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TODAY'S RUSSIAN INTELLIGENTSIA

A New Role in the Post-Soviet Political Order

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A VIBRANT INTELLECTUAL CLASS IS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT IN ANY HEALTHY SOCIETY. THE INTELLIGENTSIA DEVELOPED IN RUSSIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND ARE HISTORICALLY DEFINED BY HIGH MORAL PRINCIPLES, JUSTICE, FREEDOM, RULE OF LAW, AND THEIR ROLE AS PRODUCERS OF THE PREDOMINANT RUSSIAN DISCOURSE. IN THE POST-SOVIET POLITICAL PARADIGM, INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT WAS NEEDED MORE THAN EVER. HOWEVER, INSTEAD OF AN EMERGENT INTELLECTUAL CLASS FREE FROM GOVERNMENT CONTROL, TRUE INTELLECTUALS WERE UNABLE TO TRANSFORM IN THE INTERIM YEARS AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETREATED FROM THE FUNCTIONS THEY HISTORICALLY PERFORMED. THE INTELLIGENTSIA WERE CO-OPTED BY THE POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT MUCH AS THEY WERE IN THE SOVIET UNION. EVEN THE WORD HAS LOST ITS SOCIAL VALUE TODAY AS A DIFFERENT CLASS OF SOCIAL ELITES IS INCREASINGLY PROMOTED IN MEDIA AND POLITICAL CIRCLES. SOME GROUPS STILL REMAIN TRUE TO THE TRADITIONAL INTELLIGENTSIA, BUT THEY ARE THE FEW WHO KEEP THIS IMPORTANT RUSSIAN SOCIAL CLASS ALIVE.

Henceforth, a poet will be . . . well, just a poet, vying on the bookshelves with Angelique, James Bond and horoscopes. This is a change of history of Russian culture which may prove as profound as the collapse of communism.ⁱ

— Simon Franklin, *Cambridge Slavonic Studies*. August 28, 1991.

Artists, literary scholars, academics, critics, and other members of the intelligentsia, like poets, were forced to transform during the emergence of a post-Soviet political order. The problem of understanding who the intellectual has become is one of interpreting cultural forces. Historically, the Russian people are understood as a mass molded by two forces: the rulers and the intelligentsia. While the ruling class changed throughout Russian history, the intelligentsia remained the conscience that spans time to give the mass shape, voice, and direction.ⁱⁱ Despite its potential after the Soviet collapse, no vibrant social intellectual force emerged in its traditional role to provide the guiding discourse. The identity of Russian intelligentsia is complex, and to explain its phase shifts and historical importance is difficult. To understand the intelligentsia's absence as a critical agent of social and political production in Russia today requires understanding the historical identity and importance of the intelligentsia, its particular constitution during different eras of Russian history, and a closer look at how the intelligentsia adapted and was forced into a subordinate role in the post-Soviet environment.

In its purest sense, the notion of “intelligentsia” is a Russian invention since employed to help explain similar social groups and cultural phenomena in other regions.ⁱⁱⁱ Despite its clear origin, some scholars suggest it has lost any objective meaning.^{iv} The intelligentsia has been responsible for much of the political, ideological, and cultural transformation in Russia and is traditionally associated with civic opposition, high moral principles, incisive moral criticism, and freedom as a necessity for social justice, human rights, and the rule of law. The roots of the term are traced to the 1800s, especially the 1830s and 1840s when

democratic ideas first penetrated the student consciousness, but “intelligentsia” was not used widely until the 1860s and 1870s when it became associated with the educated classes and the socialist, revolutionary class.^v The term continued to gather meaning in the early 1900s as it became associated with a burgeoning class of professionals and intellectuals.

One common element is an “otherness” understood both positively and negatively. The intelligentsia understood its role as the engine of “real” Russian progress, but this otherness also manifested itself in a perceived alienation, depicting the intellectual as out of touch with mainstream society.^{vi} Regardless of the differing perspectives, there is a consistent notion of isolation, especially from the state autocracy. The intelligentsia gained special status through passionate personal engagement in ethical questions that separated the group along different national, social, and ideological lines.^{vii}

Intellectuals are often classified as noble, but the Russian nobility, like the intelligentsia, was historically multidimensional: rich, poor, rural, urban, and occupying a variety of posts. Thus, the “class” distinction is problematic. Additionally, proximity to authorities, wealth, and social status were not traditionally considered a sign of intelligence or talent.^{viii} A generational variable also must be addressed because, as ideological foundations passed from father to son, the shape of intellectual society shifted accordingly. Historian and philologist Yuri Lotman denies any class identification of the intelligentsia and rather defines the group as people who acted from conscience and shame rather than fear and profit.^{ix}

The Soviet era drastically changed the traditional concept of Russian intelligentsia, clarifying the identity of this eclectic group. The Soviet intelligentsia became the “broad occupational stratum similar to the bureaucratic, managerial, and technical elite referred to frequently in Western studies of modernizing countries.”^x These intellectuals, however, were mired in Soviet ideology, characterized by inclusion

rather than otherness, and underscored the cooptation of the intellectuals under the Soviet regime. The more traditional intelligentsia was forced to do intellectual work for the party and the working class. Under Lenin and the party, the prevailing Bolshevik vision of the intellectual was “thin-skinned, detached from life, incapable of taking action and unwilling to get his hands dirty.”^{xi} The departure from the traditional cultural value of the intellectual is clear.

Perhaps the best way to understand the intelligentsia is as a subculture—loosely associated individuals with varied structural roles, ideas, and opportunities, as well as diverse relationships with the state, bureaucracy, and each other.^{xii} The advantages of the subculture distinction are its emphasis on disassociation, focus of values outside normal Russian society, and its mutability. A subculture shifts form to align with changing empirical conditions. As noted before, the traditional intelligentsia was not particularly identified with authority, power, wealth, or social status, whereas many of today’s intellectuals are public figures who value material goods and the state and break from the traditional intelligentsia mold.

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In his extensive analysis of the Russian intelligentsia, Alexei Elfimov differentiates three intellectual groups. Based on the Soviet era, his classification characterizes the bureaucratization of the intelligentsia and the divisions the inherent contradiction the term “Soviet intelligentsia” implied. The first and largest group consists of individuals who held positions of power, management, or control over cultural production and occupied posts in journals, newspapers, film, TV, radio, or as art producers, department heads, deans, or academics. This group “dismissed moral

implications of the connection with the bureaucracy and, having thus cleared the bad conscience predicament once and for all, in good conscience assumed the right way of life, prescribed by the communist state.”^{xiii} The intellectuals in this group were successful within communism’s framework, comfortable with it, and produced the dominant cultural discourse.

The second group is smaller and well-educated, defined by their inability to move up the Soviet social scale. The distinction comes from their emphasis on “actual” intellectual achievement rather than capitulation to communist hierarchy and the party’s monopoly on professional success. They believed the genuine intelligentsia should not be bureaucratic and were often considered dissidents. In their society, this group produced the majority of true intellectual discourse and held positions such as lower journalists, talented writers rarely published, lower assistant or associate professors, and some creative artists. This classification is the most troubling; while they differentiated themselves enough to be depicted as the intelligentsia of a group, they often acted as intellectuals from the first category.

The final classification is the smallest group: those who believed in the traditional oppositional and alien role of the intelligentsia (like the second group), but were responsible for actual dissidence and opposition. Unfortunately, few managed to navigate the Soviet era and survive. Many were sent abroad or to the gulag. Their important role was to consolidate and maintain the identity of the true intellectual, even if only as martyrs. A modern example of this category of intellectual is journalist Anna Politkovskaya, whose death showed that fear still exists to quash outspo-

kenness and underscored the gap between those who serve the state those who serve the public.^{xiv}

Despite constructing this classification based on conditions of the late Soviet era, Elfimov's demarcation is also useful to analyze mobility and production of different intellectual groups after the Soviet collapse. The term "intelligentsia" is still widely employed but is now accompanied by the question, "Which type?" Although there is less political violence in today's Russia, the state maintains an important role in intellectual and cultural production. Using Elfimov's account today, the regime and bureaucracy can generally be inserted in place of its Soviet counterpart. In his classification, comfort and proximity to the communist regime becomes comfort with current nationalistic policy, authoritarian characterization, and materialism. Capitulation, participation in the regime, and departure from the traditional intellectual role remain the differentiating criteria.

Using this understanding of the Russian intelligentsia to analyze today's political and cultural order, the question becomes: "With *glasnost*, *perestroika*, and the fall of the Soviet regime, why did the third class of intellectuals not reinvent themselves as the influential, widely-recognizable intelligentsia, the engine of thought and real progress? In the mid-nineties, how can the intellectuals possibly be associated with power, corruption, failure of liberal democracy, and deference to the state?" Only through the analysis of the intelligentsia's his-

torical antecedents can the shift be accurately understood.

After 1917, prominent leaders such as Lenin and Bukharin took special interest in the neutered status of the intelligentsia. "The Bolshevik revolution," writes Boris Kagarlitsky, "which the *intelligenty* had done so much to prepare, trampled upon the very ideals that had led them to fight against Tsardom in the preceding decades."^{xv} The

dominant perception was that the intelligentsia was bourgeois, aristocratic, and distinct from the socialist intelligentsia that made up the Bolsheviks and the emerging bureaucracy. In a 1919 letter to writer Aleksei Maksimovich, Lenin wrote: "The intellectual forces of the workers and peasants are growing and getting stronger in their fight to overthrow the bourgeoisie and their accomplices, the educated classes, the lackeys of capital, who consider themselves the brains of the nations. In fact they are not its brains but its shit."^{xvi} Lenin considered the Constitutional Democrats the center of conspiracy against the Bolsheviks and initiated the massive arrests of a wide variety of past leaders.^{xvii} Lenin's revolutionary theory characterized the group as the "proletarians of

mental labor," relegated them to slaves of the party and the working classes, and concretized the juxtaposition to the Russian worker through the Constitution which defined the intelligentsia as a "layer," thus stripping the intellectual of legal status as a citizen.^{xviii}

Lenin and Stalin effectively wiped out the intelligentsia as a



JOURNALIST ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA WAS FOUND SHOT DEAD IN THE ELEVATOR IN HER APARTMENT.

political force by absorbing previous intellectual arenas to control and force the intelligentsia into poverty. Elfimov characterizes the intellectuals of the early Soviet era as “servants with no rights.”^{xix} Starting in the 1920s, plots of land and special privilege were given to artists, scientists, and other intellectuals who became the “favourite child” of the government. Scientists were especially important and received special treatment, housing, exemption from party membership requirements, and direct access to the Kremlin.^{xx} Any other concentration of intellectuals in places like universities, humanitarian institutions, or publishing houses was controlled via this system of servile dependence or tightly monitored by *nomenklatura*. In this condition, a political class developed that generated the mildly critical Soviet intellectual discourse, wanting no restrictions, but did not desire to dismember the system (i.e. intellectuals of type one and two).^{xxi} This political philosophy set the conditions for *perestroika* and the intellectual class to emerge after the collapse.

The Soviet era’s requisite double-role of intellectual survival was alluded to above: “Power worked through language as the population . . . identified with the regime through ‘speaking Bolshevik’ . . . Like the rest of the population, the intelligentsia engaged in doublespeak through which they succeeded in their careers and, during Stalinism, survived.”^{xxii} Writers like Voznesensky supported the Soviet discourse by writing pro-communist, patriotic poems, earning him the Lenin Komsomol prize, but also fulfilled his intellectual responsibility through “dissident” poetry.^{xxiii} The intellectual enjoyed freedom of ex-

pression in addition to state support while occupying an ambiguous moral middle ground—a split from the traditional intelligentsia’s critical moral and political roles.

Ironically, the second class of intelligentsia was the group most co-opted by the communist regime. Elfimov notes, “The trap was not just that the intelligentsia was given an unambiguous choice—either to serve the party or go to the gulag—it was rather that even serving the party, it could not be sure that it was doing the right thing and that its position was secure.”^{xxiv} Early in *perestroika*, the intelligentsia sup-

ported Gorbachev against the party’s conservative elements, but in later years the intellectuals radicalized and began to support Yeltsin when Gorbachev reacted against the intelligentsia’s increasingly activist democratic opposition.^{xxv} Despite its prior position of non-acceptance and opposition, the intelligentsia had firmly rooted itself within the cold politics of the regime.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the intelligentsia transformed itself from above by consolidating its efforts during *perestroika* as well as initiating a metamorphosis from below. Through historical discourse, the intelligentsia became a political force, delegitimizing Stalinism and Lenin’s totalitarianism and supporting Western liberalism.^{xxvi} It united with Yeltsin and the state. In 1988, the first opposition group was created—the Democratic Union—which proposed a liberal model of capitalism, self-determination of the republics, and withdrawal of Soviet troops.^{xxvii} Through the Congress of People’s Deputies, the intelligentsia was able to gain



LENIN AND HIS FOLLOWERS HAD THEIR OWN VIEW OF INTELLECTUALS.

power and civil groups emerged such as the Moskovskii Klub Intelligentsii and Moskovskoe Ob'ednenie Izburatelei. Together with the Democratic Russian Movement, the intellectual force drew followers from the Communist party and nominated Yeltsin for president in 1991 on the foundation of liberalization and nationalization.^{xxviii}

During and after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the intelligentsia traditionally manifested itself politically as the dissenting voice of opposition in accordance with its high moral standards. The intelligentsia's organization of new political and social groups indicated that intelligentsia subculture was capable of surviving years of suppression and co-optation. This healthy cultural status, however, waned during the 1990s as the state collapse also revealed a collapse of the intelligentsia, which was wholly unprepared for the tasks of building state institutions, assuming managerial roles, or coping with the economic downfall.

Despite direct political participation, by 1993 rifts within the intelligentsia were widening as awareness grew of Yeltsin's authoritarian, non-democratic tendencies, as well as the "unconstitutional" constitution.^{xxix} Some intellectuals joined the conservatives. Theater directors, writers, editors, physicists, young liberal economists, and former dissidents like Egor Gaidar, Anatoly Chubais, and Grigory Yavlinsky became deputies and assumed prominent positions within the emerging regime.^{xxx} Others like Sergei Kovalev, the Ombudsman of Human Rights, were labeled anti-Russian. Kovalev lost his post for documenting atrocities during the first Chechnya War in 1994—what Marina Peunova calls the "final blow to the intelligentsia's belief it had leverage on the government."^{xxxi} The intelligentsia broke apart, and its inter-regime efforts left behind no legacy of consolidated parties, institutions, or freedom but rather a paradigm shift from liberal democracy and dissent to conservatism and compliance.^{xxxii} On August 28, 1991, Franklin prophesied: "One result made stunningly plain over the past week, is the death of the party. Another less visible but in its way no less traumatic will be the death of



THROUGHOUT RUSSIAN HISTORY, LITERATURE WAS TRADITIONALLY CONTROLLED.

the Russian intelligentsia."^{xxxiii} His insight was the collapse of the national Russian myth, which ultimately forced the intelligentsia identity crisis of the mid-1990s that remains problematic today.

In many ways, the intelligentsia sowed the seeds of its own demise. Part of the intelligentsia, however, was successful in the inter-regime period and lives on today. In 1993, Yeltsin thanked the intelligentsia community for its support and important function in forming public opinion and culture that was the basis for Russia's emergence as a political power.^{xxxiv} Again, one must ask, "Which type?" It became clear he was directly thanking members of the creative intelligentsia: type one. This is an important distinction, for many intellectuals were already alienated by the changing political order and had retreated from a public, participatory role to uphold the traditional philosophy of the Russian intelligentsia.

Traditionally, the term "creative intelligentsia" signified the genuine intellectual—spiritually rich, genius, and inspired—but in modern Russia it came to describe a new group of non-government intellectuals that did not produce true intellectual discourse, was enamored of its popular

image, characterized by unhealthy ambition, and unable to differentiate between official and unofficial discourses.^{xxxv} Much like the party intellectuals who constructed Soviet realism during the early Soviet era and other intelligentsia who fed off public stature and privilege, the creative intelligentsia today is nurtured by publicity and materialism characteristic of close proximity to the regime. Far from the traditional view of the intelligentsia as producers and actors of “real” progress, the creative intelligentsia was born out of the “Yel-cynicism” that produced a negative Russian future by rejecting true ethnic Russian government, autonomy, education, and culture.^{xxxvi} “The Yeltsinoids’ regime turned us into zombie-like TV-viewers,” said Sergei Oushakine of the Russian Federation’s first president. “By substituting our values and passions with totally foreign desires, the regime—just like a circus magician—manipulates the individual and collective consciousness of Russia’s peoples. It is the *method of hermeneutics* that serves as the main tool of this manipulation.”

The intellectuals who thrived in the post-Soviet atmosphere were the nationalists and chauvinists that were able to outmatch the liberal, democratic intelligentsia in the limited interpretive space characterized by cynicism and hypocrisy. The elite political intellectuals could be found on state councils and boards such as the Foreign Ministry or within the Soviet military leadership and were responsible for the changing strategies, policies, intellectual exchange with the West, and geopolitical discourse that shaped emerging nation-state ideology.^{xxxvii} Despite the important role of this class in generating the prevailing cultural identity, its position within the bureaucratic elite eliminates application of the term “intelligentsia” in its truest sense and questions the character of Russian progress. Instead, members of this group are characterized as “technicians of practical knowledge” (*polittekhnologi*) or “people of air” (*ljudi vozdukha*)—politically apathetic spin-doctors who created the official discourse with a new type of information and rhetoric.^{xxxviii}

The entire spectrum of Russian society, and the intelli-

gentsia in particular, suffered an identity crisis in the post-Soviet order. The official discourse promoted Russia’s power and status more than human rights and individual liberties, and the Soviet-trained, administrative intellectual force looked upon the non-consolidated, non-government intelligentsia as irresponsible, unpatriotic, ignorant of the reformers’ plan, opposed to any government, and incapable of feeding itself because of its principles.^{xxxix} Conservative figure Mikhail Leont’ev wrote: “The circle of people that I belonged to perceived the events of the beginning of the 1990s as a triumph of liberalism. I am ashamed of this . . . The Russian Soviet intelligentsia did the same thing in 1991 that it did in 1917.”^{xl}

The intelligentsia searched its collective soul extensively. In the 1990s and into the new millennium, intellectuals gathered in multiple Congresses to discuss their role in the new political order. The 1997 Congress’ stated goals were broad. Firstly, it desired to use the intelligentsia’s power for the improvement of society, which is consistent with the traditional view of the intellectual as a progressive social servant, and second, the Congress wanted to overcome the traditional gap between the intelligentsia and power. Special attention was given to the moral climate, the spiritual remaking of society, and the fate of the Russian society, state, and national idea.^{xli} The last Congress was in 2003, and the intelligentsia had not changed significantly.

A closer look at modernity, literature, and academia during the regime transition is integral to understanding this stasis and the constructive efforts of the intelligentsia to advance the intellectual discourse. The intelligentsia misunderstood the fall of the Soviet Union much like it misinterpreted the regime transition in 1917, leaving Russian society in a crisis of modernity. Elfimov notes basic Russian linguistic challenges of modernity, but even more fundamental is the notion that Russia never encountered modernity in the same manner that the West experienced this important temporal and cultural concept.^{xlii} Social exploration during the regime transition included extensive investigation of new ideas and translation of

many texts. Russian anthropologist Serguei Oushakine characterizes this examination as “intellectual indigestion” and notes the fundamental problem of its multi-paradigmality: non-parallel intellectual strands such as structuralist and post-structuralist accounts emerged simultaneously and were interpreted as parallel phenomena.^{xliii} What transpired was a troubled attempt to account for the universal social condition during the transitional phase that was rooted deeply in the past. Unlike Soviet Marxism, however, this emerged outside the political context. The crisis of modernity prompted the beginning of genuine discourse—a search to understand the present and build the future by examining the past.

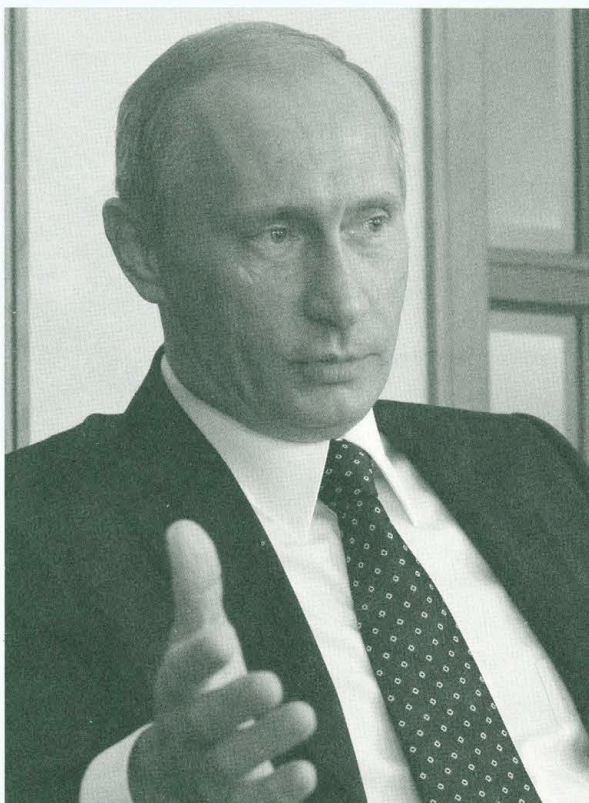
In literature, the intellectual discourse also required a look to the past and a resurgence of old texts, western and domestic, while simultaneously affecting fresh analysis of literature as an intellectual discussion. In Russian history, literature was traditionally controlled, but in the Soviet era, the suspicion and control of the independent word enhanced literature’s authority and fueled important political

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discussion through cryptic images, allusions, and metaphors.^{xliv} Under the controlled, complex organizational structure of writers’ unions, publishing houses, and popular newspapers, literature was an incredibly important mode of cultural production. However, during *glasnost*, non-literary forms of expression were liberated and the former creative monopoly of the small literary elite was broken.^{xlv} A linguistic vacuum emerged in the inter-regime period. People were looking between the lines for the truth and realizing the authors had nothing real to say.^{xlvi} Today, there is a struggle between the state and efforts to reinvent literature. New intellectuals strive to stretch the imaginative freedom of the new Russia while the state reacts to bring cultural activity back under its control.^{xlvii}

Like literature, academia’s influence sagged after the collapse. In the Soviet era, an academic post was very secure because it was one of the most bureaucratized and usually meant lifetime job security.^{xlviii} Academics lost their intelligentsia status by shrinking from their traditionally public, creative role into the comfort of the Soviet bureaucracy, but the end of *perestroika* signaled the end of academic privilege.^{xlix} In Russia today, the academic is on the same plane as all other public figures and simply cannot compete. Humanities academics are especially marginalized, often seen as Marxist retrogrades, and are ignored in favor of the modern, creative intelligentsia. Professors also make very little money and lack a healthy labor market. In 1997 an assistant professor made roughly thirty dollars per month, three times less than a secretary and fifteen times less than a poorly qualified bus driver.^l Despite the poor condition of the Russian academy, among many there is still the “feeling of responsibility before oneself, one’s occupation, the future of the country and finally before the students who cannot be left without knowledge, even if one is paid almost nothing.”^{li}

The intelligentsia as a cultural group and political player suffered greatly in the immediate post-Soviet order, but for each destitute analysis, there exists an effort to reinvent the intelligentsia in its traditional context. The Altai State



RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER VLADIMIR PUTIN.

University Faculty of Sociology and the regional intellectuals work to stop the “endless movement of symbolization,” provide a starting point for dealing with the past, and create a foundation for the future Russian ethos.^{lii} Organized around the “Russian tragedy,” the group posits a teleological organic body—a “primary embodiment” from which one can rediscover the vital force in the Russian ethos.^{liii} Although the discourse sometimes turns xenophobic, it is integral to escape the mechanical functionality of the post-communist, neoliberal order. It provides an alternative post-Soviet cosmogony and tries to solve the problem of the state under attack—a vision of a collapsed system of spiritual and moral values signifying the state’s lack of true social capital.^{liv} This work is very important to overcome the problems of modernity and engenders further discussion and development within academic circles and

the broader intellectual community. Similar production is visible in other regions that also hold critical academic responsibility in high esteem. In general, academics lack an extensive organizational structure and social and political opportunities.

Similar efforts exist in literature. A group called “Non/Fiction” intends to emphasize serious literature over banal entertainment of Russian literature today. Sincerity exists within the intelligentsia directly connected to the traditional moral high-ground, responsibility, and missionary obligation characteristic of intelligentsia of the 1800s.^{lv} However, this is counterbalanced by the continued degradation of literature in other parts of society. Formerly a fountainhead of intellectual writing, the publication *Junost’* proclaimed its new goal in 1999, “to stay away from the questions of ideology, politics, economics, law, national, and religious relations,” and in the same issue, it mocked efforts to publish journals as “a sweet fruit of the bitter Russian roots, the roots of lack of possessions, and therefore, of idleness.”^{lvi}

This is indicative of the modern intellectual retreat from the political discourse and also reflects the unsuccessful efforts of the intelligentsia to organize effective opposition. Government interaction remains nuanced. At the turn of the century, the intelligentsia began to cooperate more with the Putin administration while retaining elements of its traditional philosophy. To some intellectuals, Putin was seen as the savior from chaos and anarchy of the Yeltsin years as well as a benefactor of the arts, and he thus garnered support from public intellectuals of the first type.^{lvii} The intelligentsia’s reaction to Putin’s step-down as president in May 2008 is indicative of the degree of intellectual politicization. An open letter was written by representatives of the creative intelligentsia pleading Putin to remain in power which prompted a letter from the opposing camp opining in favor of his removal. Scholarly reaction characterized this moment as a “blip” on the intelligentsia’s “cardiogram”—highlighting the general lack of resistance by the part of society meant to provide intellectual

opposition.^{lviii} Today, the intelligentsia is largely represented by the Yabloko party, but this impoverished group was only able to garner 1.7% of the vote in 2007 (zero Duma seats).^{lix} Despite this failure, Putin and Yabloko head Grigoriy Yavlinskiy met in March 2008 to signify that the Kremlin—as it transitioned to the Medvedev administration—wants to accept the intelligentsia into the political discourse.^{lx} What remains to be seen is the particular development of this relationship and in what fashion the intellectuals work with the state to develop Russian culture and healthy discourse.

The modern political atmosphere was apparent in a May, 2008 roundtable discussion on state TV Rossiya channel titled “Intellectual Literature in Debates on the 2020 Strategy.” The guests suggested the intelligentsia actively participate in the country and society by providing a new ideology to aid Putin’s plan for Russia’s development. The Chairman of the Free Russia Public Association Union even said that the intellectual not participating in the country’s life was a traitor, terrorist, and worthless.^{lxi} What these state intellectuals failed to understand is that to ensure the country’s healthy development, the intelligentsia must remain outside such vapid discourse. Only by denying the with-us-or-against-us ultimatum can the intelligentsia stay true to its founding philosophy and reassert itself as the conscience of the Russian people.

The fall of communism did not stop the Soviet regime’s co-opted intellectual and cultural stranglehold from becoming the new Russian nationalistic machine that similarly blocked intelligentsia’s entrance to the political sphere and meaningful dialogue. The chance to reawaken vivacious intellectual culture was lost in the convoluted post-Soviet political order. The Russian intelligentsia is still hindered by limited access to political and cultural intellectual opportunities, but is also hobbled by internal problems in academic literary fields. There is a real chance for Russian society to reinvent itself. The true intellectuals can play an integral role in the discourse, but the intelligentsia needs time to organize its efforts. “The room for honest speaking

is far greater than Russian intellectuals make use of,” says Marietta Chudakova, a historian of Russian literature. Yet she recognizes the paralyzing stasis as well: “Nobody has been commanded to lie down—and everyone is already on the ground.”^{lxii}

ENDNOTES

- i. Franklin
- ii. *Ibid.*
- iii. “The hand that feeds them; Russian intellectuals”
- iv. Brower (638-647, 638)
- v. Brower (639)
- vi. Kagarlitsky
- vii. Brower (639)
- viii. Matsuk
- ix. *Ibid.*
- x. Brower (645)
- xi. Matsuk
- xii. Elfimov 2000 (226)
- xiii. Elfimov 2000 (235)
- xiv. “Speaking truth to power”
- xv. Kagarlitsky (56)
- xvi. “Letter from Lenin to Gorky”
- xvii. “Attacks on Intelligentsia: Early Attacks”
- xviii. Elfimov 2003 (26)
- xix. Elfimov 2000 (232)
- xx. “The hand that feeds them; Russian intellectuals”
- xxi. *Ibid.*
- xxii. Peunova
- xxiii. Elfimov 2000 (231)
- xxiv. Elfimov 2000 (233)
- xxv. Peunova
- xxvi. *Ibid.*
- xxvii. “Declaration of the Democratic Union of Russia”
- xxviii. Peunova
- xxix. *Ibid.*
- xxx. *Ibid.*
- xxxi. *Ibid.*
- xxxii. “The hand that feeds them; Russian intellectuals”
- xxxiii. Franklin
- xxxiv. “Russia; Yeltsin talks to intelligentsia; mentions differences with Rutskey”
- xxxv. Peunova
- xxxvi. Oushakine (181)
- xxxvii. Holden (164)
- xxxviii. Peunova
- xxxix. Matsuk
- xl. Leont’ev
- xli. Aleksandrova
- xlii. Elfimov (230)
- xliii. Oushakine (172)
- xliv. Franklin

- xl. Ibid.
 xli. Elfimov 2000 (241)
 xlvii. O'Brien
 xlviii. Elfimov 2000 (239)
 xlix. Ibid.
 l. Elfimov 2000 (242)
 li. Elfimov 2000 (250)
 lii. Oushakine (182)
 liii. Oushakine (185)
 liv. Ibid.
 lv. O'Brien
 lvi. Novodvorskaia
 lvii. Korchagina
 lviii. "The hand that feeds them; Russian intellectuals"
 lix. Country Profile Russia
 lx. "Russian TV examines significance of Putin-Yavlinskiy meeting"
 lxi. Serova
 lxii. "The hand that feeds them; Russian intellectuals"

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