930s (as were reflective individuals from any status background who had been exposed to the internationalist character of school education before 1932, and were stimulated to wonder about why the official line had changed).⁹⁰

Yet the belief that the Soviet Union was genuinely a force for civilisation -- in Central Asia, if nowhere else -- was quite widespread among educated Russians; hence, ‘loss of empire’ was a wounding experience for almost everyone who grew up in the Stalin years, however fiercely they opposed the Stalin regime and its successors. This point has been recorded in several large-scale academic investigations;⁹¹ at an anecdotal

⁸⁹ As manifested, for instance, by the proverbs cited in V. Dal’, *Tolkovyĭ slovar’ zhivogo velikorussskogo yazyka* (see e.g. 2nd edn., Moscow, 1882-1884; reprinted Moscow: Russkii yazyk, 1978, vol. 1).

⁹⁰ Children from intelligentsia families were also heavily advantaged, as John Dunstan points out, in the supposedly neutral entrance tests for special language schools (*Paths to Excellence*, p. 101). And even ordinary city schools were likely to offer better opportunities than village ones: an order of the Ministry of Education on 13 December 1968 making provision for separate streaming in the top forms of the full secondary school for pupils from the eight-year programme who came from village schools where there had been little or no language teaching (*Spravochnik direktora shkoly*, p. 139) is a clear indication of significant failure at that point.

⁹¹ See e.g. H. Pilkington, *Migration, Displacement and Identity in post-Soviet Russia* (London: Routledge, 1998), particularly ch. 8, which argues that the negative views among re-migrants to Russia of the behaviour and attitudes of Russians permanently domiciled there constitutes “an apparent inversion of migrants’ own sense of cultural

level, it was not uncommon, in the 1990s, to hear cultivated Russian scholars born in the 1930s and 1940s assuming that their Nordic audience would be complimented when they talked of a translator from the Finnish who “devoted her entire life to the literature of this little country”, (in fact one of Europe's larger land units), and one could quite regularly hear remarks such as “mne kak-to stranno, chto Pribaltika bol'she ne nasha” (it's kind of odd that the Baltic States aren't ours any longer) even when engaged in private conversation with an ex-dissident.⁹² Given the restrictions on foreign travel (a perquisite of high-ranking Party officials, top scientists, and famous creative artists until the late 1980s), the Soviet global myth was not open to scrutiny in the same way as, say, the myth of the Soviet Union as ‘workers’ paradise’, or of late Soviet society as characterised by full equality between men and women. Even if they shared Ronald Reagan’s view of their country as an ‘evil empire’, Soviet Russians tended to believe that their country was ‘evil’ because it was powerful and dangerous. And Soviet propaganda for children was also an important source for the seductive myths about the West -- rich, privileged, socially divided, morally corrupt -- that haunted many Soviet citizens in the late 1990s.

It would be absurdly simplistic (indeed, one could go further: offensively crude) to assume that everything in the belief system of a reflective adult (or even a not very reflective one) could be traced back to childhood experience. But when

superiority – which, after all, was based on the story of Russians ‘civilizing’ the East”.

⁹² All these cases are based on personal observation. Finnish and Hungarian nationals have reported to me remarks along similar lines – ‘when Hungary/Finland wasn't ours any longer’, and so on. Even intellectuals born in the late 1950s and 1960s sometimes subscribed to at least a residue of official patriotism: the claim of the Communist Party hardliners who organised the August 1991 coup that the Soviet Union had suffered a catastrophic decline in national prestige since glasnost struck a chord among many who bitterly opposed the so-called ‘return to normality’ proposed by the junta. I hope (practicalities permitting) at some stage to follow up these rather desultory comments about popular attitudes with work among focus groups in several Russian cities aimed at tracking the relationship between ‘patriotic education’ and adult attitudes to Russia’s standing vis-à-vis the West and the rest of the world.

they move outside the area of their precise professional expertise, or of their day-to-day experience, most adults (however well educated) tend to be thrown back on the level of information with which they were programmed at school. (For me, at primary school in London during the 1960s, some aspects of patriotism seemed puzzling if not nonsensical – for example, the ‘I’m Backing Britain’ campaign to try and persuade British shoppers to reject imported goods. But others – for example, the sentimental views of international co-operation encouraged by visits to the Commonwealth Institute, housed in an extraordinary scoop of oxidised bronze and green glass – continue to colour my attitudes to the present day.) And in any case, the direct experience of many post-Soviet Russians during the second half of the twentieth century worked to increase the authority of childhood myths, rather than to undermine these. The Sovietisation of Eastern and Central Europe gave the former Pioneers of the 1920s and 1930s the chance to exercise ‘patronage’ of an absolutely real kind over the cultural elite of Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Czechoslovakia.⁹³ Conversely, once post-Soviet marketisation had placed institutionalised child-care beyond the reach of many parents, and wrecked the rough-and-ready, but reasonably extensively developed, network of free medical services for small children, and once educational inequality (formerly passed over in silence) began to be underlined by the formation of expensive private schools, the Soviet Union came to seem in retrospect very much the ‘paradise for children’ that it had boasted itself to be. And increased opportunities for foreign travel also worked to ingrain stereotypes, rather than to wipe them away. Herded into inferior hotels in the beach resorts of countries whose language they could not speak, overcharged for poor food and shoddy souvenirs, exploited as cheap labour if they tried to earn foreign currency, post-Soviet tourists were naturally inclined to accept

⁹³ See e.g. John Connelly, “The Sovietization of Higher Education in the Czech Lands, East Germany, and Poland During the Stalinist Period, 1948-1954”, in M. David-Fox and G. Péteri (eds.), Academia in Upheaval: Origins, Transfers, and Transformations of the Communist Academic Regime in Russia and East Central Europe (Westport, Conn.: Bergin and Garvey, 2000), pp. 141-78.

the Dickensian stereotypes of Western life (bloated capitalists versus suffering workers) perpetuated by the most chauvinistic Soviet children's literature and journalism as an unexpectedly honest documentation of the truth.⁹⁴ One legacy of Soviet children's writing may have been the eventual collapse of the system that propaganda texts celebrated, but another was to constrict many of its former readers' ability to adapt to any system set up as an alternative. In turn, the prevalence of Soviet chauvinism (often with overtones of 'Great Russian chauvinism') in school education after 1946, imitated in the 'most favoured nation' propaganda of Soviet satellite states, provides further evidence for Katherine Verdery's compelling hypothesis that the upsurge of divisive nationalism in the former Soviet Union and Soviet bloc after 1991 should be seen as a *product* of Soviet nationalism, rather than simply a reaction to this.⁹⁵ At the same time, adjustment to the post-Soviet world has been a good deal easier for citizens of Russia's former dominions, who have been able to call upon 'pure' traditions of popular resistance and national self-expression allegedly repressed under Soviet power, than it has for subjects of the nation that was once 'first among equals' in the Soviet Union: which is perhaps the reason why externally-oriented xenophobia should have taken firmer root in Russia than in some other parts of the former Soviet bloc.

⁹⁴ An interesting fictional version of a disastrous encounter with the West of this kind is the immensely popular detective-story writer Aleksandra Marinina's thriller *Smerti -- svetlyi lik* (Death Has a Bright Face) (1998), which begins with scenes in which two Russian girls try to find work in Turkey, and rapidly discover that only a job in a massage parlour (in the sleazy sense of the term) will allow them to make even a narrow profit out of their stay in the country.

⁹⁵ K. Verdery, "Nationalism and National Sentiment in Post-Soviet Russia", *Slavic Review* 52: 2 (1993), 179-203. Verdery dwells particularly on hostility to minority ethnic groups, such as Jews and Gypsies, which hostility she sees as an inversion of the 'us against them' trope in Soviet-era propaganda. The relation between anti-Western feeling in post-Soviet Eastern Europe (especially Russia) and anti-Western propaganda in the Soviet era seems more straightforward.

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