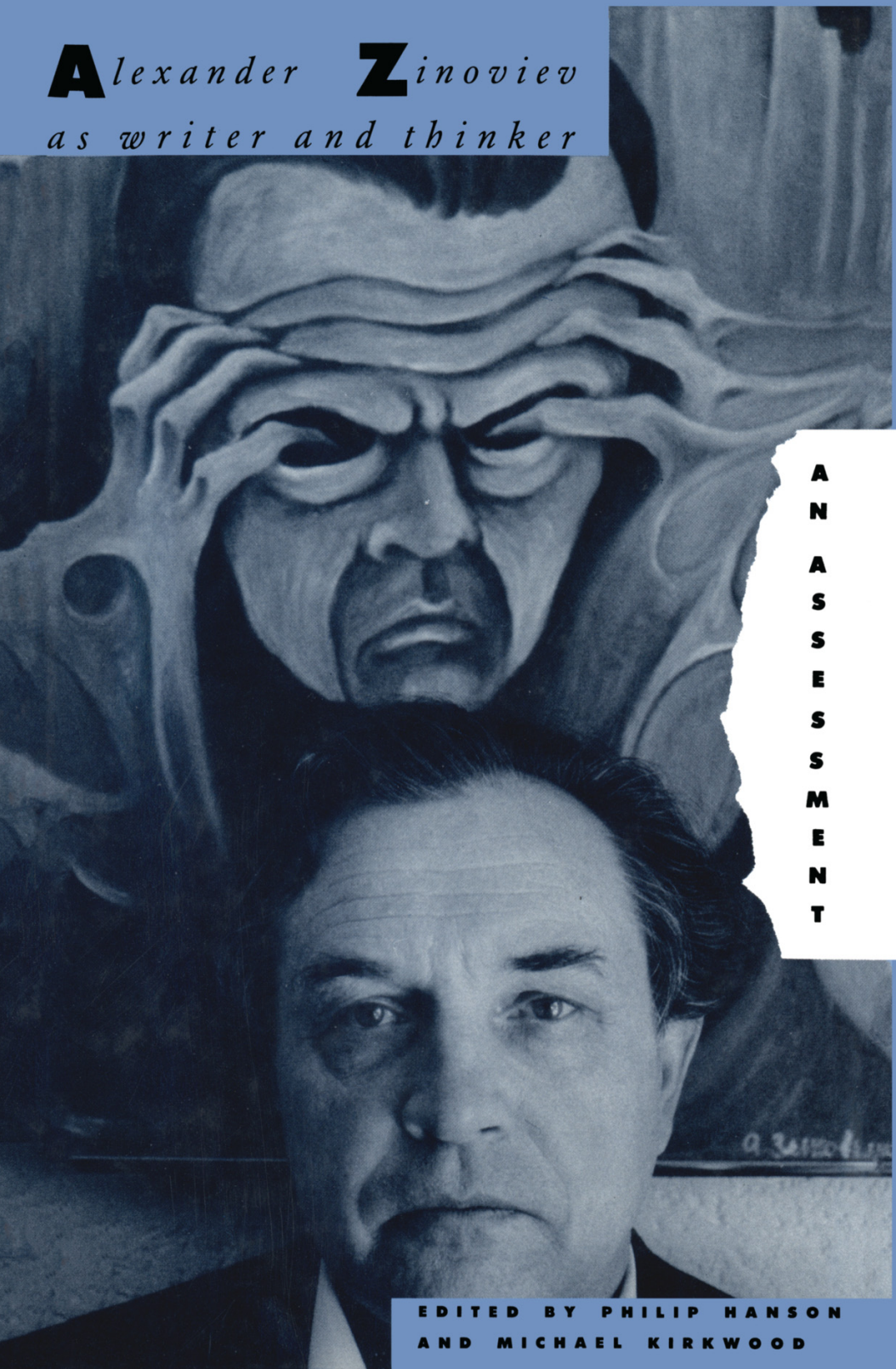
Alexander Zinoviev as writer and thinker

AN ASSESSMENT



EDITED BY PHILIP HANSON
AND MICHAEL KIRKWOOD

ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV AS WRITER AND THINKER

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Edited by

Philip Hanson

Reader in Soviet Economics
University of Birmingham

and

Michael Kirkwood

Senior Lecturer in Russian Language
University of London

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PHILIP HANSON
MICHAEL KIRKWOOD

Notes on the Contributors

Wenzel Daneil is the pen-name of a West European government official with a special interest in East–West relations.

Jon Elster is Professor of Political Science at the University of Oslo.

Julian Graffy is Lecturer in Russian Language and Literature at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

Philip Hanson is Reader in Soviet Economics at the University of Birmingham.

Geoffrey Hosking is Professor of Russian History at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

Charles Janson is a journalist and the publisher of *Soviet Analyst.*

Michael Kirkwood is Senior Lecturer in Russian Language at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

Arnold McMillin is Professor of Russian at the University of Liverpool.

Tomasz Mianowicz is a Polish-born journalist now living in Munich, and a regular contributor to *Kultura* (Paris).

Wolf Moskovich is Professor of Slavic and Russian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

G. S. Smith is Professor of Russian at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of New College, Oxford.

Arch Tait is Lecturer in Russian Language and Literature at the University of Birmingham.

Editors' Note

In the footnotes and sometimes, where appropriate, in the text, we have identified Zinoviev's books simply by the initial letters of their titles. Where an English translation exists, we refer to that and the Russian original in that order. The list that follows does not include the more technical writings in logic. The translations of the Russian titles are given in the bibliography.

YH	*Yawning Heights*
ZV	*Ziyayushchie vysoty*
RF	*The Radiant Future*
SB	*Svetloe budushchee*
ZNS	*Zapiski nochnogo storozha*
BI	*Bez illyuzii*
VPR	*V preddverii raya*
ZhD	*Zheltyi dom*
MIZ	*My i zapad*
TRC	*The Reality of Communism*
KKR	*Kommunizm kak real'nost'*
MDMCh	*Moy dom moya chuzhbina*
HS	*Homo Sovieticus*
GS	*Gomo sovetikus*
NSNRNB	*Ni svobody ni ravenstva ni bratstva*
NYP	*Nashei yunosti polet*
EDI	*Evangelie dlya Ivana*
ING	*Idi na Golgofu*

Also by Philip Hanson

SOVIET – EAST EUROPEAN DILEMMAS (*with Karen Dawisha*)
*THE CONSUMER IN THE SOVIET ECONOMY
*ADVERTISING AND SOCIALISM
*TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY IN SOVIET–WESTERN RELATIONS

*Also published by Macmillan

1 Introduction

Philip Hanson and Michael Kirkwood

The reception in the West of Alexander Zinoviev's writings has been a blend of admiration and incomprehension. The main aim of this book is to reduce the latter.

Both as a writer and as a thinker, Zinoviev can benefit from intermediaries, especially in the West. His style and the structure of many of his writings are without close parallels. His ideas are often the opposite of any conventional wisdom. For example, his moral contempt for Soviet society is apparent throughout his fiction, yet he argues that the Soviet social system is not merely stable but based on popular support.

To embark on making this controversial writer more accessible, one does not have to be an uncritical admirer of his work. In fact, uncritical admiration would be a handicap. What the contributors to this volume share is a belief that Zinoviev is a writer who is worth interpreting, assessing, criticising and, in general, coming to terms with.

To give some preliminary idea why this should be so, and why a special effort should be needed, it is worth considering the reception of Zinoviev's fiction and social analysis in the West from the time of its first appearance in the late 1970s. The development has been an odd one: admiration peaked early and incomprehension has, if anything, increased ever since.

Zinoviev, as Charles Janson recounts in his biographical sketch, had a distinguished career as an academic philosopher in the Soviet Union before he began to write fiction. Several of his works in formal logic were translated into German and English. (The bibliography at the end of this volume gives the details.) He wrote *Yawning Heights* in 1974, at a time when he had got into severe trouble with the authorities. The appearance of the novel in English followed soon after his *de facto* expulsion from the USSR in 1978. It had also been quickly translated into French and German after its original publication in Russian in Lausanne. *Yawning Heights* was widely reviewed and highly praised. Almost all the reviewers agreed that it was a remarkable book. Most of those reviewers, however, had no special interest in the Soviet Union. As far as they were concerned, the publication of *Yawning Heights* was above all a literary event.

The early admiration still seems justified. Ibansk, the imaginary country or, on occasions, world, of *Yawning Heights*, is a bizarre invention. It amazes the reader much as a strange and vivid invented world can amaze the reader of a science fiction novel like Frank Herbert's *Dune*. At the same time, Ibansk is obviously not a freely invented fantasy. It is based on the Soviet Union. *Yawning Heights* is a passionate and hilarious piece of invective, directed against something large and real. Western reviewers therefore treated it as a work of social and political importance. Most of them, however, were vague about the nature of this social and political importance.

For the Western reader *Yawning Heights* is still intellectually puzzling. It is easy to see that it contains whole sequences of dazzling parodies of official Soviet rhetoric. But it pays almost no attention to Ibanskian officials. It says little about the people who are conventionally blamed for the drab and oppressive nature of Soviet life: the Party officials and secret policemen. The main characters are Moscow intellectuals. All of them are more or less 'liberal', though in many cases only when drunk and among friends. On the whole they are not dissidents. Many of them are conformists who rail against a society in which conformism entails the most ludicrous hypocrisy. Zinoviev and his characters tell jokes about this society, concoct verses about it, propound paradoxes about it and elaborate sociological theories about it. But most of them are not heroes of any sort of resistance. They are themselves part of the problem, and they know it. To make things more trying for the Western reader, Zinoviev's characters are not impressed by the West. Over There (that is, the Western World) is envied for its freedom, comfort and variety, but it is simultaneously condescended to for its naivete and incomprehension about Ibansk – and is expected to become, in due course, Ibanskian.

Zinoviev's subsequent writings have elaborated his social and moral account of Ibansk. *The Radiant Future*, which appeared in English soon after *Yawning Heights*, is the most straightforward piece of fiction that he has so far written. The characters are easily distinguishable from one another; they have motives as well as ideas, and there is a plot. *The Radiant Future* describes vividly the deceptions of oneself and others that are needed to make an intellectual career in Moscow. It is true that hypocrisy is not a recipe for failure anywhere, but what Zinoviev presents in *The Radiant Future* is a society in which ambitious people are absolutely required to be hypocritical; in which the hypocrisy is required to be grotesque, and

in which the consequences for innocent bystanders can be lethal. The central character, in pursuing his own advancement, has contrived to send a close friend to the camps.

In addition to *Yawning Heights* and *The Radiant Future*, Zinoviev has published a shelf-full of books since he came to the West in 1978. These books, together with his earlier books on logic, are listed in the Bibliography. Nearly all of them have been published in Russian and French (so far, one has been published only in German). Only some of them, and with some delay, have begun to appear in English. They have made less impression on Western readers than *Yawning Heights* and *The Radiant Future*. None of them has had either the ferocious exuberance of *Yawning Heights* or the straightforwardness of *The Radiant Future*. Yet some of Zinoviev's best work, in the opinion of some of the contributors to this volume, is to be found among these less known works.

Of the essays that follow, those by the editors, Wenzel Daneil, Jon Elster and Geoffrey Hosking are primarily about Zinoviev as a social theorist and an analyst of Soviet society.[1] For the more tidy-minded among us, it would have been gratifying if we had all agreed on just how important Zinoviev is as a social theorist, and why. In fact, the outcome is not as tidy as that. What the reader will find in all these chapters, however, is the judgement that: 'Anyone who wants to understand the Soviet Union today must take Zinoviev into account'.[2]

This is a common view among *émigré* Soviet intellectuals. It is not a universally agreed view, but the emigration is not much given to agreeing. 'Zinoviev understands the Soviet Union much better than Solzhenitsyn. He's the writer who really worries the Soviet authorities.' Those are remarks which we have heard innumerable times from *émigré* friends and acquaintances. For them, Zinoviev is the writer who has pinned down exactly what it is that makes Soviet society tick, and that makes them both love and hate it.

The reaction of the Western specialists who read *Yawning Heights* when it first came out was similar.[3] One of the contributors to this book, after sitting up all night reading *Yawning Heights*, proposed to the then Director of Birmingham University's Centre for Russian and East European Studies that the Centre should halt all its research for a year and switch to reading Zinoviev. (In the end a compromise was reached.)

The essays that follow convey the reasons for this enthusiasm.

They also express the doubts, reservations and outright disagreements that all of us have about one or more aspects of Zinoviev's version of 'communism as reality'.

Apart from Jon Elster, all the contributors to this book are in some way or other professionally involved with the USSR. It does not follow that Zinoviev's ideas are of interest only to sovietologists. His bleak view of Soviet society is developed quite systematically from a bleak view of human beings. Soviet society is stable, and most Soviet citizens cooperate in maintaining it, in Zinoviev's view, because it relies on the lowest human motives and these are strong and natural. The opposite pole is civilisation, and civilisation is fragile and unnatural. Hence the tendency, in Zinoviev's scheme of things, for Ibansk to inherit the world. It is an easy, downhill process. Civilising Ibansk, on the other hand, is an uphill slog about which Zinoviev's views are unsettled: it is either impossible or, in his odd moments of optimism, nearly impossible.

There is a great deal in Zinoviev's writings that is specific and down-to-earth. The fact that they also contain ideas as large and sweeping as those outlined in the last paragraph, however, guarantees a cool reception in the US and Britain for Zinoviev as a social theorist. (The notion that the growth of the hard left and the hard right in Britain is a sign of a new interest in ideas, is almost certainly wrong. We have simply become more tribal. General ideas still do not sell books in the UK as they do in France.) By the same token, Alexander Zinoviev has recently been more cultivated by the media in France, Italy and Germany than in Britain or America.

Anglo-Saxon queasiness about general ideas has been worsened, in Zinoviev's case, by some of the interviews he has given. He has tended in interviews to simplify and exaggerate the ideas that are more subtly and persuasively put in his texts. It is hard for anyone to avoid coarsening subtle arguments in conversation. The problem is serious in Zinoviev's case, for three reasons. First, he has given a great many interviews. Second, in his books the voices of his different characters convey offsetting and balancing ideas; in his interviews he has only one voice. Third, some of his interviews have been conducted in languages in which he is less at home than he is in his native Russian. That is why we have chosen in this book to concentrate on Zinoviev's texts and make little use of his interviews. His books, for all their sprawl and their sometimes exasperating perversities of presentation, contain his moral and analytical account of society in its most considered form.

Let us take this last point a little further. It is useful to attempt a typology of texts when considering Zinoviev's work devoted to the Soviet Union because, in an important sense, there is a connection between their 'surface structure' and the 'generative power' of Zinoviev's 'text-grammar'. His preference is for the short text, accompanied by a title (just to make sure that readers know what he is talking about!). This is a stylistic device which all his works have in common, irrespective of other features which allow one to differentiate between them. It is precisely this stylistic device which is the source of exasperation referred to above. It is not one of the more obvious devices which one associates with specific types of text such as the academic treatise, monograph, essay, learned article or novel.

Zinoviev's works, however, can be differentiated along other parameters. Three broad genres suggest themselves. The first is 'literary', in which category one would include *Yawning Heights*, *Notes of a Nightwatchman*, *The Radiant Future*, *V predverii raya*, *The Madhouse*, *Moi dom – moya chuzhbina*, *Homo Sovieticus*, *Evangelie dlya Ivana*, *Idi na Golgofu*, *Nashei yunosti polet*. Most of these works, however, have elements of structure which are *not* normally associated with literary genres. A second genre is the 'monograph'. Here one would include *The Reality of Communism* and *Die Diktatur der Logik*, although neither is quite conventional. What differentiates them from the 'literary' works, however, is the fact that they consider one broad question in isolation. The style is also much more 'academic'. Finally, there is the 'public lecture/essay' genre, in which category one would place the collections of speeches and articles which Zinoviev has produced in the years since he left the Soviet Union, namely, *Bez illyuzii*, *My i zapad Ni svobody ni ravenstva ni bratstva*.

Such a classification makes the student of Zinoviev feel better. It eases the itch which is unbearable for the taxonomer who cannot pigeon-hole a specimen with precision. It is much more important, however, to note the simplicity and power of Zinoviev's device. If each individual text is seen as a playing card, all of them adding up to several packs, it becomes clear that Zinoviev can shuffle them and lay them out in an infinite series of sequences which can be differentiated in terms of length, diversity and density, both on a stylistic and thematic level. The chapters in this volume add up to an analysis of aspects of both those levels.

On the stylistic level Gerry Smith seeks to evaluate one strand in *Yawning Heights*, namely those texts which are written in the form of

verse. Such texts appear in many of Zinoviev's 'literary' works and a consideration of their value as 'poetry' is long overdue. Smith is careful to make the point, however, that the poems in *Yawning Heights* must be viewed in their context, since often they are thematically entwined in the work as a whole. Wolf Moskovich's chapter analyses Zinoviev's use of language. Unfortunately, much of the humour in Zinoviev's work is linguistic and cannot be captured by translation. Professor Moskovich's chapter must appeal, therefore, more to the specialist who knows the Soviet system well and whose knowledge of Russian embraces a wide range of registers, to put it euphemistically. Puns are notoriously untranslatable and Zinoviev makes great use of them. The following English puns convey in only a very mild fashion something of the flavour of Zinoviev's word-play; bureaucrap, philosophistry, the crotch of dialectics, the Leadershit, dreamology, informerology, diabolical materialism, etc.

Arnold McMillin discusses Zinoviev's place in the context of unofficial Russian literature of the 1970s and Tomasz Mianowicz assesses his significance as an artist and caricaturist. These two chapters together with Julian Graffy's provide the reader with a context in which these two aspects of Zinoviev's creative talent can be evaluated. Zinoviev's views on literature are predictably less than orthodox, and he is one of the few people who are prepared to say in print that Shakespeare is over-rated. (Bernard Shaw was another highly intellectual writer who found Bardolatry upsetting.) More interesting is his view of Orwell's *1984*. He is prepared to acknowledge that the work has literary merit but argues that Orwell fundamentally misunderstood the true nature of communist society. Professor Heller in his book *Mashina i vintiki*[4] takes precisely the opposite view, so it is evident that Arch Tait's discussion of Zinoviev's own view of literature and its role in society provides an extra dimension which allows the reader to evaluate the extent to which Zinoviev, as it were, practices what he preaches.

We turn now to a brief review of the chapters which are concerned more with important themes in Zinoviev's work. Several of the contributors attempt to assess the importance of Zinoviev's work in the fields of political science and sovietology. Jon Elster's chapter, which has appeared before and is reprinted in this volume with permission, assesses the importance of Zinoviev's work on logic for an analysis of Soviet society and indicates that dialectical analysis is not only compatible with formal logic, but that it can only be understood through the latter. His main conclusion, however, is that

Zinoviev opens up entirely new perspectives by analysing the previously neglected area of political irrationality.

Wenzel Daneil, on the other hand, examines the implications of Zinoviev's work for Western readers (including politicians) who want (or are required) to make political judgements about geo-political issues. Daneil probes several key claims by Zinoviev about the nature of Communist societies and Communist attitudes towards the rest of the world in an attempt to gauge the extent to which one might actually apply Zinoviev's theories in political practice. In this connection he draws attention to the fact that the current attempt by Gorbachev to reform the way the Soviet Union does things provides a most opportune test-bed for Zinoviev's theories. If Zinoviev is right, one must expect Gorbachev to fail.

If Daneil emphasises the pragmatic aspects of an evaluation of Zinoviev's contribution to political science, Philip Hanson is more concerned to probe the extent to which Zinoviev's rhetoric gets in the way of serious analysis. His study of Zinoviev's 'grand theory' of Communism leaves him sceptical about its usefulness for understanding Communist societies in general, but he acknowledges that Zinoviev's analysis of the contemporary Soviet Union is impressive. Geoffrey Hosking, too, is concerned to evaluate the usefulness of Zinoviev's work for political scientists and sovietologists, and argues that Zinoviev's mode of writing allows him various loopholes which weaken his claim to be a 'scientific' analyst. He also has reservations about some of Zinoviev's theories of Soviet power, in particular Zinoviev's view of the role of *narodovlastie* ('people power') as a form of 'do-it-yourself' oppression and an explanation of how the Soviet Union is administered.

The issue of *narodovlastie* is an important one for Zinoviev and is examined in many of his works, especially in *Nashei yunosti polet*. This work is Zinoviev's collected (as of 1983) thoughts on Stalin and Stalinism, but as Michael Kirkwood shows in his chapter of that title, Zinoviev's views on Stalin and his era can be traced back to the very beginning of his work. One of Zinoviev's key claims is that the Soviet Union was formed not so much *by* Stalin but as a result of social processes operating in the vacuum created by the collapse and destruction of the old order. For Zinoviev the relationship between Stalin and Stalinism is symbiotic if not dialectical. Stalin may have created Stalinism, but it created him as well. And whatever has happened in the years since Stalin's death, the Soviet Union is still Stalinist. Characteristically, Zinoviev argues that that is not necessarily a bad

thing. Nor good, either. The crucial difference is that people can no longer believe in the 'bright future', whereas, under Stalin, many allegedly did.

Zinoviev often argues that moral judgement should not be passed on historical epochs and he has been criticised as a result by people who are ready to see him as an apologist for Stalin. Yet moral issues of right and wrong and the relationship between morality, ideology and religion are another major theme in Zinoviev's work. Michael Kirkwood's chapter on ideology seeks to locate Zinoviev's discussions of ideological issues in the context of his work as a whole.

As even a cursory glance at the select bibliography of Zinoviev's work will show, his output is immense. This volume of papers on various aspects of his work cannot hope to be exhaustive. It should be regarded as an attempt by some of us who are interested in him to 'prime the pump'. Virtually every chapter in this volume contains several questions which need further research. Hardly any work at all has been done on Zinoviev's use of language. There is a vast amount to be done in this area. Many more political scientists, sociologists and historians need to be introduced to Zinoviev's work and tackle the questions which he has posed. To dismiss him out of hand as a phenomenon somewhere on the periphery of the social sciences who 'apparently' has written 'idiosyncratic' books is at once too easy and unfortunate. If the present volume can go even a little way towards introducing people to Zinoviev's work who have not yet encountered it and/or helping people who already have, it will have served a purpose.

Notes

1. The other contributors, whose chief concerns are aesthetic, did not ignore Zinoviev's ideas. If any of us originally supposed that form and content could be kept apart, the meeting at which we discussed first drafts of these essays would soon have changed our minds. In the discussions Wolf Moskovich was particularly persuasive about the need to treat Zinoviev's writings as a single phenomenon. All of us have in fact tried, in some degree, to do this;
2. Geoffrey Hosking, 'Mediocrity for the Millions', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 23 May 1980, pp. 571–2.
3. To be precise, this was the reaction of those who read it right through. Many fell by the wayside, defeated by the length, complexity and linguistic difficulty of the book. Many more never tried to read it. It was not economics, or not political science, or not sociology. They therefore thought it was none of their business.
4. M. Heller, *Mashina i vintiki* (London: Overseas Publications Ltd, 1985).

2 Alexander Zinoviev: Experiences of a Soviet Methodologist

Charles Janson*

After Solzhenitsyn, Alexander Zinoviev is probably the most celebrated member of the Third Russian Emigration.[1] He is an exceptional, almost maverick, *émigré*. For unlike most of his fellows he has settled (after a short spell at Munich University) to no academic, editorial or other salaried job. He writes at least one book a year, which is always arresting and soon translated into other languages. He supplements his writer's living by lectures, articles and telecasts. During the last five or six years these media-appearances have earned him the reputation of a brilliant and doggedly controversial personality. This is the more remarkable as Zinoviev is not fluent in any foreign language; and in some countries has to be translated during the television performance itself. But then a good deal of the argument is to be seen in his face.

Alexander Zinoviev is not a man of the camps. He has never been arrested since he was 18. But he is very much a man of the war, in which he fought and suffered hard. He is a first-generation academic, a formidable intellect who was in the 1960s, by all accounts, the Soviet Union's leading mathematical logician. (Logic, like chess and possibly dentistry, was one of the refuges from Marxism–Leninism.) Zinoviev is also very gifted in the visual arts, as are both his daughters. He is a very accomplished amateur painter and, surely, one of the world's great political cartoonists. By turning from formal logic to his own sociology and thence to his astonishing documentary fiction, he traversed a route never, I think, taken before in science or literature.

All his novels are an amalgam of theory, drama and portrait-painting; the portraits being usually not of persons but of Soviet

* This account draws on conversations which the author has had with Alexander Zinoviev over several years, and on a short autobiographical sketch provided by Zinoviev in 1985, as well as on other sources.

stereotypes. Zinoviev writes not Solzhenitsyn's epic prose but sequences of soliloquy and dialogue, vocally passionate and cuttingly satirical. I have a letter from Alexander which says: 'I am only 10% satirical'. Yet it is as a satirist, undoubtedly, that he impresses the Western reader: and it is perhaps no accident that one of his British admirers is Anthony Burgess who himself inclines to a picaresque, fantastic and satirical style.

Nobody has better described Zinoviev's style than Vittorio Strada, Professor of Russian at the University of Venice.

> Alexander Zinoviev made his debut in Russian literature with a book which had no precedent and was unclassifiable: a work of art and science, satire and philosophy that combined romanesque fiction with sociological truth . . . *The Yawning Heights* was the matrix of all Zinoviev's subsequent work. In it he explored the Soviet world through an uninterrupted flood of chatter and discussion: an absurd intermingling of voices making a parody of the dialogues of Plato. The voices didn't arrive at a definite catharsis: they remained a tangle of viewpoints revealing facets of a single *logos*: the logos of real-life communism. In moments of crisis communism goes into a series of modulations of its inner essence which constitute a kind of tragi-comic nonsense.[2]

It is this nonsense which permeates the whole of Soviet official life to this day, a decade after the publication of *The Yawning Heights*.

European capitals have always had their intellectual élites. Moscow, even Stalin's Moscow, was no exception. Those who knew the city's luminaries of the 1950s and 1960s of this century well remember Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Zinoviev[3] as a deliverer of aphorisms, luminous speculations and philosophical judgements. He was always a great lover of paradox and mordant observation, to be compared perhaps with England's Hugh Trevor-Roper, the historian; or, to balance the proposition, with Cornwall's Dr A. L. Rowse, who resembles Zinoviev in sharing the kind of frustration that is generated by success.

Witnesses of the Muscovite experience begin by stressing that the Soviet authorities, including the KGB itself, have always respected men (it seems to be men rather than women) who are gifted well beyond the official norm and who act in some sense as beacons in the encircling gloom. This is understandable in a society committed to the hilt to the neo-Calvinist communist classics and to a monochrome incestuous ideology. Within a system that lacks on principle life's

graces and redemptive humour, masters of the unexpected serve as more than light relief: they ornament society much as G. K. Chesterton or Bernard Shaw enlivened the overall reputation of the (rather serious) British Empire eighty years ago.

Of course, under Sovietism the sword of Damocles always hangs over voluble Russian talkers. Only recently there was the sad case of the wife of the Soviet official in London who, when on leave in Moscow, remarked at a party that the trouble about the Soviet Union was that there was too much Marx and not enough Spencer. How much more dangerous for a dialectician and congenital *enfant terrible*!

Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Zinoviev was born on 29 October 1922 in the village of Pakhino in the Chukloma region of the *oblast'* (province) of Kostroma, an old town 600 kilometres north-east of Moscow. He is, as he always insists, the most Russian of men, whose peasant-family had lived for centuries in the same district: the women working on the land while the men gained a livelihood in the town, famous for its artisans. Zinoviev believes that Kostroma people have Viking blood. Certainly his is also a boyar name, shared by the eminent London critic, Kyril Zinoviev, *alias* Kyril Fitzlyon, and by Peter Zinoviev, the electronic musician. (One should perhaps establish once and for all that A. A. Zinoviev is unrelated to the Zinoviev of the notorious 'Zinoviev letter', whose real name was Apfelbaum and who adopted the old Russian name of Zinoviev as a sort of revolutionary joke.)

Alexander received an excellent education in his home-country district until 1933: his secondary education took place in Moscow. There he won the pupil's gold medal in 1939. Zinoviev remembers the big shake-up in the village when Stalin began his terror. The kind of Communist who did little but drink vodka and boast of his exploits in the civil war was liquidated as a 'chatterbox'; after which people such as schoolmasters and postmasters concentrated rather more on their jobs. He himself was a youth who benefited from the regime's glorification of education; and he has always felt greatly indebted to that feature of Soviet life, to whose standards he compares most Western education unfavourably.

In the 1930s, during his Moscow school-years, Alexander always spent the summer holidays in the country with his mother (*née* Apollinaria Vassilievna Smirnova) working on a collective farm. In 1938 he joined the Komsomol, 'a pure formality for good schoolboys'.[4] Since the revolution Zinoviev's father, Aleksandr Yakovlevich, had

himself been working away from the family in Moscow. His brothers and sisters gradually left Kostroma too in search of better jobs and better living conditions. There were nine surviving young children. Three of the brothers began as simple workmen and, after night-classes, ended as engineers. A fourth became an army colonel but had to resign in the 1970s after he had refused to denounce his 'disgraced' brother Alexander in public. The two sisters worked 'at the lowest level of the Soviet hierarchy'. One of the them was a laundress, and later a lift-attendant.

Alexander Zinoviev always stresses one consequence of the 1917 revolution: voluntary migration to the towns. In the countryside people had the most primitive accommodation; although the Zinovievs' house did have two storeys. But above all the Russian village exuded boredom of a quality scarcely imaginable in the West. As in other countries, but infinitely more so, peasants wanted a new life. This was promised by the slogans of an urbanising and industrialising revolution. Neither a Lenin nor a Sverdlov saw any good or any future in what they saw as the dull, dark, disorganised and unorganisable peasantry; or in its derivative the *meschantstvo*, or primitive small *bourgeoisie*. Maxim Gorky, one of the most popular pre-revolutionary writers, was of the same mind. This dis-honouring of the peasantry as such has, as far as I know, never happened in any other country in the world.

Zinoviev seems from his youth to have been a revolutionary romantic.[5] To this day he remains grateful for having been born into the Soviet-Russian 'new-life movement'. But by the end of his schooldays (1939) he had become a convinced anti-Stalinist and developed in himself a 'critical relationship with the Soviet system'.[6] The reason? His awareness of the system's exploitation of the masses, of social injustice and of growing social inequality under Communism.

Alexander voiced these sentiments in the faculty of philosophy in Moscow. Just as any spirited Western student, aged 18, might have complained of capitalism in London or Paris. This bit of free speech cost him his place as an undergraduate in the Institute and led to his arrest. However, the authorities could not believe that the young Alexander could have formed his own erroneous opinions about Soviet society. They must have been inspired by somebody else. So to discover his criminal mentors they assigned him to a special flat under police supervision. But on the way to it Alexander escaped from the police; and leaped onto a train going east.

During the next year or two Zinoviev was on the run with an all-Union search-warrant out against him. He managed to switch jobs between farms and factories so that the police never found him. While he was dodging about the Soviet Union Alexander joined forces with some young people of the same mind. Like young terrorists of seventy years before, they discussed the assassination of the ruler. But they could not find a weapon and later split up.[7]

With Hitler's invasion of June 1941 the country was thrown into turmoil. The runaway forgot his pre-occupation with social justice; and the authorities forgot him. In the easily-joined army Alexander, to cover his tracks just in case, was able even to switch units by giving a records clerk a bottle of vodka. He became a sergeant of cavalry, then joined a tank regiment and was twice slightly wounded during the battles of the first year. But soon his educational record led to his entry into an air-force school. By the autumn of 1944 he was a commissioned bomber-pilot at the Front and remained there until the end of the war. Alexander received a fair number of medals and decorations. 'But my anti-Stalinist disposition was noticeable to those around me, so that I was continuously under suspicion and observation by the security organs.' Further he was apt to quarrel with his squadron-leader and once slapped his face; this because his superior had ordered him to taxi his own aircraft back to the hangar without warning him that bombs were still in the under-carriage.

However, Alexander Zinoviev escaped the fate of Alexander Solzhenitsyn who was arrested at the Front in February 1945 and sent to a labour camp for having made disrespectful comments about Stalin in correspondence with a friend. The philosophical faculty in Moscow took him back as an undergraduate. Nobody in the Institute denounced him for his prewar escapade which, after the dispersal of the original staff, may simply have been forgotten. Or his war service may have been deemed to exculpate him. In any case by 1947 there was, Zinoviev records, a certain relaxation in the Soviet Union and a tendency no longer to take Stalin quite so seriously. Evidence of this was, for example, the University's acceptance of former prisoners-of-war who were not Party members.[8]

Alexander continued to be an awkward customer and to declare himself an opponent of the cult of personality. And he was not alone: 'even in my own circle there were keener anti-Stalinists than myself. Moreover they were Party members. They had been front-line officers and joined the Party that way'.[9]

While he was an undergraduate Zinoviev earned his living as a

docker, a coal-miner, in a brickworks, as nightwatchman and schoolteacher. He graduated with distinction in 1951 at the late age of 28. His next aim was to join the faculty of logic at Moscow University, where later he was to become Professor of Logic.

It was in this year (1951) that Zinoviev is best remembered by students who later emigrated to the West for his impeccable behaviour as a young academic in opposition to anti-semitism. Stalin, by then deranged, had turned against the 'cosmopolitan elements' in the intellectual institutes, instigating a kind of common-room terror. Zinoviev openly and continuously denounced Stalin's campaign. This record is important, for Zinoviev was later (in 1984) to make a number of complicated statements which, to some, showed a Russian anti-semitic nationalism. The remarks[10] which stressed the declining reliance on Jews in the professions in the Soviet Union, belonged, he claims, to a broader thesis: that Sovietism as a regime, was detrimental to Russia because it favoured the other component nations at Russia's expense.

Those who remember Alexander's stance in the dangerous days of 1951 also remember his intellectual début in 1954. This was the circulation in typescript of a dissertation entitled: 'A Method of Ascent from the Abstract to the Concrete with reference to Karl Marx's *Capital*'. This work was the talk of the intellectual town. As one person said: 'It showed what a first-class philosopher could do even with Marxism'. At 32 Zinoviev was already a Muscovite Bertrand Russell.

There were other young philosophers of intellect and originality at that time; for instance Merab Mamardashvilli from Georgia. Younger than Zinoviev, and a much more reserved person, Merab was Alexander's pupil. (He was later rusticated to Georgia, but finally allowed back to the centre of Soviet academic society.)

Zinoviev remains adamant that he was the only trained philosopher/logician to think outside Marxist categories. The rest were 'Soviet thinkers'.

The good years for young Muscovite philosophers lay somewhere between 1954 and 1973; and more especially during the general-secretaryship of N. S. Khrushchev (1953–64), the maverick *Gensek* who got into such a muddle trying to liberalise Soviet Communism.

Zinoviev's main theatre of operations was the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences (during 1954–76), where he was tutor and later Professor of Logic (the latter from 1966). But all this time Alexander, it seems, was not a trusted person; so little trusted,

for instance, that he was never given a room of his own in the Institute itself and had to rent one privately elsewhere. He was suspected by his (presumably jealous) colleagues of unorthodoxy; i.e. infidelity to the ground principles of Sovietism. This despite his admission to the Communist Party in 1954, which was an essential preliminary to any high appointment for anyone. (It appears that he joined at this time in the hope of contributing to a post-Stalin liberalisation).

Alexander was very probably the best logician in the Soviet Union. So his works began to be published abroad, first in what he calls the 'semi-Western' languages of the Eastern bloc and then in Italy and Holland (where *Philosophical Problems of Many-Valued Logic* appeared in English as early as 1963). True, his major professional works also came out in the Soviet Union from 1960 onwards.[11] Yet Zinoviev was not once allowed to accept any of the numerous invitations by academic institutions abroad. In other words he was deemed unfit for export; and never let out of the Soviet Union during his Soviet professional life.

The sticking-point in Alexander's most promising career was the refusal, around 1970, of the 'highest authorities', i.e. the KGB, to support his candidature for membership of the Academy of Sciences. One reason that Zinoviev gives was his own intensive, semi-private sociological studies. Here he had entered a field that was a strictly forbidden zone to anyone who was not a high Party ideologue. Only the perennial Mikhail Suslov, the Communist Party Central Committee Secretary for Ideology, and those directly or indirectly authorised by his office were authorised to make enquiries into the nature of Soviet society itself.[12] For a university professor to do so autonomously amounted to an act of subversion. As we know, it was Zinoviev's immersion in Soviet sociology that led him to write his documentary novels: in my opinion works of genius, and *sui generis* in the history of literature. His sociological investigations had thus lit a fuse under his whole career as a prominent Soviet citizen.

By the end of the 1960s Alexander's financial renumeration was already declining. Quotations from his works were becoming less frequent. The Soviet Union has been compared with a boys' boarding school that never breaks up in which boys/people suddenly become unpopular without knowing quite why. This was happening to Zinoviev. The authorities were chilly; so were some of his academic colleagues. Brezhnevism was restoring full state vigilance over intellectuals. The Party had had enough of scintillating young men who

poked their noses beyond their ken and competence. Dissidence from human rights enthusiasts had reared its head in the country and old-style repression was being partly resumed.

For the authorities Zinoviev was worse than a dissident: he was actually offering concepts for the analysis of Soviet society: by far a more dangerous happening long-term than simple and isolated demands for civil rights which could always be dismissed as eccentricity or madness or as a form of civic treachery inspired by foreign enemies. The real nature of Soviet society was, and had to remain, a State secret.

Before his final disgrace it is true that Alexander Zinoviev was one of a loose 'committee of intellectuals', a group of academics on call by the high-ups, for example the Central Committee or the KGB. But the role of these men-on-call was to have their brains picked, not to offer opinions on questions of ideology or high policy.

Twenty-five years later accounts vary slightly of the departure of Zinoviev from the editorial board of *Voprosy filosofii* (*Questions of Philosophy*): a key event in his official decline. Zinoviev mentions only his personal resignation as a protest against the incursion of Brezhnevism into philosophy.[13] Other witnesses refer to a larger government intervention: the authorities' dismissal of the periodical's whole board, with six or seven people going including the then deputy-editor, Merab Mamardashvilli. In any case the event meant Zinoviev's further estrangement from the authorities and insulation from his colleagues and pupils.

By 1974 he had lost the right to give lectures; and of course his professorship. As a further contribution to his destruction Zinoviev instances his refusal to sign the academics' round-robin condemning Sakharov's dissidence. This refusal compares interestingly now with Zinoviev's later unveiled and insulting mockery of the same Sakharov in *Homo Sovieticus* (1982). Almost certainly the non-signing would by itself have precluded Alexander Zinoviev's election to the Academy, whatever his professional merits of hypothetical use to the regime.

When Alexander Zinoviev found himself idle and in indefinite quarantine, he flung himself into sociological satire. Between 1974 and 1976 he wrote the *Yawning Heights*, a giant book and the first full-scale, unlicensed satirical treatment of the Soviet Union since Zamyatin and Bulgakov. This vast novel or allegory, published abroad in 1976, achieved world renown within the relevant public and almost unalloyed critical approval. Few Western readers understood

Soviet society enough to follow its innumerable references exactly. But the general effect was stunning.

The book's appearance also stunned the unfortunate director of the philosophical institute who was charged with lack of vigilance. The author had been able to write and export the work at surprising speed because much of the material had already been delivered in public lectures.

After *Yawning Heights* Zinoviev was liquidated as an academic person. He was stripped of all his academic titles and lost his salary and his flat. For the next two years he lived on his savings and continued his writing in constant anticipation of arrest. The KGB knew that it had a potential second Solzhenitsyn on its hands. Alexander knew that he could not escape the most drastic punishment.

As in Solzhenitsyn's case, the Organs decided that Soviet interests were best served by expulsion rather than by imprisonment or internal exile. In August, 1978, Zinoviev was allowed to emigrate with Olga,[14] his third wife, and their daughter Polina. The pretext was an invitation from Munich University. So at the age of 56 Alexander at last reached the West. Previously he had only glimpsed it in such places as East Prussia, Vienna and Prague at the end of the Second World War. Almost immediately after his arrival in Germany the Soviet authorities deprived him of his Soviet citizenship by decree.

So far we have said nothing about Alexander Zinoviev's private life. His first marriage was in 1944. The son of this marriage, Valery, received a commission in the militia, which however was eventually taken away from him. After his father's official disgrace he was ordered not to see him again. But like his uncles he refused to break with Alexander and saw him at least once before he went into exile. Like two of his uncles Valery then turned himself into an engineer and now works in Ulianovsk.

Zinoviev's first marriage was dissolved in 1947. Four years later he married a Moscow journalist. In 1954 they had a daughter, Tamara, who graduated from Moscow University as an art-historian. She too lost her job after *The Yawning Heights* and now has only temporary employment as an artist. This second marriage broke down in about 1960. No doubt one of the reasons was incompatibility between an ambitious Party journalist and an independent-minded, unpredictable husband. (Other incompatibilities are hinted at in *Homo Sovieticus*.)

During the late 1950s and 1960s Zinoviev, the star of the intel-

ligentsia parties, was equally respected for his capacity to imbibe alcohol. Surviving witnesses relate with admiration the perfect harmony between the champion's two functions. Some consider that it was during those drinking years that Zinoviev peaked as an intellectual; and that later, in Moscow and abroad, he was never as happy or as buoyant. It was the doctor who warned Zinoviev that if he stayed with vodka he would die. On the same day he gave it up for ever. In the West he drinks only wine, and rarely that. If only Modeste Mussorgsky had followed the same advice!

Zinoviev has told me that only exceptionally sanguine people could dispense with vodka, for in the Soviet Union it is needed as a 'confidence-fuel' to make everyone feel that everyone else is their friend.

Alexander began his life in the West at Munich University in the faculty of logic. But his teaching there was not a great success on either side. In Europe, from 1979–81, he was becoming a very well-known interpreter of Soviet society and the Soviet system of government. By 1982 as lecturer, writer and media-personality he had taken issue with his fellow exiles and with Western sovietologists. He had also begun to startle the public. One of the main bones of contention between Alexander and his Western audience was his doctrine regarding the Stalin and post-Stalin periods. For Zinoviev the Stalin period was something very positive: the new Soviet country's childhood and adolescence; whereas Brezhnevism, or the period after Khrushchev, had turned out a nightmare of corruption, cynicism and mediocrity. By 1982, at least, Soviet leaders had for Zinoviev, become zombies, burned out by Party work; and incapable of leadership, personal or collective. With the ideology fossilised under Suslov, the subject of one of Zinoviev's most biting essays,[16] the Politburocrats had become merely 'social symbols'. (At the time this was to me a very unfamiliar rendering of them.)

Zinoviev's insistence on the de-personalisation of the Soviet leaders during our talks in Munich in the early 1980s reminded me of Catholic interpretations which I had heard previously: that the deep purpose of the Soviet system was to negate what was positive and thus destroy the inherited human personality. Therefore the Soviet 'leaders' were not leaders at all but preventers of consistent, purposive action by human beings:[17] in the last resort a sort of negating mafia, bereft of religion, philosophy, logic and law, acting against good and against God.

Zinoviev himself has never explicitly rejected Sovietism which he

accepts *de facto* as a valid, working system. On the other hand, he idolises neither Lenin nor Glorious October. He believes that his country had, in the historical sense, very bad luck to be saddled with Lenin and his 'old guard'; especially the latter who, for Zinoviev, were mainly 'chatter-boxes' like Trotsky or softies like Bukharin. Yet as a Russian nationalist Alexander has little use for any Romanovs since Peter the Great ('the last Russian autocrat') who, he believed, had given Russia an increasingly alien and German regime.

The revolution, he held, had really begun in 1861 with the emancipation of the serfs when Russians had started to travel all over the vast country in search of jobs. This emancipation had created a pre-revolutionary situation in which only a radically new government could preside over the new Russia. What happened in 1917, was, for Zinoviev, less a revolution than a complete collapse: a collapse of moral authority on the part of the Tsarist regime which had lost, or failed to win, four wars in succession. It was no doubt a pity that the successor-state was run by the Bolshevik fraction, the most outlandish politicians in the field; people moreover who owed allegiance to a single German sociologist. It would have been nicer to have had something genuinely Russian at last.

In his conversations with me between 1982 and 1985 Zinoviev always stressed the irrelevance of Marxism to Russia in the early twentieth century. But at the same time he emphasised the necessity of a strong ruler who could make the new, inevitably collective, institutions stick and so save the 'Russian lands' from a running chaos. Granted the 'hurricane of history' the Soviet Union was a relatively successful polity because Tsarism had at least been replaced by a consistent system. Further, it was a merit of Sovietism that it had preserved the Romanov empire intact. (For Westerners this line of apologetics implies that they should recognise that for Russians, if not for them, it was preferable to have a country in some sense their own instead of a fragmented, and no doubt colonisable, chaos.)

It was over the 'necessity' of a 'a Stalin' and over the validity of Soviet institutions that Alexander Zinoviev took issue sharply with his fellow exiles, with Western sovietologists and with almost the whole dissident movement within the Soviet Union. However, here too Zinoviev has a double attitude similar to his view of the Soviet system itself. He views dissidence as a valuable long-term phenomenon, but regards present-day dissidents as eccentric. Further, he is critical of their motives, sometimes accusing them of exhibitionism; pernicious

exhibitionism, for the West tends to be magnetised by such people and thus, according to Zinoviev, remains ignorant of the immediate feelings and needs of the 280 million people who live under 'real-life Communism'. He has even said that dissidents betray the people they profess to help.[18]

The next and most startling Zinovievan step is to hold that Sovietism, the only existing complete expression of classical Communism, is a new and permanent system in the world which in some ways answers man's normal, natural disposition. Communism, by abjuring civilisation/culture in favour of animality (albeit a rather special kind of animality) enables the twentieth-century masses, especially in the 'third world', to settle for non-civilisation in the shape of a guaranteed, simple, in some ways secure collective life. It is precisely the world's mass propensity to shirk the burden of civilisation and culture that makes Communism dangerous as a competitor of the West whose only specific *raison d'être* is to establish them.

It seems to be implicit in this opinion of Soviet Communism that Russia was for centuries Europe's primitive country, a view expressed by the anthropologist, Laurens van der Post, in his book *Journey into Russia* (1963). Naturally the less individualised a people is, the less value it will ascribe to the person and his interests. From this standpoint it is sometimes even argued that Soviet collectivism suits Russian people and is for them a more humane, because more appropriate, life-system than, say, the American or the Japanese (Zinoviev himself firmly states this).

But Alexander Zinoviev's main exasperation with Western sovietology arises not from a wish to extol Sovietism but from his fear that the West, by underrating Sovietism's success, will end up by succumbing to it. And this would, in his view, be the ultimate historical disaster, for then culture/civilisation would no longer have a repository anywhere.

Zinoviev, I believe, abhorred Stalin as an individual. Yet I have never heard him express more than polite regret for the labour camps – the Gulag; nor any explicit approval of any single dissident imprisoned by Stalin's successors. I did once manage to persuade him to write a letter to *The Times* (that is to say, I wrote it, he signed it and *The Times* printed it) urging the West to keep on protesting about the non-observance of Helsinki.[19] But I suspect he put his name to the letter either out of inertia or to please me or because he thought it proper that the Western liberal should continue to exist as a species. To survive, the West must ardently join battle in the 'historical

struggle between the two systems'. An essential part of Zinoviev's mission to the West is to accuse it of perpetual weakness.

When all is said and done, what can be made of this extraordinary Russian intellectual writer? As a student of the Soviet Union I find him the most illuminating theorist at my disposal. Zinoviev, as Sidney Hook has said, is the only Soviet-born philosopher who, from within his own society, has given an independent critique of Marxist and Leninist/Stalinist institutions on a fundamental theoretical plane. For a Soviet academic to have expressed an original sociological vision in arresting literary form was a 'happening' indeed.

The broad Western view of the Soviet Union has always been that it was an 'empire of evil' because the regime was both cruel and mendacious. Solzhenitsyn and nearly all Third Emigration exiles agree. Zinoviev differs by attributing, as we have seen, a kind of existential value to Sovietism. He believes, still more unusually, that salvation could come from a better form of Communism under a dynamic, non-mediocre leadership. It is perhaps because he refuses to jettison the system that he is able to illuminate its inner workings so conscientiously and so well.

Another characteristic of Alexander Zinoviev is to stand back from the West/East struggle saying: 'Let the best man win!', for all the world as if he was equally pleased with the past-saturated West and the future-holding East. Indeed I have found Alexander Zinoviev much more respectful of the West than are many Tsarist and other Soviet exiles, people far more anti-Soviet than he is. Even when he is seriously annoyed he does not talk (as they are apt to do) about the 'rotten West' (*gniloi zapad*). On the contrary he admires it and wishes it kept systemically apart from Communism. The West should defend its glorious Graeco-Roman, etc., past while the Soviet Union makes its own progress, always in terms of 'Soviet reality' and 'Soviet social laws'.

Nothing in Zinoviev's position is especially easy to understand. The theoretical imbroglio became inextricable, as I have mentioned, with the publication by *Encounter* (April and May 1984) of an interview of Alexander Zinoviev by George Urban, the renowned quizzer of intellectuals and statesmen; himself a historian and until recently Director of Radio Free Europe. This interview, not surprisingly, drew protests from all over the academic world. It contained an apparent outright justification of Stalin's murderous collectivisation of agriculture; and lacked, among other things, any sympathetic

reference to the present plight of Eastern Europeans bullied by Soviet-imposed Communist officials. The 'sovieto-centricity' of the supporting arguments aroused the dismay and anger of such *émigré* journals as *Russkaya Mysl'* and *Obozrenie* and indeed of many staunch admirers of Zinoviev's work such as Alain Besançon.

Not content with this declaration to the anglophone world, Zinoviev renewed it, with variations, in an interview with Georges Nivat in the Parisian weekly *L'Express* on 12 April 1985. It is fair to add about the *Encounter* interview that Zinoviev gave it in English, and some of it when he was nervously exhausted. Further, he was, for some reason, never given the chance to see or revise the text. (No such circumstances surrounded the interview in *L'Express* which, as he does not speak French and Nivat speaks excellent Russian, he must have given in Russian.)

It has, I think, been a great misfortune for everyone that Zinoviev's public intransigence has put him into semi-quarantine among fellow-academics in the West. Few of them outside France and Italy now seem to take Alexander Zinoviev seriously as a theorist, although the man who is perhaps the greatest of them, Professor Lészek Kolakowski, is an exception. Does Zinoviev's own brand of genius simply preclude him from academic co-operation and what might be called the collegiate search for truth?

Alexander Zinoviev's eight years of exile have certainly depressed him, as his latest volume of poems *Evangelie dlya Ivana (A Gospel for Ivan)* (1985), amply confirms. Emigration at the age of 56 must be a depressant for anyone. It could hardly be expected that the Muscovite star of lecture-hall and salon could remain as buoyant as a freelance in a Munich suburb. But I suspect that the matter is a good deal more complex.

Zinoviev is a sincere and impassioned novelist who wishes to sustain great themes. He is a trained and inspired theorist, capable of flights of virtuosity as well as profound *aperçus*. But he has something of the clown in him too which comes out particularly in his publicism. And that is when the trouble starts. Clowns are often noble and moving persons who mourn life's deep and tragic absurdities. But there is also the clowning of the *enfant terrible*. In an astonishing manner Alexander Zinoviev is, I think, both kinds of clown and modulates from the one genre to the other. This creates ambiguity. And ambiguity is disconcerting when it comes to the science which he intends to promulgate. Ambiguity sits even worse with the

statesman-like deliberations which Alexander, when wearing his pro-Western hat, enjoins on us. The resulting extravaganza is often highly entertaining, but the wreckage has to be considerable.

Zinoviev is fond of saying he is a 'typical Soviet man'. This is quite untrue. He is not a typical anything or anybody. But one may perhaps say that he is a very Russian man, with all the Russian's impulsiveness (*proizvol*) and generous mood-swing. Yet even among Russians Alexander is a very rare bird. Not many of them, surely, can feed off so many different berries and sing so many songs. Let us call him 'the Mozart of Soviet sociology'. I once did; and he liked it – for a split second.

Notes

1. This term usually applies to Soviet citizens who emigrated from the Soviet Union after about 1960.
2. *Corriere della Sera*, 24 September 1985, *L'Antimondo di Zinoviev*.
3. Zinoviev has now adopted the standard Western spelling of his first name.
4. *Curriculum Vitae* (1985), a brief biographical outline supplied to the author by Zinoviev.
5. See, among his articles, *NYP* and *ZhD* in particular: also the *curriculum* already cited.
6. *Curriculum vitae*.
7. Firearms are unavailable to the public in the Soviet Union, so that would-be assassins have to steal them from the army or militia or to be a member of these groups.
8. *Curriculum vitae*.
9. Ibid.
10. In his interview with George Urban, 'Portrait of a Dissident as a Soviet Man', *Encounter*, April and May 1984. The text of this interview was not shown to Zinoviev for checking before publication. See the Bibliography.
11. See the Bibliography.
12. Suslov died in office in January 1982 at the age of 79.
13. *Curriculum vitae*.
14. Née Olga Mironovna Sorokina. Born 1945; graduated from Moscow University in the history of philosophy.
15. The Bibliography shows the considerable number of his works published in these years.
16. *NSNRNB*, pp. 69–9.
17. A thesis discussed further in Chapter 10 in Jon Elster's contribution to this book.
18. Interview in *L'Express*, 12 April 1985.
19. *The Times*, 9 February 1984.

3 Alexander Zinoviev on the Role of Literature in Society

Arch Tait

There is a tension in Alexander Zinoviev between the sociologist, who assumes determinism and relativism, and the moralist, who necessarily believes in free will and categorical imperatives. The sociologist attempts to move from a dispassionate analysis of Soviet society to generalisation about 'communist' societies from which private property relations are excluded, and in the process moves one further step towards generalising about 'communism' as a moral attitude which may be found in all societies. This creates problems for an analysis of Zinoviev's views on the role of literature in society, since one must follow the continuities of his views about the role of literature in the present day Soviet Union, in 'communist' society, and in the struggle against the 'communist' moral stance. The present chapter endeavours to characterise his views on the basis of articles, interviews and lectures covering the period from from his arrival in the West in October 1978 to the end of 1981.[1] In addition I have drawn on the more systematic exposition of his views in *The Reality of Communism* (1981).[2] There is a predictable shifting of emphasis over this period, as he discovers that some features which he had believed were specific to Soviet society are to be found also in Western societies, and as he reassesses the audience for which he is writing.

Zinoviev discerns an unending historical process in which two tendencies, a civilising tendency and a communist or communal tendency, struggled and continue to struggle.[3] The second (communal) tendency he sees as 'the overwhelming mass of humanity falling downwards, swimming with the tide of human instinct, drifting along the line of least resistance'.[4] The rules of communal behaviour are, for example, giving as little and taking as much as possible, minimising risk and maximising gain, minimising personal responsibility while maximising recognition, minimising one's own dependence on others, while maximising their dependence on you.[5] The

first or civilising tendency seems closely allied to what Western historians popularly call the puritan work ethic. It is

> resistance to the second, containment of the instinctive forces of the second, a striving to raise people's social organisation to a higher level. It is based on hard work, personal risk, individual initiative, taking responsibility for one's own actions and self-restraint at the prompting of conscious morality, lawfulness and other civilised values.[6]

Zinoviev tells us that the social structure which grew from this tendency and which preserved it gave birth to the blessings of present day civilisation and simultaneously to the social ills which are inextricably part of them. People blamed civilisation both for these ills and for the ills which arose from 'communism', which was an underlying tendency of society as it strove to become civilised. Attempting to eradicate these ills, they destroyed civilisation in Russia, leaving communism an open field.[7] Zinoviev has little time for the national character of the Russian people, and lists their servility, indolence, brutality and other faults as reasons why communism broke the chain of civilisation at its weakest link: Russia. Nevertheless, these vices, he tells us, are common to all large human communities. It is merely that Russia has provided a fertile breeding ground for them to reach a mature social form.[8]

For the effective functioning of society even communism needs to restrain the forces of communality, and one of the ways in which it does this is by partially adopting and radically adapting, not to say perverting, some of the means used by civilisation for the same purpose.

> For instance certain moral and legal ideas, humanism and the products of spiritual art become here a means of stultifying people, an element in the ideological control of people. In other words they have a role opposite to that which they have in the framework of civilisation.[9]

This is largely a description of ideology.

Zinoviev states that ideology plays such a major part in communist society, that it is meaningful to characterise it as an ideological society. He defines ideology as 'a definite teaching about the world, about human society, about mankind and about the vitally important features of people's lives'.[10] This doctrine tolerates no opposition or competition. Ideology is not an acceptable adjunct to or alternative

to the arts and sciences. It has no interest in ascertaining truth, and lives parasitically off them, exploiting them selectively in its own pragmatic interests. 'Ideology is neither truthful nor untruthful. It has other purposes: the justification to people of particular aims and the organising of their actions to the achievement of these ends.'[11] The major function of ideology is to promote uniformity of thought and behaviour, social cohesion, throughout the ideological society. It provides a (spurious) sense of purpose, which is of value in mobilising the population to action, as was Marxism during the Russian revolution (although other formulations could have served equally well).[12]

Literature is particularly susceptible to this parasite, since like ideology it is mediated by language. 'The link between ideology and literature at their very gnoseological source is so close as to make it almost impossible to distinguish between them.'[13] Indeed, Zinoviev sees ideology as exploiting literary devices to fictionalise social life to its own ends. Thus, ideology does not rest content with influencing the passive consciousness of citizens, but devises a real-life pantomime in which they are the actors, from the summit of power to the least of social groupings. 'Therefore, in communist society people do not merely live, they masquerade, and the task of ideology is to teach them to masquerade seriously and with deep feeling.'[14] Indeed, drawing on communal motivations, ideology succeeds in imbuing these 'ideological orgies' with a satanic intensity.[15] In an equally disturbing way, ideology creates fictional doubles for deviant individuals, which come to have more reality than the individuals themselves.

> In these doubles are reflected those real qualities of people which members of society need to take into account in order to exercise control over their fellows and themselves. Thus it seems as if our fellows know our secret thoughts and intentions better than we do ourselves. They can literally see through us.[16]

While Zinoviev concedes that it would be unjust to describe literature without qualification as an arm of ideology, it is by and large a major channel for it. This applies not only to the Soviet Union, where the evident coercion of literature masks the fact that writers on the whole quite happily and voluntarily fulfil their ideological obligations, but also to the West. Despite the fact that Western literature appears to be, and to some extent in fact is, free, writers are in a variety of ways pressured into the service of ideology: through market forces, through what is considered topical, through

their relations with publishers and booksellers, through the system of literary prizes, through considerations of publicity and literary criticism, and through the attitude of their readers to what they read.[17]

To return specifically to the Soviet Union: quite apart from its 'gnoseologically' based vulnerability, Soviet literature is organisationally vulnerable. It is a means of livelihood for thousands of people.[18] Soviet literature is a complex structure comprising a multitude of organisations, with a characteristically Soviet system for distributing favours, including honours and reputations.[19] One of the consequences of the communally motivated social structure is that literature, and culture generally, are to a significant extent a department of the ideological apparatus of society.[20] Zinoviev advises us that

> The position is not that talented Soviet writers try to write truthful literature of high literary quality but are prevented from doing so by the party and state authorities, but that many thousands of writers, the bulk of them without talent, themselves represent party and state authority in this sphere of society. They themselves exercise a stringent censorship over themselves and their colleagues. They themselves are in the first instance bearers of the regime and only subsequently its victims: a condign reward for the privileged position which they enjoy relative to the lower orders of society. There are very few writers who are victims of the regime, trying to open up new paths in their creative work and with real ability to do so.[21]

'Communal' behaviour inexorably leads to capitulation before the demands of ideology.

Aside from the literary output of the regime's more venal apologists, literature is produced in the Soviet Union which does contribute to society's understanding of itself. Truthfulness (*pravdivost'*) is a fairly commonplace virtue. It requires of its author, to parody the official definition of Socialist Realism, the full and concrete depiction of reality as it is, rather than as it might become after further hypothetical revolutionary development. It is accurately descriptive, and doubtless, as a result of its cognitive value, socially progressive.[22] Its practitioners include members of the Union of Writers (Shukshin, Trifonov, Rasputin, Astaf'ev, Belov, Bitov among them) no less than such disgraced figures as Solzhenitsyn and Shalamov.[23] If it is generally acknowledged now that every cell of Soviet society is permeated by vulgarity, stupidity and brute force, this is in part due to the fact

that this has been depicted truthfully in the vast volume of critical literature which has been produced in recent years.[24] Nevertheless, works of critical literature do not become major literature merely by virtue of being critical of Soviet society, and the bulk of what is produced remains within the confines of ideology. 'The struggle takes place within ideology; it is not a struggle between genuine understanding and the duping of people by ideology.'[25] On the other hand, such writers as Vladimov, Erofeev, Nikolev, Shalamov, Solzhenitsyn, Shukshin and Vysotskii express the anguish of life in the new Russia much as Dostoevskii expresssed the anguish of living in the old.[26]

What contribution to Soviet society can Russian *émigré* literature make? Precious little in any direct sense, Zinoviev seems to think. Soviet writers, even those who are less than adventurous, have the wind in their sails providing they do not fall into the substandard category of abject apologists of the regime. They have valuable work to do in accurately representing the society around them. It is indeed only the writer who lives in Soviet society and who knows the Soviet way of life who can participate in elaborating the important theme of 'the birth of a communist society'.[27] The *émigré* writer, in contrast, is a wasting asset. He may well have brought with him at the time of his emigration valuable experience and insights into Soviet society, but his experiential knowledge begins to date from the moment he crosses the Soviet frontier. He is cut off from his roots, from his immediate contact with the life of the people.[28] His access to his public, and thereby his influence, are severely diminished.[29] New arrivals, bringing up-to-date insights, mask and mitigate this problem, and if in future they were to arrive in sufficient numbers, then *émigré* literature might indeed add up to an unprecedented phenomenon.[30]

Zinoviev pours cold water on the treasured roles which the internal and 'external' *émigré* intelligentsia have traditionally ascribed to themselves. They are no guardians of a pure Russian language or culture.[31] Neither language nor society stand still, and the fate which awaits the *émigrés* of today is that which has already struck the writers of the first emigration, whose style and aspirations are alien to the racially mixed Soviet intelligentsia who today live in the major cultural centres of the USSR.[32] As for Samizdat and Tamizdat, these are not major channels for influencing Soviet society's self-cognition. They are at best a rivulet making a distinctive, but minor, contribution to the torrent of national self-awareness.[33] In addition, uncen-

sored literature has played a positive role in tempting official writers by setting an example in the area of new literary forms. 'It is not difficult,' Zinoviev tells us, 'to discern its influence on the rest of Russian language literature.' This stage, however, he believes to be already largely over.[34]

The primary task which Zinoviev sees literature as having is, we infer from the above, to assist contemporary society in its self-cognition. To some degree Soviet literature achieves this, despite the state's attempts to harness it to ideological moulding of the population.

Because of his technocratic view of the role of literature, Zinoviev is predictably dismissive of classical literature. He could not when younger (and perhaps still cannot) understand how ordinary people who were not professionally obligated as literary critics or other officials of the art world could be interested in reading Shakespeare, Dante, Tolstoi, Turgenev or Gor'kii. His own favourite authors, however, include Lermontov, Blok, Esenin, and, with reservations, Dostoevskii.[35] He evidently equates enthusiasm for the entire received canon of classical literature with conditioning at the hands of the Gorky Institute of World Literature, or the Union of Writers.[36] At all events, the reader of classical Russian literature nowadays will apparently do little beyond equipping himself with an outdated picture of Soviet society.[37]

Zinoviev sees traditional literature as fundamentally flawed as a means of making sense of the world. It is axiomatic that the description of the laws of nature, society and cognition is not the task of literature, but of science. 'Every schoolboy knows what literature should concern itself with: literature should describe Ivans, Peters, Matrenas, dogs, butterflies, daisies, etc.'[38] He sees it as being concerned with surface phenomena, where real understanding of society must proceed from sociological analysis using the procedures of scientific research. The professional literati may imagine that the Laws of Human Truth determine the course of life, but Zinoviev, 'as a specialist and an observant person' knows that it is determined by sociological laws, and that not individuals but trends and statistical probability are what matter. Not even Stalin was as powerful in reality as he is portrayed by historians, writers and politicians.[39] Zinoviev is of course not such a rigid determinist as he pretends to be, but part of the polemic which he is conducting is against those voluntarist 'bels esprits' among the dissidents who imagine that changing society is merely a matter of adopting a new party programme or of conducting

a certain amount of propaganda. 'All manner of plans and models of the future, programmes and promises play a part in people's lives, but it is a part which has nothing whatever to do with understanding real life, its objective laws and tendencies.'[40] Societies are influenced by forces much deeper and less manipulable than the demagogues and prophets suppose, and the need is for a sober appreciation of social reality, not for analysis of the dreams of various well-intentioned visionaries.[41] This view is behind Zinoviev's gleefully paradoxical acceptance of such Soviet axioms as that Soviet society is monolithic, that the party and the people are one, that the Soviet social system results from the active participation of the multi-million population of the USSR, etc.[42]

Like Tolstoi in his polemic against the adulators of Napoleon Zinoviev emphasises the complexity of the life of a society:

> We are talking about the lives of millions of people from a succession of generations, performing billions of varied actions. The bulk of these actions are performed in accordance with laws beyond the control of parties or state organisations, let alone of an insignificant bunch of politically heterodox individuals called dissidents.[43]

Zinoviev contrasts this complexity of social reality with the smooth imagery of conventional literature.

> Draw a straight line on a piece of paper and then look at it through a microscope. You will find it looks like the electro-cardiogram of a patient with a terminally defective heart. That is what our straightforward, logical, causal life will look like if you view it more attentively through the microscope of the intellect. You will see then not the smooth, uncomplicated picture which ordinary literature gave and still gives us, but tufts, zigzags, peaks, troughs, laughter, tears, falsity, sincerity – in appalling disharmony. In order to make this picture simple and unified you need to fill in link lines, not of events but of ideas.[44]

What is Zinoviev's vision of the role of a new literature? Literature is not an end in itself, whatever the specialists of the Gor'kii Institute of World Literature may opine. It can, however, serve a useful practical function in facilitating an understanding among a certain educated stratum of Soviet (and Western) society of the major sociological processes which are in train nationally and internationally. He does not insist that his own unconventional literary style is the

only correct one, perhaps jokingly observing that it is a difficult method and he doubts whether all writers are sufficiently intelligent to master the necessary discipline of scientific thinking.[45] On the one hand he sees the proper task of literature, including his own writing, as being to inform. 'I do not write for entertainment. [. . .] My aims do not extend beyond informing people about the nature of the future which threatens them. What conclusions readers draw from my books are their private affair.'[46] On the other hand he has larger ambitions to alter the way people think about societies in general, and about Soviet society in particular. The problem of the Soviet way of life, he tells us, is a sociological problem. What is needed to understand it is neither an historical nor a comparative approach.[47] It is not enough to see facts as such. 'What is needed is a particular method of understanding these facts; what is needed is a new way of looking at the problem (*razvorot mozgov*), definite criteria for the selection, evaluation and juxtaposition of facts', the ability to judge phenomena within their overall social context.[48]

In terms of the present-day Soviet Union Zinoviev discerns a new constituency from which he believes himself to come, and to which his writing is addressed. The reader in whom he is interested is well educated: better educated, indeed, than the professionals of the Writers' Union. He has benefited from the wider dissemination of scientific and technical achievements and from the more general accessibility of art. His education and indeed his way of apprehending the world have been greatly affected by macluhanesque influences: the cinema, television, photography. His cultural expectations have been modified by such cultural forms as the documentary, science fiction, and applied art. He has an appreciation of the alternative, oral Soviet culture, which escapes the ubiquitous ideological controllers, and is himself articulate and sharp-witted. His background is more likely to be in the natural sciences than in the humanities. He expects of literature not descriptions of nature or of the external appearance of a character, since he is well enough able to articulate these for himself. What he requires is scientific analysis of the world about him;[49] he expects literature to provide him with hard information, but this is something that few contemporary writers are capable of providing.

Zinoviev adumbrates the concept of literary 'adequateness', by which he means that a work of literature reflects both the language and the way of thinking (the mentality) of that section of a country's population which is most intellectually developed,[50] which best

understands what is occurring in the society around it, and which 'most actively experiences it'.[51] Writers of such literature include Babel', Olesha, Platonov, Bulgakov, Il'f and Petrov, Zoshchenko, Tynyanov, Belinkov, Vladimov, Voinovich, Erofeev, Bokov, Okudzhava, Galich, and Vysotskii.[52]

The writer of 'adequate' literature must himself come from and must command all the resources of this background. He must be thoroughly at home in the milieu of the scientific intelligentsia's oral culture. When he senses his powers he will simply burst through all bureaucratic shackles and prohibitions and find his way to his public.[53] Our suspicion that Zinoviev is here writing of himself is confirmed by an interview given to Radio Liberty in August 1979 where he notes that 'I wrote for people like myself', people who in addition to the attributes noted above are given also to reflection, and either are not very successful in their careers, or have no career aspirations.[54]

While disclaiming any status as a literary critic, Zinoviev volunteers his personal preferences as to literary form, which may coincide with those of the new reader. In terms reminiscent of Evgenii Zamyatin's definition of neo-Realist literature, he describes a literature

> infinitely more concentrated in terms of thought than traditional literature; literature which avoids superfluous descriptions, which exploits the conceptual apparatus of science and the methods of scientific thinking; literature rich in information, which readily deploys varied literary forms within a single work if they achieve the necessary effect; literature close to oral culture.[55]

The limitations of his literary sensibility are evident when he tells us that 'Of *War and Peace* I accept only the historical sketch, and of Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* only the part dealing with Christ and Pilate.'[56]

Zinoviev clearly sees his own works, particularly *Yawning Heights*, as 'adequate' to their time. His social and literary background fit the prototype advanced above. The experience of his researches as a logician into the language of science and ideology, he tells us, assisted him greatly.[57] He acknowledges that he was well read when he began writing, and that therefore many unconcious literary influences may have been at work; but these, he avers, were wholly unconscious. While certainly aware of crafting his work, he did not assimilate it to any literary prototype. At the time he wanted to settle a score with

his society, to purge himself of an accumulation of thoughts and ideas. The adverse external circumstances of his life in the Soviet Union gave him the opportunity to turn to writing, and to realise what proved to be his own literary style. 'Every cloud,' he notes, 'has a silver lining'.[58] He is reluctant to see himself as part of any tradition, and argues that in many areas of Soviet life analogies with the past are apparent rather than real.[59]

Addressing the Congress on Science Fiction in Brussels in November 1978, Zinoviev developed his ideas on the role of literature in society, and further defined his own role as a writer.[60] He there placed himself in the tradition of Voltaire, Swift, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Zamyatin and Orwell, adding that he believed himself to be the first writer to bring to this tradition the one-man scientific investigation of society as a preliminary to rendering his insights into literary form, and to attempt a comprehensive analytical description of a society in all its aspects.[61] He sees the merit of all these writers as being that they write 'the truth about reality', by which he means social reality, 'what is occurring' (*proiskhodyashchee*). Here again, Zinoviev's theorising proves to be largely a description of his own method of literary creation. Nevertheless, he insists, it is the appropriate method to apply where one is dealing with major social questions.[62]

We have seen that Zinoviev makes no attempt to conceal his impatience with, contempt even, for traditional literary values. Why bother with literature at all? Why does he not simply publish his social theory in the form of a scientific treatise? He gives an entirely clear and intelligible answer. He plans to exploit certain characteristics of the literary image. Given that he is a one-man show rather than a large, richly endowed research institute, given in any case the difficulty or impossibility of obtaining access to much of the statistical and other sociological data which would be essential if one were to undertake a fully 'scientific' account of Soviet society, Zinoviev has had recourse to literary imagination as a way round these two problems. Firstly, it provides a means for the author to give a complete and tolerably accurate picture of his society on the basis of very incomplete data; secondly, it provides a form which renders the picture presented convincing. Where the social scientist would have to back up his contentions with tables of statistics compiled by an army of researchers, the literary author can observe and present, for example, the tendency to the growth of social inequality in the USSR in graphic and persuasive form.[63] One might add that, given the

narrow focus of scientific research and the vastness of the phenomena about which Zinoviev wishes to generalise, some literary format is probably inevitable.

More conventionally, Zinoviev sees fiction as having strengths similar to those of the scientist's hypothetical example.[64] Where the applicability of a concrete example is limited by its particularity, a hypothetical example can incorporate what is of value in a whole range of concrete examples, without becoming so generalised as to lose its ability to elucidate and illustrate graphically some aspect of the theory. In literature generalising scientific theory such an 'example' is replaced by a literary fiction with an even wider applicability. An example is no doubt Ibansk itself which, Zinoviev suggests, he chose 'as a means of presenting the results of my researches into Soviet society as having some measure of relevance for any contemporary human collective of sufficient size and development'.[65]

Zinoviev tells us that he has observed rigorous scientific standards, and has arrived at certain conclusions. His creative fantasy is not, therefore, unfettered. He describes his method as 'the scientific style of figurative thinking' (*nauchnyi stil' obraznogo myshleniya'*). Having arrived at his own overall stance towards his sociological material, he 'computes' the logically possible character varieties and situations required to illustrate his theory comprehensively. His characters propound his theory, in places mouthing 'bits of theory'. They have no literary autonomy: Zinoviev's characters, reminiscent of those of Expressionist writers, equal their social function. They personify 'the laws of everyday life'.[66] He wanted to cut them down to size, and to portray them not as Soviet ideology or official sociology portrayed them, but as the 'common, dirty nonentities they really are'.[67] Such laws do not exist in the abstract, separate from real individuals, and he raided his memory to flesh them out and find appropriate costumes for them. Their sphere of action is not confined to the USSR, but they flourish there, untrammelled by the constraints upon them which have been devised by the civilised societies of the West.[68]

The literary work has a unity not of plot, but of theory.[69] It stands by the coherence of its ideas, not by the elements of its narrative structure. Its integrity is not an aesthetic integrity, evident in the elegance of the exposition of the ideas: it is not even necessarily present in the text, but is at one remove. The literary text may well be, in aesthetic terms, a mess. At the same time, literary fantasy generates (the illusion of?) a holistic understanding of social life.

It is a striking feature of Zinoviev's fiction that he seems to have little

time for literary form as such. Narrative structure is not developed, neither is plot. Indeed, Zinoviev might seem to go out of his way to maximise the difficulties in the way of assimilating his ideas, for example by his eccentric divisions of the text. 'I write books which are not easy to understand,' he warns, 'and I know that there are not that many people nowadays who are prepared to regard reading as hard work. Nevertheless there are such people about, and my books do get read.'[70] He also points out, however, that the lack of literary integrity was a consequence of the threatening circumstances under which he was writing. His writing might at any moment be terminated by 'circumstances beyond his control'. The various parts of *Yawning Heights* were written so that they could, if need be, be the last part. He was unable to afford the luxury of a continuing plot for the book as a whole, and could at best allow himself recurrent characters and the continuing development of ideas.[71] Zinoviev is well enough aware that his variety of literature may not be regarded as literature at all by literary specialists, but despatches them to his own satisfaction by reflecting that they are themselves mere social functionaries whose sour faces can be predicted or 'computed' as unerringly as those of other nonentities.[72] On the other hand, he insists on the genuinely literary nature of his generalisations, and denies that he has produced a coded chronicle of Soviet life. He demands that his readers should not attempt to 'decipher' *Yawning Heights* (e.g. by equating Dauber with Ernst Neizvestnyi).

As far as the ideas of his characters are concerned, Zinoviev at one moment states baldly, 'Overall the thoughts of all the characters in the book are my own thoughts which have merely been distributed among the various characters'.[73] Then he concedes the characters some degree of traditional autonomy to argue among themselves, to contradict each other, adding in apparent self-contradiction, 'People often ascribe the sentiments of my heroes to me. Sometimes I agree, sometimes not.'[74] At the same time, Zinoviev makes clear his position as a moralising author: overall he stands firmly behind the 'author' whom the reader will deduce from reading *Yawning Heights*, but he is not preaching any fixed creed. 'As far as my outlook is concerned it is not (as you can judge from my books), something that I can pickle by adhering to a particular group, or sect, or party. It is a living thing; I do not want to kill it with one-sidedness.'[75] He would like the reader to discern, and possibly to emulate his overall orientation towards life. This does not entail clinging to any dead formulae, but acceptance of character, of his style of thought and behaviour. It

is a way of reacting to 'what is occurring', an underlying attitude towards life which can be summed up as: seek truth and resist brute force, since otherwise you are not a man.[76]

This brings us back to the moral dimension of the need to struggle against 'communism' in everyday life, both in East and West. For all Zinoviev's protestations of the need for dispassionate, 'scientific' description of different types of society and of the inapplicability of Western perspectives or norms to Soviet society, his language when he condemns 'communism' is very strong indeed. Of the cultural sphere in Soviet society he says, 'What takes place is so sickening that one is reminded involuntarily of the thesis of Marxism according to which society is a form of the motion of matter.'[77] Well-intentioned but muddle-headed revolutionaries are 'swine who have committed repulsive crimes in the name of exalted ideals'.[78] He tell us that morally justified revolt needs no explanation or justification. 'It is irrational and has no cause. It has only effects; and the rebel has only a destiny.'[79] Are we to doubt that he hopes his readers, informed about the nature of the future which threatens them, will also accept his premise that the problem is to find effective means to resist communism everywhere and at every turn?[80]

Given the unwieldiness of social formations, what forms of resistance are worthwhile? What lessons can be learned, for example, from the experience of the dissidents? Zinoviev acknowledges that the importance of the dissident movement is not only the fact of its existence, but also that it has proved the possibility of influencing the life of society overall.[81] The dissidents have shown people, particularly young people, the possibility of opposing a Communist regime from within.[82] Nevertheless, their importance should not be exaggerated. They have not shaken Soviet society to its foundations.[83] Soviet society has its own positive norms which preclude civil rights.

> The struggle for the values of the Western way of life on a basis of communist social relations is something which will have a long and bloody history. It is not a minor task which can be decided by government decision or by a demonstration by the dissidents.[84]

Soviet society is not merely un-spiritual, but actively anti-spiritual. Zinoviev finds it still too early to evaluate the significance of the fact that certain members of Soviet society (mainly from the intelligentsia) are trying to attain spiritual independence from the prevailing Soviet ideology through such channels as yoga, parapsychology, religious philosophy, diet and sex. 'I am convinced that this need for

"spirituality" and a corresponding way of life is indicative of a natural need for religion in an atheist communist society.'[85] He envisages a new religion, 'adequate' to communist society, as beginning among the more educated sections of the intelligentsia and giving, simply, a more credible, 'merciless', image of man and society, not excluding parties and leaders. It would give also detailed guidelines on how to live. Zinoviev allows for the option of a god if he would prove a useful adjunct to health of the soul.[86] Such a religion would be closely bound up with the question of morality in communist society. Moral behaviour and behavioural norms 'arise as a striving by people to limit the turbulence of unbridled social behaviour'. The motivation is a personal one and is a voluntary self-limitation of instinctive social behaviour.

> For example such moral postulates as that one should keep one's word, not denounce one's neighbour, not curry favour with one's superiors, not do evil to other people even where one can do so with impunity, become practical, active norms for living.[87]

Given the communist penchant for repressing organisations, this new spiritual awareness could only arise from the spiritual unity of individuals who knew and associated with each other. He has no illusions that such a creed would quickly become established, or that its early practitioners would not be subjected to trials similar to those faced by the early Christians.[88]

Here Zinoviev the moralist seems to collide with Zinoviev the sociologist. Against the fragile prospects for this non-organised spiritual brotherhood must be placed his judgement that resistance to the communist menace is possible, 'but only as a result of the efforts of millions of people from all spheres of society, not merely of a few well-intentioned people'.[89] Meanwhile, his hybrid literature, reinforced by sociological fact, has a crucial role to play.

> For the mean time I see only one force which is at least capable of weakening the snares of ideology, if only for a very small group of people: that is literature as a form of cognition adequate to the problems of our time, giving a merciless analysis of all significant events of the present day.[90]

This will not be literature operating at some transcendental level. This factually based literature must burden its reader with full awareness of his personal responsibility as an individual in history. 'It must describe a real, not a fictitious, enemy, and must give a person a real

weapon for defending himself from this enemy, and not a toy one. It is not so easy to do this.'[91]

Only a small rivulet in the murky torrent of ideologised literature has retained its integrity and opposes the ideological duping and manipulation of people. Zinoviev is not inclined to exaggerate the importance of this literature of the resistance of the individual to the violence which society visits upon him.

> I know that it is the revolt of isolated individuals against the whole of the rest of the Universe: but I see no other, more powerful means of this kind. Moreover, I see the sense of such literature not in its homilies, but in the very fact that it has the audacity to appear.[92]

The sociologist holds out little hope that the moralist will on his own have any major impact on society.

Zinoviev falls back either on black pessimism,[93] on a faith in the power of martyrdom in the name of a spurious religion – or, but only at times, on reducing his sociological model to a metaphor for a moral struggle within the individual in search of a righteous life:

> People are what matters. Another human being is the most precious thing and the highest ideal for a human being. So my social ideal is always attainable in some measure, but fully attainable – never. I am a man of the present time. My ideal is man's behaviour in what is occurring, e.g. in real life.[94]

What, ultimately, will be achieved? If nothing else, a writer following this path can comfort himself with the thought that the possibility of knowing the world and of finding means adequate to describe it is a sufficient reward in itself for his labours and tribulations. At the very least, he can content himself with the proud consciousness that not everybody in the world is a pawn duped by ideology.[95]

Notes

1. Namely *BI*, containing articles, interviews and speeches from his first year in the West (October 1978 to August 1979); *MIZ*, a similar collection covering the period up to May 1980; and *NSNRNB*, which covers the period up to 1981.
2. *The Reality of Communism*, tr. Charles Janson (London: Gollancz, 1984); *Kommunizm kak real nost'* (Lausanne: L'Age d'homme, 1981).
3. *MIZ*, p. 70.
4. Ibid.
5. *TRC*, p. 61; *KKR*, p. 52.
6. *MIZ*, p. 70.
7. Ibid. Communism is a more fundamental social form than capitalism, since with its victory all social relations become 'communal', and capitalist/civilised relations are excluded. Capitalism, on the contrary, does not exclude other relations within a society, including communal relations. TRC, p. 23; KKR, p. 17.
8. *MIZ*, p. 42.
9. *TRC*, p. 28; *KKR*, 21.
10. *TRC*, pp. 216, 218; *KKR*, p. 193.
11. *NSNRNB*, p. 26.
12. *TRC*, p. 37; *KKR*, p. 28.
13. *NSNRNB*, p. 51.
14. *TRC*, p. 221; *KKR*, p. 196.
15. *TRC*, p. 222; *KKR*, p. 196.
16. *NSNRNB*, p. 79.
17. Ibid., pp. 51–2.
18. Ibid., p. 51.
19. *MIZ*, p. 145.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 146.
22. *BI*, p. 115.
23. *BI*, p. 116.
24. *BI*, p. 45.
25. *NSNRNB*, p. 53.
26. *NSNRNB*, p. 71.
27. *MIZ*, p. 83.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., p. 84.
30. Ibid., p. 83.
31. Ibid., p. 84.
32. Ibid., p. 82.
33. Ibid., p. 84.
34. Ibid., p. 93.
35. *NSNRNB*, p. 71.
36. *BI*, p. 10.
37. *MIZ*, p. 56.
38. *BI*, p. 10.
39. *TRC*, p. 202; *KKR*, p. 178.

40. *BI*, p. 70.
41. Ibid., p. 47.
42. Ibid., p. 72.
43. Ibid., p. 87.
44. Ibid., p. 122.
45. Ibid., p. 23.
46. *MIZ*, pp. 94–5.
47. Ibid., p. 128.
48. Ibid., p. 129.
49. Ibid., p. 79.
50. Ibid., p. 80.
51. *BI*, p. 115.
52. Ibid., p. 116.
53. *MIZ*, p. 80.
54. *BI*, p. 121.
55. *MIZ*, p. 80.
56. *BI*, p. 9.
57. Ibid., p. 10.
58. *MIZ*, p. 81.
59. Ibid., p. 82.
60. 'O tak nazyvaemoi nauchnoi fantastike. (Iz doklada na kongresse nauchnoi fantastiki v Bryussele, XI, 1978)', BI, pp. 19–24.
61. *BI*, pp. 24, 23.
62. Ibid., p. 23.
63. Ibid., p. 13.
64. Ibid., p. 22.
65. Ibid., p. 13.
66. Ibid., p. 11.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., p. 12.
69. Ibid., p. 22.
70. *MIZ*, pp. 94–5.
71. *BI*, p. 9.
72. Ibid., p. 14.
73. Ibid., p. 16.
74. Ibid.
75. *MIZ*, p. 95.
76. *BI*, p. 17.
77. *MIZ*, p. 148.
78. Ibid., p. 76.
79. Ibid., p. 77.
80. Ibid., p. 89.
81. *BI*, p. 61.
82. Ibid., pp. 72, 86.
83. Ibid., p. 71.
84. *MIZ*, p. 147.
85. Ibid., p. 34.
86. Ibid., p. 36.
87. Ibid., p. 37.

88. Ibid., p. 36.
89. *BI*, p. 76.
90. *NSNRNB*, p. 54.
91. Ibid.
92. *NSNRNB*, p. 55.
93. Zinoviev wrote in May 1980, 'Each day of this year comes and goes like a personal insult. You feel submerged up to your chin in a boundless ocean of dirty water. You feel as if your body and soul were already being consumed by the bacteria of decay and the maggots, and yet still you clutch at moral precepts which have lost their force – the last remaining straw. Is it worth continuing to clutch at them? You feel like turning your back on the lot of it and saying to yourself, "To hell with all this muck."' *MIZ*, p. 154.
94. *MIZ*, p. 97.
95. *NSNRNB*, p. 55.

4 Ideology in the Works of A. A. Zinoviev

Michael Kirkwood

It is tempting to begin this chapter with a quotation from Zinoviev's latest book[1] which might well serve as an epigraph: 'Ignore official ideology. Any attention paid to it only strengthens it.'[2] This is a piece of advice which one finds from time to time in Zinoviev's work, expressed less succinctly, but no less adamantly.[3] It is advice which he has not taken himself. Discussions of ideology are to be found in many of his works and he has, indeed, recently written a whole book on the subject.[4] The aim of this chapter is to locate and classify those discussions under a series of headings which will allow us to present Zinoviev's views on the role and importance of ideology in a communist society in a systematic fashion.

Let us begin by deciding how we are to interpret the term 'ideology'. The term is defined in the *Soviet Academy Dictionary* as a 'system of views, ideas, conceptions (*predstavleniya*) characterising a particular society, class or political party'.[5] Given the role of ideology in the Soviet system, this is rather a modest, almost self-effacing definition. The *Oxford English Dictionary* is more forthcoming:

ideology: 1. the science of ideas; the study of the origin and nature of ideas;
2. Ideal or abstract speculation; visionary theorising.
3. A system of ideas concerning phenomena, esp. those of social life; the manner of thinking characteristic of a class or individual.[6]

Ideology as understood by Zinoviev is simultaneously a body of doctrine, a guide to action, and a magnetic field the influence of which it is difficult, if not impossible, to escape.[7] Zinoviev's understanding of the term differs in important respects from the definitions just quoted. Ideology for Zinoviev is not class-based or class-oriented as it is in the Soviet definition. Ideology is specifically not a science as far as he is concerned, hence he would reject out of hand the primary definition offered by the *OED*. He would, on the other hand, be happy to accept the second *OED* definition and the first part of the

third. His own definition is the following: 'Ideology is a body of ideas which, by intention or result, forms in people a particular type of consciousness adequate for the conditions of their social milieu, a consciousness which approves of some forms of behaviour of people in a given society and condemns others.'[8] It is in Zinoviev's sense that we shall use the term 'ideology' in the rest of this chapter.

Let us first examine ideology as a body of ideas or doctrine. It is as a body of ideas, for instance, that marxism – leninism has attracted most attention. Most people writing on the subject of marxism – leninism are at pains to trace the evolution of Marxism as interpreted by Lenin in his writings, or to establish the extent to which the original theory has to be modified in the light of changing circumstances and events which Marx (and Lenin) could not have foreseen, or to evaluate the contribution to marxist–leninist thought of contemporary ideologues, General Secretaries of the CPSU, leader writers of Party newspapers and journals, etc. There is often of course a great difference between what Zinoviev calls the 'classics' of Marxism and Leninism, i.e. the actual primary texts of these writers and the texts produced for mass consumption. The former constitute the unadulterated 'fountainhead' and are not, themselves, suitable as ideological texts since they are too difficult. Ideological texts, to be successful, have to be easily understood by large masses of people.[9]

Zinoviev is fond of reminding his readers of Lenin's famous remark that, fifty years after Marx's death, only a few people read him and that even fewer understood him properly. He also applies that same remark to Lenin's own writings. However, it should not be inferred from this that Zinoviev has any high regard for the intellectual calibre of Marx's work, or indeed of Lenin's. He often refers to the fact that he spent some eight years studying the works of Karl Marx in an attempt to master the body of his thought.[10] He apparently wrote a notoriously successful dissertation based on the results of his studies which went the rounds in Moscow although it was never published.[11] The conclusion to which he came and which he reiterates frequently and at length, whether in his own name or through the mouths of his characters is that what Marx and Lenin wrote was mere verbiage (*slovobludie*).[12] From a strictly logical point of view much of their writing, he claims, is utter nonsense. However, the work of the 'classical writers' constitutes the 'best' that Marxist thought has to offer from an intellectual point of view and it is the works of those writers which, Zinoviev asserts, are most studied and criticised by Western scholars. The 'average product', however, the work of the

average scholar working in a Soviet department of philosophy, is the best indicator of the true nature of Soviet philosophical writing and Zinoviev asserts that it is abysmally low, degenerate and universally despised within the Soviet Union itself. It is therefore a source of amusement to Zinoviev when he comes across examples of Western scholars solemnly taking the writings of Soviet hack philosophers seriously.[13]

Despite his lack of respect for the intellectual level of the works of the classical writers, Zinoviev does not deny their potency as a source on which ideologists can draw, if the need arises. Indeed, the practice of quoting from the 'classics' is one which he constantly satirises in his novels. What he does deny is that they were ever in any sense a 'blueprint for action'. He has stated on more than one occasion that the Revolution produced the need for an ideology, firstly in order to legitimise the position of the leadership and secondly to mobilise the population and steer it in a particular direction. It so happened that marxism – leninism was handily available. Again it must be remembered that it was not the individual works of Marx and Lenin which were used as ideological texts for mass consumption. In an age of widespread illiteracy and a very low level of general culture, texts written for an educated élite would have been quite useless. It was Stalin who adapted marxism – leninism and reproduced its essentials in a form which made it accessible to the masses of the ordinary population.[14] The crisis which Soviet ideology faces today, according to Zinoviev, stems from the fact that the intellectual level of the doctrine is no longer adequate for a highly educated population whose cultural level is very much higher than it was in the age of Stalin.[15] The sole addition to the whole of marxist – leninist thought since the time of Stalin has been the word 'developed' placed in front of the word 'socialism'.

The intellectual level of the doctrine notwithstanding, the doctrine remains essentially unchanged. It continues to preach the gospel of collectivism, the superiority of socialism over capitalism and the inevitability of communism. The virtues of patriotism and internationalism (which increasingly refers to relations between nationalities *within* the Soviet Union) are extolled, as is the need to defend the socialist motherland against its enemies.

IDEOLOGY AND SCIENCE

The Soviet claim is that marxism – leninism is superior to any other ideology because it is 'scientific'. It allegedly offers the only true scientific view of the world, since it alone is armed with a theory which accounts for the development of the world to date and predicts the way in which the world is 'inevitably' bound to evolve. If there is one aspect of Soviet ideology which Zinoviev attacks more than any other, it is its claim to be a science. Time and again he demonstrates that this claim is totally false. Sometimes he mounts an attack by discussing the 'language of science' as opposed to the 'language of ideology'. The former is concerned to make things explicit, clear, unambiguous, verifiable, to make statements which are open to challenge and refutation. The latter is concerned with obfuscation. ambiguity, simplification, irrefutability, bias, etc. This is not to deny that an ideology may make use of the language of science, may identify itself with science, may make use of science for its own ends. Zinoviev, indeed, indicates that Soviet ideology does precisely all those things. Nevertheless it is not a science. Scientific texts are by definition texts intended to be read by a relatively small, initiated readership. They cannot be understood by the masses at large. Attempts to 'popularise' scientific discoveries and make them available to the public in a form in which the public will understand them inevitably simplify the nature of those discoveries to the point where there is little in common between the 'popular' accounts of these discoveries and their true scientific nature. It is no coincidence that Soviet ideology goes to great lengths to make the Soviet population aware of what is going on in the scientific world, since it thereby gains in respectability. Zinoviev's realistic, if not cynical, view is that anything the masses can understand is by definition not scientific.[16]

At other times he attacks official marxist – leninist ideology by discussing the meaning of key concepts such as 'class', 'base', 'superstructure', 'marxist economic relations', 'ownership', 'property', 'productive relations', etc. He subjects them to merciless criticism and demonstrates with enviable ease and clarity the extent to which they collapse when they are examined from a logical point of view.[17]

But not only is ideology not a science. It is profoundly *anti*-scientific. Above all he criticises it for the fact that Marxism was an attempt to justify one man's *a priori* view of a particular society at a particular point in its development. The categories which Marx

invented as a means of providing a description of that society are not only not valid for a description of that society, they are totally inapplicable to a society of the Soviet type, i.e. a socialist, post-capitalist society. Soviet ideology uses Marxism not only as a means of stirring up anti-Western feeling, it uses it as a means of concealing from the Soviet public the true nature of the society in which they themselves live.[18] Zinoviev's great claim is that, whereas communism has arrived to all intents and purposes (institutionally there will be little change), the world still awaits the discovery of a scientific theory which will permit an adequate analysis of that society. This, of course, is the precise opposite of the Soviet claim, which is that communism is as yet far off (and seems to get further away the more time passes) whereas it alone is in possession of a truly 'scientific' theory of society.[19]

IDEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Zinoviev has very recently written a separate book about each of these two subjects,[20] so perhaps one should say now that he is just as concerned to show that ideology is not to be confused with religion as he is to demonstrate that ideology is not a science. Again, his views on this topic are discernible in his early works.[21] Zinoviev is apt to dismiss organised religion out of hand as being, firstly, totally inadequate in this modern scientific age as a source of explanation of natural phenomena. This role is carried out much more efficiently by ideology. Neither Christianity nor Islam nor Buddhism is adequate since none of them has kept pace with the development of modern civilisation. Moreover, as organised religions they are subject to the same kind of problems which affect any mass organisation, i.e. they become subject to the operation of Zinoviev's famous 'social laws'. He is particularly scathing about the Russian Orthodox Church inside the Soviet Union which he regards as a Soviet institution which the State makes use of to demostrate the superiority of the official ideology.

When Zinoviev speaks of religion, therefore, what he has in mind is something private and personal and which has certain prerequisites. These include a feeling of religiosity on the part of an individual, the presence of a 'soul' (*dusha*), the desire to cherish one's own individuality. A belief in the existence of God is not necessary. We shall say more about Zinoviev's concept of religion below but here we must point up the differences as Zinoviev sees them between

ideology and religion as such. Ideology is a matter for the head whereas religion is a matter for the soul. In the case of ideology the question of faith is not crucial. Faith is indispensable for religion. Ideology and religion are very often concerned with the same questions of life, but ideology is in a much stronger position than religion in that it can offer intellectually much more satisfying answers. People, on the other hand, do not need ideology. It is something which is forced on people from outside themselves. The need for religion, however, comes from within the individual. The church in organised religion is a result of a need for religion, unlike an ideological institution which exists to force ideology on people. On the other hand, people are much more likely to accept ideology since otherwise they would find that their path through life would be much more difficult. The public acceptance of ideology and the public demonstration of ideological commitment does not entail a belief in the ideology, although belief is not excluded and obviously there are people who do believe in the ideology. In the context of the Soviet Union ideology is in a much more favourable position than religion since it is much more adequate in relation to its circumstances than religion can ever hope to be.

It is characteristic of Zinoviev that in such unpropitious circumstances he should invent his own religion. There are several references and partial descriptions of it scattered throughout his works but it is described in detail in his new book. Ivan Laptev is the Soviet Union's answer to Jesus Christ. Born in a small provincial town, he realises, or decides, that he is God. He invents a religion which he christens 'Ivanianstvo', sometimes referring to it as 'Laptism'. It is a religion designed to help people in the Soviet Union who have opted out of the system or who wish to resist the collectivist ethic. It is unlikely to appeal to careerists, or indeed to anyone who is happy with the Soviet system as it is. Like Jesus, Laptev performs miracles, heals the sick and preaches. The parallels are maintained throughout, Laptev's move from Ensk to Moscow echoing Jesus's journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem. Christ's crucifixion in Golgotha is paralleled by Laptev's spiritual death in the Soviet Union. His resurrection has its counterpart in Laptev's reappearance in Ensk, the difference being that whereas later Jesus ascended into Heaven as the Son of God, Laptev reappears in Ensk 'cured' of his belief that he was God. The final twist is that he seems quite happy to face the future as an ordinary Soviet citizen.

Laptev's opposite is the appropriately named 'Antipode' who has many an argument with Laptev about the respective merits of ideology

and religion in the Soviet Union. Neither in fact wins, since Antipode's 'improved' ideology makes no more headway in the Soviet system than Laptev's idiosyncratic religion. It is clear, however, that ideology suits the vast majority of the population more than religion. As Antipode says:

> Your religion demands self-denial, self-discipline, it offers you a steep uphill climb and requires you to make a constant effort to restrain yourself. Ordinary people are not capable of that. People find it easier to swim with the current and to let themselves fall rather than swim against the current and scramble up a mountain. Falling is also a form of flight, that's the whole problem. And the fall is sufficiently long to last a whole lifetime.[22]

Although the book is highly diverting in many respects, there is a serious underlying concern with questions of morality. Laptev's religion contains a body of doctrine designed to help the individual to lead a morally upright existence in an environment which is highly immoral. Laptev's equivalent of the Ten Commandments contains about fifty instructions concerning one's personal conduct which, if carried out faithfully, will allow the individual to achieve that goal. Here are some examples: maintain a sense of your own worth; keep people at a distance; retain an independence in your behaviour; do not be friends with careerists, intriguers, stool-pigeons, slanderers, cowards and other bad people; do not invade anyone's private world (*dusha*) and do not let anyone invade yours; do not attract attention to yourself; get by without help if you can; do not force your assistance on others. In sum they add up to a powerful armoury for the protection of the individual in a collectivist world. A belief in God is not necessary. What *is* necessary is an attitude which allows you to behave *as though* God were watching you. Zinoviev's purpose is to invent a religion which will be adequate for educated people with a high level of general culture living in an advanced technological age.[23] Above all his religion is designed as an antidote to the poison of the official ideology.

IDEOLOGY AND MORALITY

Communist ideology produces immoral people. This is an allegation which Zinoviev has made on more than one occasion and his argument runs as follows. Given a large enough number of people living

in a society for a sufficient period of time universal 'social laws' come into operation which reduce to the formula 'dog eat dog'. Civilisation can be seen as the history of the invention of constraints which inhibit the operation of these laws. Examples are institutions which we associate with Western democracy: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, the rule of law, religion, opposition, etc. Under such circumstances a form of moral behaviour develops which Zinoviev terms 'personal morality' or 'morality of the individual'. Ideal communist man, on the other hand, is not a moral creature:

> Firstly, Marxism presupposes that man is fully conditioned by the circumstances of his existence and his virtues are deemed to be the product of ideal conditions of life and not of his own free will. Secondly, a person is compelled to be what in theory he should be by the general forces of power, ideology and collective. Thirdly, it is only outwardly that a person is compelled to correspond with the ideal: in practice he is trained in his behaviour by the rules of communality. These last are limited by the collective, by the authorities and by ideology only for the purpose of preserving society which is itself based on communal laws.[24]

It is not a question of deciding who is morally 'superior', a Western citizen or a Soviet citizen. Zinoviev himself argues that what is 'moral' is not necessarily good and what is 'immoral' is not necessarily bad. (Whether one would want to agree with Zinoviev is another matter.) The real question of importance is whether, on the whole, Soviet people think and act differently from non-Soviet people. In some respects they clearly do. In the context of Soviet society people are required to conform explicitly and to demostrate their conformity repeatedly. What they think and say in private may be very different from what they say in public. But does the cynicism which such circumstances breed in many Soviet citizens lead them to the conclusion that 'people are the same everywhere'? Can they conceive of a social system in which Zinoviev's 'social' or 'communal' laws operate with less force, or do they assume that people in the West are likely to be as frequently forced to operate in the 'two-faced' way that many of them are? Zinoviev draws attention repeatedly to the lack of trust between people in the Soviet Union and between the authorities and the population at large:

> People don't believe in the moral qualities of their neighbours and place no reliance on them. This in fact is the deepest source of immorality in society.[25]

One of the most striking features of Soviet society is the extent to which people are watched over by others and manifestly not trusted. One example is the practice in Soviet supermarkets of searching every customer's shopping bag *after* they have paid to ensure that what they have bought tallies with their receipt. Do such practices breed a feeling of contempt for people and the conviction that, since no one is trusted, there is no point in being trustworthy? What happens when Soviet citizens emigrate to the West? Do they retain their 'Sovietness' or do they leave it behind? Zinoviev is in no doubt that a Soviet citizen is doomed to be 'Soviet' for the rest of his life. *Homo sovieticus* is a whole book on the theme of how Soviet *émigrés* tend to reproduce their own type of society in exile.

Soviet ideology, says Zinoviev, allows Soviet people to behave badly to each other without having to feel guilty. In an environment of shortages of everything which people need a 'merciless struggle' for everything becomes a natural way of life. People will ensure to the best of their ability that no one individual prospers more than another. Back-stabbing, secret denunciation, toadying, bribery, graft, corruption, shoddy workmanship, deception characterise Communist society. Zinoviev does not argue that such vices are not to be found in non-Communist societies, but asserts that in Communist societies they are endemic. Central to his argument is his conviction that the individual in Soviet society is deemed to have no intrinsic worth. For Zinoviev the collectivist structure of Soviet society is so stable because it is so simple. It is a gigantic nesting doll of collectives of similar structure, the individual members of which operate in conditions of mutual dependence. 'Collective' responsibility encourages personal irresponsibility. Despite the oficial ideology which promotes the ideal of a highly dedicated individual devoting all his strength and energy to the building of Communism, demonstration of personal initiative is not appreciated by other members of the collective. Dynamism, energy, a thirst for reform, suggestions for improvement tend to be suffocated.

It is much easier to live according to the tenets of the official ideology than it is to follow Zinoviev's fifty or so 'Commandments'. An ideology which fosters the belief that the interests of the individual must be sacrificed in the interests of the collective allows people with a clear conscience to treat other individuals shabbily. It is thus easy to perform acts which are 'morally good' in terms of the official ideology but 'morally bad' in terms of Zinoviev's 'personal morality'. And Zinoviev is very clear that only the individual who performs a

given act knows whether that act is a moral or an immoral act. Only he the individual knows what motivates him to act as he does. What counts, morally, is not the performance or non-performance of an action, but the underlying motives. These are not discernible from an observation of the act as such. Zinoviev goes so far as to claim that such a morality is deeply inimical to the Soviet system and that every effort is made to suppress it:

> Morality in my sense comes into conflict with ideological "morality" and is persecuted in Communist society as a threat to its very foundations.[26]

His view of ideology in relation to morality is tersely formulated thus:

> The whole apparatus of moral education and propaganda aims to teach people to live in an atmosphere of hypocrisy, deceit, coercion, meanness and corruption, and to live according to the laws of communality, which themselves are limited by means devised by communality itself for the purpose of its own self-preservation.[27]

IDEOLOGY AS A GUIDE TO ACTION

Soviet ideology is not just a body of doctrine. It is also a 'magnetic field' in which people operate as 'charged particles'. They are exposed to a range of models which shape their thought patterns and behaviour, with the result that most Soviet citizens tend to think and behave in the same way. This is a contention which runs through much of Zinoviev's work and receives explicit treatment in *The Reality of Communism*. Ideology thus has two aspects, the philosophical and the pragmatic:

> The philosophical relates to its world view, i.e. its doctrine about the world, society, man, mode of cognition. Its pragmatic aspect concerns the practical issues of rules of thought and behaviour. It is in the second of these that we must look for the key to the understanding of the essential significance of ideology. The practical ideology of a society is an aggregate of special rules and behavioural skills which people apply in situations which are intrinsically important. Knowing this one can predict how the average ideologically-conditioned Communist citizen will behave in such situations.[28]

The extent to which Soviet people undergo ideological training can scarcely be exaggerated. Zinoviev has made the point on more than one occasion that ideology in the Soviet Union plays such an overwhelming role that it is possible to designate Soviet society (Communist society) as an *ideological* society.[29] Although the foundations of the system were laid before the Second World War, its growth to gigantic proportions happened since the death of Stalin, mainly under Suslov.[30] Indeed, Zinoviev is wont to argue that it has reached proportions hitherto unknown in history and is a positive threat to the rest of mankind. In the context of a totalitarian system in which there is total State ownership of the means of production and distribution, the media, communications networks, the absence of private property and private enterprise, there exists no bulwark against the flood of ideology and no possibility of an opposing ideology gaining ground. Zinoviev does not deny the influence of the 'decadent West' which is exerted via tourism, foreign radio and television broadcasts, Western pop-music, etc., but the situation is not as in Poland, where the Catholic Church represents an alternative 'system' to the official power structure of the Polish State, with its own 'transmission belts', assembly points, 'ideology' in the form of a religious creed which is alien to the official ideology. Not only is there no permitted alternative in the Soviet Union to the official ideology, the amount of time and resources devoted to ideological work is absolutely colossal. Ideological training nowadays begins in the kindergarten. Every child from the age of seven is expected to become an Octobrist. From then until the age of twenty-eight it is likely to be a member of one youth organisation after another, each catering for a particular age-group, each committed to 'educating' its members 'in the spirit of Communism'. Ideological work is built into the foundations of the whole educational system. Each youth organisation has its own rituals, practices, obligations, commitments. Each school subject is taught from a marxist–leninist ideological perspective. Thus all teachers, lecturers, professors are simultaneously ideological workers. The picture is the same in factories, enterprises, research institutes, and especially the armed forces. Then there are agitation brigades, universities of marxism–leninism, higher party schools, not to mention the Union of Soviet Writers and people working in the media generally. According to Zinoviev, if one calculates the cost of ideological work in terms of manpower and resources, the sums are comparable with those spent on national defence.[31]

But it is not just the 'matériel' of ideology which is important.

Ideological *activity* is no less important. Soviet life is highly ritualised along ideological lines. From a first year Octobrist to the General Secretary of the CPSU people have to demonstrate ideological commitment publicly and often. Everyone must learn by rote a certain amount of the 'doctrine' and be in a position to demonstrate that they have indeed learned it. There are innumerable rituals which take place at school or at the work-place which compel people to take part in ideological meetings, whether it be to discuss the current quarterly plan or to approve the Party line on Nicaragua. There are signs that even this amount of ideological commitment is deemed to be insufficient. Worried by a growing apathy among many young people, especially among those in the less populated centres, the Party has recently called for leisure centres and clubs to become focal points for increased ideological work among young people.[32]

People in the West often argue that people in the Soviet Union largely pay lip-service to the ideology and do not believe in it. The assumption is that people are therefore not affected by the ideology and that the ideology is consequently unimportant. Zinoviev has little time for such assumptions. He argues repeatedly that belief is not a requirement of ideology. As long as people apparently accept it, that is sufficient. Public conformity, public acceptance of the Party line is an index of acceptance of the regime, of the legitimacy of the rulers. Moreover, and Zinoviev stresses this, the organising role of ideology and its orientation of people in a particular direction is of immense importance in a Communist state. However, even if the Party were to decree that ideological work should cease tomorrow, that decree would not be carried out since the ideological machine has grown to such an extent that it has escaped human control.[33] It is not something which can be removed from Soviet society – it is the main *activity* of Soviet society.

IDEOLOGY AND THE WEST

Since he has lived in the West, Zinoviev's views on ideology in the Soviet Union have not changed. On the other hand, he now argues that the West is equally in the grip of its own ideology and that people in the West are 'processed' no less than they are in the Soviet Union.[34] This is a difficult point for a non-Marxist to accept. It is debatable whether there is any such thing as 'Western ideology', but Zinoviev is quite categorical:

> Western society is a pluralistic society, chaotic in many respects, in many vitally important respects unsusceptible to central control, with a tendency to anarchy, wilfulness and fragmentation . . . This does not mean that the West is polyideological. . . . Ideological diversity, amorphousness, chaos, disagreement, enmity and other phenomena which point to the absence of an ideology which might be termed "Western ideology" are in fact phenomena within the framework of that very ideology.[35]

I think that Zinoviev is engaging in verbal seight-of-hand in the above passage, but the conclusion he comes to is arresting:

> Western ideology, like Soviet ideology, is destroying the bulwarks of civilisation built up over centuries which were designed to, and did in fact, constrain the spontaneous forces of people's social environment.[36]

The 'spontaneous forces' are undoubtedly what Zinoviev calls elsewhere 'social laws' or the 'laws of communality'. Examples of negative features of 'Western ideology' quoted by Zinoviev include 'the propagation of sexual depravity', 'the propagation of matrimonial infidelity', 'coercion', 'gangsterism', 'parasitism'. 'Moral values', he says, 'are ridiculed as old-fashioned'.[37] At this point one is reminded of Solzhenitsyn. One is also reminded of many people over the age of sixty who were brought up in a very different social atmosphere from that of today and who would agree with Zinoviev. Many people under the age of sixty would also agree with him. Mankind is drifting towards Communism, he argues. It is a state which will last for many centuries. The only hope of averting it is struggle against it:

> The struggle against Communism is in the interest of everyone. But because historical circumstances affect people's lives and force various aspects of their life into relatively autonomous compartments, the forces of Communism and the forces of civilisation are in fact actual people and groups of people, different countries and groups of countries. It is only as a result of uninterrupted resistance to Communist pressures (and not thanks to their elimination which is not possible in a living society) that civilisation can be preserved and can continue.[38]

Given his jaundiced (or perhaps clear-eyed?) view of the West, his hopes of a successful resistance must be diminishing.

CONCLUSION

The constraints of space and the amount which Zinoviev has written about ideology have made it difficult to give an account which is anything more than broadly descriptive. Given the enormous number of books, articles, interviews and broadcasts which Zinoviev has produced over the last five years together with his preference for writing in a rather kaleidoscopic manner, the very location and categorisation of what he has had to say on any particular issue encounter serious problems. At the present stage of Zinoviev scholarship, locating his utterances rather than analysing them is perhaps a necessary first step.

Nevertheless, an assessment of what Zinoviev thinks about the related questions of ideology, religion and morality, however brief, is in order. Much of what he has had to say about morality, and many of his 'Commandments', are in the tradition of Western, Protestant individualism. In that respect much of what he says is an echo of what people like Chaadayev, Belinsky, Kavelin, have said before him. He is a 'Westerner' beyond doubt and would have been reviled utterly by every Slavophil worthy of the name. Much, too, of what he has to say about Marxist doctrine has been noted before, although perhaps in less forthright terms. One only has to think of Karl Popper, John Plamenatz, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sidney Hook, to go no further. Where Zinoviev breaks new ground, it seems to me, is when he describes and analyses the structure, extent and role of ideology in a Communist society. His descriptions and analyses are not 'scholarly' in the conventional academic sense. They would probably not be accepted by professional journals of sociology and politics. His 'apparatus scholasticus' is not in evidence. His works are innocent of charts and graphs, statistical tables, etc. On the other hand, he offers a plausible account of many aspects of Soviet society which is at least as valuable as the more 'scholarly' accounts available in more conventional academic form. He is prepared to offer a theory which will account for features which most Western commentators describe, namely deficits, poor workmanship, queues, eyewash, low-productivity, etc. While he does not enthuse particularly about the virtues of the 'Russian people', he does not blame the deficiencies which he describes on 'laziness' or 'drunkenness', or Russian history. These deficiencies he sees as deriving to a large extent from the 'practical ideology' which people learn from an early age.

He also breaks new ground in the way he treats his topics. It is not

enough to say that his approach is academically unconventional. Nor is it enough to say that his approach is wholly artistic. It is true that he brings a vast range of literary styles to bear and mounts a devastating attack on a topic from many different angles. But his devices also include those of the essayist. The result is that he can be scholarly and artistic both simultaneously and consecutively. However, questions of this nature are treated elsewhere in this volume and need not be explored further here. As far as Zinoviev's views on religion are concerned, one or two observations are in order. Zinoviev's views on the irrelevance of organised religion in the Soviet Union when one is speaking about genuine religious feeling contains an echo of Belinsky's famous remark concerning the Russian's innate atheism:

> . . . the Russian speaks the name of God while scratching his posterior . . . The Russian people are deeply atheistic by nature. They still have many superstitions, but not a trace of religious feeling.[39]

The lack of correlation between religious observance and everyday behaviour has also been noted by others, notably Christel Lane.[40] His attempt to provide mankind, especially Communist mankind, with a religion adequate for the late twentieth century is not unique. However, whereas Ninian Smart[41] advocates a religion which is an amalgam of Christianity and Buddhism, Zinoviev offers a religion which is wholly in the Western tradition of the post-Industrial Revolution. Although it contains much which is common to the Christian tradition, it contains 'Commandments' which are quite un-Christian. The exhortations to 'turn the other cheek' or 'love thy neighbour' have no place in his code, which is unashamedly designed for the individual and is not only anti-Communist but also anti-communal.

In sum, Zinoviev's views on ideology and on the relationship between ideology and religion, science, morality and everyday behaviour are captured in various modes of discourse. This allows him a range of perspectives which is much wider than most people have at their disposal. Much, too, of what he has to say is unconventional. What is quite beyond doubt is Zinoviev's serious concern with the matters he discusses and his sense of responsibility as a thinking human being who finds himself in the 'interesting times' in which mankind has to live today.

Notes

1. *Idi na Golgofu* (*ING*) (*Go to Golgotha*) (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1985).
2. Ibid., p. 140.
3. See, for example, *VPR*, p. 360.
4. See, for example, the 'excerpts' from Slanderer's 'book' in *YH*, pp. 207–9, 214–17, 219, 221–3, 228–30, 237, 239–41; *ZV*, pp. 142–3, 147–9, 152–3, 156–7, 162, 163–5; *ZNS*, pp. 57, 63–4; *RF*, pp. 207–10, 247–50; *SB*, pp. 170–71, 199–202; *VPR*, pp. 305–6, 312, 316–17, 410–11, 420–21, 430–31, 444–5, 448–9, 455, 530–31, 539–40, 544, 546; *ZhD*, vol. I, pp. 38, 48–9, 54–5, 150–51, 176–7; *TRC*, pp. 216–39; *KKR*, pp. 193–212; *BI* pp. 25–33, 35–43.

   His new book on the subject of ideology is due to appear in German in August 1986. Professor Zinoviev was kind enough to allow me to have access to his original Russian typescript. Since it had not been published when this chapter was being written, I have left it out of account in this discussion. I would assert, however, that the main thrust of the book does not counter what he has already published, but rather extends and develops what he has said before.
5. Cf. *Slovar' sovremennogo russkogo yazyka*: AN SSSR M. 1956, p. 47.
6. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, (OUP, 1973), vol. I, p. 1016.
7. *ZhD*, vol. I, p. 48.
8. *NSNRNB*, p. 48
9. *TRC*, p. 226; *KKR*, p. 200; *BI*, p. 32.
10. See, for instance, the interview 'God na zapade' reproduced in *BI*, p. 123.
11. *TRC*, p. 48; *KKR*, p. 39.
12. See, for instance, his generally searching remarks on the intellectual calibre of Marx, Engels and Lenin in 'O sotsial'nom statuse marksizma', reproduced in *BI*, pp. 27–8.
13. *ZhD*, vol. I, p. 42. For a more extensive discussion see his 'O sovetskoy filosofii', reproduced in *BI*, pp. 35–43.
14. See 'O staline i stalinizme', in *MIZ*, p. 12.
15. 'Ideology comes to the fore (2)', *Soviet Analyst*, vol. 12, no 19, 28 September 1983, p. 6. See especially his article 'Ideologicheskii krizis', in *NSNRNB*, pp. 90–91.
16. *Soviet Analyst*, vol. 12, no 18, 14 September 1983, p. 7. See also *YH*, pp. 207–9; *ZV*, pp. 142–3; *TRC*, pp. 227–9.
17. See especially *VPR*, pp. 444–5, 448–9, 530–31, 539–40.
18. *TRC*, p. 45; *KKR*, p. 35.
19. *TRC*, p. 17; *KKR*, p. 11.
20. Namely, *ING* and the book to which reference is made at the end of note 4.
21. See, for example, *VPR*, pp. 357–62, but also *ZNS*, pp. 48–9, *RF*, pp. 63–5; *SB*, pp. 54–6; *MIZ*, pp. 31–8; *TRC*, pp. 222–5; *KKR*, pp. 197–9.
22. *ING*, p. 74.
23. He is by no means alone in this venture. See Ninian Smart's attempt to do the same thing in his book *Beyond Ideology: Religion and the Future*

of Western Civilisation (London, 1981). Zinoviev gives an explicit account of his own views on religion at some length in *Les Cahiers Protestants*, April 1980, no 2, pp. 7–15.

24. *TRC*, p. 236; *KKR*, p. 209.
25. *TRC*, p. 238; *KKR*, p. 210.
26. *TRC*, p. 236; *KKR*, p. 209.
27. *TRC*, p. 237; *KKR*, p. 210.
28. *TRC*, p. 231; *KKR*, p. 204.
29. *ZhD*, vol. I, p. 38; *TRC*, p. 216; *KKR*, p. 193. See also his article 'Ideologicheskoe obshchestvo', in *NSNRNB*, pp. 79–81.
30. *NSNRNB*, p. 68.
31. *TRC*, p. 217; *KKR*, p. 193.
32. See the leading article in *Pravda*, 6 January 1986.
33. *ZhD*, vol. I, pp. 48–9. On the general principle of the uncontrollability of ideology, see *YH*, p. 198.
34. *NSNRNB*, p. 49.
35. Ibid., pp. 48–9.
36. Ibid., p. 50.
37. Ibid.
38. *TRC*, p. 29; *KKR*, p. 22.
39. Quoted in M. Raeff (ed.), *Russian Intellectual History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966) p. 256.
40. Cf. C. Lane, *Christian Religion in the Soviet Union* (London, 1977) p. 74.
41. Smart, *Beyond Ideology*.

5 Zinoviev's Fiction in the Context of Unofficial Russian Prose of the 1970s

Arnold McMillin

The task of setting Zinoviev in any kind of context is a daunting one, for, like many great writers and, probably, no less minor ones, he is entirely *sui generis*. Superficial resemblance to his Third-Wave contemporaries may be seen in many areas, but in each Zinoviev remains strongly individual. For example, in his desire to teach and preach the 'truth' about his homeland he belongs to a tradition initiated by Herzen and renewed by Solzhenitsyn that takes in all but a small number of his fellow-emigrants; in his patent *yurodivyi*-like wish to shock, achieved most successfully in *Nashei yunosti polet* and his other pronouncements on Stalin and Stalinism, he has thoroughly irritated Western and *émigré* sensibilities alike, just as Solzhenitsyn did with his Harvard speech of 1978,[1] Maksimov with his rhinoceroses in 1979,[2] or Edichka Limonov with his flagrant politico-sexual exhibitionism.[3] In his use of what was once regarded as unconventional language, however, Zinoviev is far from exceptional in the post-Aleshkovsky world, though it may be noted in passing that his vocabulary is far less disfigured by superfluous Western doublets of the *poezd/tren* variety than the work of many other *émigré* contemporaries, particularly those living in America. Likewise, as a quasi-documentary writer, he has many partners, ranging from Solzhenitsyn to Sinyavsky and Voinovich, whilst the ranks of his fellow-satirists include many of the outstanding writers of the Third Emigration, although it is, perhaps, here that Zinoviev's claim to pre-eminence is strongest.

Since the gargantuan satire *Ziyayushchie vysoty* appeared in 1976, leading directly to its author's enforced expatriation two years later, a series of highly original albeit rather repetitive books have appeared, some but not all of which may be described as novels, presenting a mordantly satirical picture of Soviet society and ideology. Of his

non-specialist books to date, *Ziyayushchie vysoty* is not only the first but also, in many ways, the most significant. Some, like *Svetloe budushchee* and *Zapiski nochnogo storozha* have been described by Zinoviev as missing parts of *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, whilst others, written outside the Soviet Union, are linked to the earlier work by temporal and geographical setting, sociological purpose, and satirical manner, as well as in some cases the continuation of several characters from one book to another. In view of the centrality of *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, I propose to take it as the basis for a consideration of the major features of Zinoviev as a writer, paying considerably less attention to his later works.

Ziyayushchie vysoty has often been referred to as a novel, though this genre description is not acceptable to the author himself. In his eyes, this book, like those that follow it, represents a radically new type of literature, a literature of ideas and facts, stripped of all circumstantial or background description (in an interview with Vail' and Genis in *Kontinent* Zinoviev claims to have written only one superfluous sentence in the entire book: 'Teacher's daughter came and said they should go for lunch'.[4] Not only is there no physical description or background; nor are there any living characters with individual names and consistent biographies. This is not unique in modern literature, of course, and there is a splendidly witty example of the absence of personalities in Vyascheslav Sorokin's conversation piece *Ochered'*[5] but the relentless avoidance of individuality in *Ziyayushchie vysoty* is unusual for such an extended work.

The setting of *Ziyayushchie vysoty* is an imaginary and amorphous village, Ibansk, which clearly represents the Soviet Union, its name being derived from the commonest Russian personal name and the commonest obscenity. The characters whose conversations fill most of the book are given generic names such as Krikun (Shouter), Boltun (Chatterbox), Mazila (Dauber), Klevetnik (Slanderer), Vozhd' (Leader) and Khozyain (Boss). Most are representatives of the Moscow intelligentsia or political figures, and some can be easily deciphered, although the author has warned against excessive zeal in this activity. In their endless discussions these characters expound and debate myriad views on society, Zinoviev shifting the point of view, often it seems arbitrarily, from one character to another. Interspersed with these sometimes serious, sometimes wittily burlesque conversations are passages of direct discourse, short scientific or pseudo-scientific disquisitions on political and sociological matters, anecdotes, frequently bawdy, and, from time to time, verses;

philosophy alternates with absurdity, lyricism with obscenity. Few of the book's sections are more than two pages in length, each has a heading somewhat like a typical Soviet textbook, and it appears that little would be lost by transferring any given passage to another part of the book (or, in some cases, to one of his other books); nor would it seem necessary for the reader to start at the beginning or to read consecutively. The shortness and relative independence of the sections, some of whose headings are repeated, have been explained by the author variously as a result of the uncertain conditions under which they were written, and of his desire not to bore the reader with great length (though the whole book comprises 561 pages of small print); it is notable, however, that later works like *Zheltyi dom* (1980) written after Zinoviev's emigration, also consist of short, partially interchangeable sections. Probably the major purpose of this method, for the later works at least, is by means of these discontinuous but thematically recurring short texts to convey slowly and gradually to the reader's consciousness the major ideas on society, whose presentation and discussion is the avowed central aim of all his writing. If one looks for other examples of this accretive method in unofficial writing, those found prove to be so different from Zinoviev's technique as to make the comparison largely irrelevant: amongst miniatures spring to mind the camp tales of Varlam Shalamov[6] and Lev Konson,[7] or, as a good example of the gradual linking of disparate elements, Efrem Baukh's novel *Kamen' morya*.[8]

Zinoviev's insistence that he is not a professional writer is exceeded only by his scorn for the 'sour faces' of literary critics and other writers. Doubtless, he would be doubly dissatisfied with the present attempt to place him in the context of those whose work he regards as invalid, claiming as he does the purveyance of ideas to be the sole legitimate function of literature. In *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, for instance, any elements of literariness are unintentional, extraneous and incidental. However, his attempt to convey important ideas by a process of gradual accretion and extension is not aided by any notable lucidity. Indeed, it has been said by Philip Hanson that 'the rendering of the straightforward and conventional into the opaque and paradoxical is part of his style'.[9] Others have been still more forthright, referring to a lack of discipline and focus which lead to excessive length, partly, perhaps, because of Zinoviev's unwillingness to accept the received truths and certainties current in expatriate circles; in attempting to present a middle path between the total rejection of the Soviet regime (represented in *Ziyayushchie vysoty* by

Solzhenitsyn/Pravdets (Truthteller) and the partial accomodation of it (by Neizvestny/Mazila), Zinoviev seems prone to unnecessary repetition; in the unsympathetic words of Rebecca West, 'Plato himself could not have captured our attention if Socrates had presented his material in a form as unattractive as a juggernaut lorry full of close-pressed, cold porridge'.[10] More appropriate, and applicable to many of Zinoviev's books, is the Israeli critic Z. Bar-Sella's declaration that *Svetloe budushchee* is 'monstrous, as the monster on a portrait of a monster is monstrous. The more brilliant the portrait, the more monstrous the monster'.[11] Whether *Ziyayushchie vysoty* could profitably have been shortened by a good editor (this has been said of much Third-Wave prose, but Zinoviev is, as in so many other areas, an extreme case) must remain a moot point, for size and apparent formlessness produce their own effect. It may be true that most of Zinoviev's ideas can be found elsewhere, for example in the relatively short *Zapiski nochnogo storozha*, but some of the power of his satire undoubtedly derives from the monstrous form of the burlesque epic. There have been two major attempts to analyse and classify the form of *Ziyayushchie vysoty* as a Menippean satire and as a Burtonian anatomy.[12] Neither is without merit, but in both cases it is the extreme formlessness of Zinoviev's major work that strikes the reader, inducing scepticism at attempts to fit it into even the loosest of patterns. Zinoviev's reception by many *émigrés* has been as uncompromising as his own blanket condemnations, and his use of word-play and puns, most prominent in the title and setting of *Ziyayushchie vysoty* but in fact ubiquitous in his writing, makes an easy target for hostile critics, as, for example in Mikhail Armalinsky's 'Siyayushchie pustoty';[13] incidentally, the phrase 'ziyayushchie pustoty' occurs as one of many literary references in Sasha Sokolov's latest novel, *Palisandriya*.[14] Whatever the reactions of critics (and extremes are commonplace), the fact remains that Zinoviev defies classification or placement in context, and, as Vail' and Genis, two of his more perceptive critics, have noted, he is often simply missed out in discussions of modern literature because of the special effort required even to mention him.[15] Another thoughtful commentator M. Ioffe believes the key to the 'Zinoviev paradox' to lie in his writer's mask of a *yurodivyi* and his stylistics of a *yurodivyi*, relating him to Avakkum and Rozanov, and perceiving in his play and posturing a deliberate stepping outside the frame of literature.[16] In an interesting article 'V avangarde – bez tylov' Vasily Aksenov discusses the problems of *émigré* writers and the concept of avant-garde, in

particular the absent negative stimulus of what he memorably describes as the 'huge pimply arse of socialist realism' (abbreviated to ZhSR).[17] He approves Ioffe's analysis of Zinoviev, finding the satirist to be quintessentially Soviet, though not necessarily pro-Soviet.[18] If Zinoviev is, by implication, thus included in the avant-garde, he is placed in the centre of it by Boris Khazanov's bitter riposte to Aksenov as serving only the interests of literary scholars and writers of dissertations, and acclaiming the destruction of barriers between creativity, philosophy and science, the new models of thought that, though he is not named directly, would seem to be particularly characteristic of Zinoviev.[19]

Beyond dispute are Zinoviev's satirical powers, and as an all-embracing satire on the Soviet Union *Ziyayushchie vysoty* is without equal. From the punning title onwards Zinoviev destroys by at times only mild distortion the meaningless, inflated jargon which even in Platonov's day had assumed sinister independent existence (one thinks, for instance, of works like *Kotlovan*) but which in the Brezhnev era seemed to symbolise the political bankruptcy of a state built on hypocrisy and pretence. Anecdotes, the modern form of (unofficial) Soviet folk culture, figure extensively, just as they do in Soviet/Ibanskian life, and the following reflection of Ibanskian succession from one of several sections entitled 'History Yet to Come' is typical in its combination of satire and anecdote:

> When they finally came to realise that the fate of their predecessor was one that they themselves would share, the leaders decided to start giving their due to their predecessors and consequently to themselves. Since every successive leader was a whole head higher than his predecessor, and made a great step forward, this innovation marked the beginning of a period of irresistible progress. The Ibanskians were moving at such a speed that they did not even notice that they had overtaken America and left her somewhere far behind. They had to turn back, as they always needed to keep an eye on America. (*Ziyayushchie vysoty*, p. 622)

In view of the central place of anecdotes in unofficial Russian culture it is, perhaps, not surprising that they play a large role in modern unofficial Russian literature, from forming the basis of one of the wittiest of Third-Wave novels, Voinovich's *Zhizn' i neobychainye priklyucheniya soldata Ivana Chonkina* to the dispiritingly large number of collected stale jokes, flat aphorisms and pointless anecdotes epitomised for the present writer – though to single any out

from so much competition is invidious – by Gennady Tarasevich's *Satiroy po mozgam*,[20] where even the quasi-pornographic illustrations raise no interest – or, indeed, anything else.

Although Zinoviev's ideas are discussed elsewhere, I should like to quote from early in *Ziyayushchie vysoty* another very characteristic passage illustrating his satire which echoes, perhaps, Galich's memorable image of a shitometer (govnomer)[21] as the author laments the loss of the literary and artistic creations inscribed on a newly replaced piece of Ibanskian architecture:

> But the degradation of art was compensated for by the progress of scientific thought. Patriot, who took part in the building of the new shithouse, discovered two qualitatively differing strata of excrement and formulated the idea of measuring the calorific value of what remained as a result of its consumption by the average cadet. These two strata also differ sharply from the point of view of their emotional relationship to the world. (*Ziyayushchie vysoty*, p. 33)

Paradoxes, endemic and ubiquitous in Zinoviev's thought and writing, find one of their most witty examples at the end of *Ziyayushchie vysoty* with his characters 'voluntarily' entering a cremation chamber, accompanied by an official instruction that sums up much of Ibanskian life:

> As you leave, take the urn containing your ashes with you! (*Ziyayushchie vysoty*, p. 828)

In the grotesque, nightmarish, Kafkaesque world of *Ziyayushchie vysoty* Zinoviev has created a new, syncretic type of literature where the normal role of literary characters is usurped by ideas, so that only the latter have any growth or development. Breaking down the barriers between literature and life, art and science, poetry and prose, he portrays with maverick genius a deeply cynical, confused, and troubled society.

Although described as a missing part of *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, *Svetloe budushchee* is in literary terms much more conventional (the term is purely relative) than the earlier book. For example, it possesses a plot and consistent characters in a concrete socio-geographical setting. About a third as long, it is an essentially realistic story of the life of a somewhat Pooterish Muscovite intellectual or pseudo-intellectual and his family and friends. The first person narrator, who is head of the Soviet Academy of Science's Department of Theoretical Problems of the Methodology of Scientific Com-

munism, aspires to become a corresponding member of the Academy, but is frustrated by intrigue. Like many members of the Soviet intellectual hierarchy he is a scrupulous conformist in public and a 'liberal' in private. His mercenary, ambitious side is mirrored both in his second wife and in his mistress, whilst genuine as opposed to counterfeit liberalism is evinced by his daugher Lena and her young friends as well as by an old family friend Anton Zimin, who to some extent appears to represent Zinoviev. As such he offers some familiar yet very polemical ideas, including the central belief that, corrupt and limited as it may be, the Communist way of life is very profitable and therefore acceptable for a huge part of the population of the country. The high moral ideals of the young people, however, offer a hope for the future by their belief in decent standards of behaviour and responsibility, and this ray of hope distinguishes *Svetloe budushchee* from its predecessor.

Alongside the plot, such as it is, there are an immense number of digressions, anecdotes, and parodic vignettes, such as the magnificently funny illustrations of the aspiring academician's turgid and pompous scholarly work, read out with gleeful malice by Lenka:

> "Papa!" she yelled all over our vast apartment, "It's not all those people – it's you who are the real genius! You've got a wasted literary talent. You ought to be writing satirical pieces for the paper. No, even better; you should be writing complaints to the block management committee, or to the sanitary inspectors or to the Moscow fruit-and-vegetables-and-rubbish organisation about rotten potatoes and leaking taps. Just listen to what he's been writing ' . . . in the brilliant report of the outstanding leader of our party and of the whole worldwide communist movement . . . and of all progressive mankind . . . we have a brilliant general statement of the grandiose experience of the victorious and impetuous construction of communist society in our country, executed under the brilliant leadership of our communist party and personally of comrade . . . the brilliant successor and continuer of the work of the great Lenin, the outstanding theoretician and leader of our party and of the whole Soviet people, marching at the head of all progressive mankind . . . and all this expressed with a penetrating depth, breadth and extraordinary perspicacity . . .' No, Papa, you really ought to be writing novels." (*Svetloe budushchee*, p. 27)

A serious but not entirely convincing attempt has been made by Z. Bar-Sella to show that in writing this book Zinoviev plagiarised

Orwell's *1984*.[22] More striking, however, are the many links and parallels with *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, and most critics have been tempted to relate Zinoviev's distinctive brand of satire to the same figures of the past as before, paying little attention to the author's move towards greater literariness.

Svetloe budushchee hardly fits the bill as a missing section from *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, and *Zapiski nochnogo storozha*, though closer to *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, also seems to have a unity of its own, depicting fantasmagorically the life of some of society's lower orders who, whether or not they belong to the intelligentsia, certainly share its garrulousness: the fate of the renegade (*otshchepenets*) watchman is predetermined: a labour camp or psychiatric hospital (*soznatoriya* is the term used in *V preddverii raya*); thus, once again the reader's interest is focused on ideology rather than on character development or plot.[23] Zinoviev's preface sums up the book's atmosphere admirably:

> The *Notes* relate to the period of Stability, i.e. to the first stage of Flourishing, as is witnessed by the condition of festive dispiritedness and confident gloom characteristic of the people described in them. (*Zapiski nochnogo storozha*, p. 7)

Many of Zinoviev's recent books have been far from literature: in *Kommunizm kak real'nost'* (1981), *Gomo sovetikus* (1981), and *Nashei yunosti polet* his analytical and moralising ideas are expressed in a relatively straightforward way. The main exception is *Zheltyi dom*, a 'Romantic tale in four parts with a warning and exhortation'. Although it does not run all the way through this huge work, there is none the less a strand of plot depicting the ultimately unsuccessful attempts of a young man to conquer his individualism and conform to the demands of collectivist Soviet society. The satire, bawdy humour, political and social commentaries are much as before, and several of the characters are transferred from earlier works; there is, however, more sense of structure than elsewhere; indeed, a convincing attempt has been made by Michael Kirkwood to show that *Zheltyi dom*, far from being a ragbag of themes and ideas, is in fact a highly structured work, carefully designed to put across Zinoviev's views on Soviet society, and, indeed, society in general.[24]

It is hard to agree with Ionesco that Zinoviev is 'from the point of view of pure literature perhaps the greatest of all contemporary writers'.[25] Nor can one accept his own claim that the new art he creates is the only worthwhile form of contemporary literature.

Nevertheless, Zinoviev, standing well outside the mainstream of Third-Wave or any other kind of *belles-lettres*, is an original, inventive, articulate, and brilliantly satirical writer who, whether he wishes it or not, forms an important link in the worldwide, centuries-old chain of satirists, to which Russia has contributed at many periods of her history.

Notes

1. A. Solzhenitsyn, 'Rech' v Garvarde na assamblee vypusknikov universiteta 8 iunya 1978', in *Publitsistika: Stat'i i rechi* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1981) pp. 280–97.
2. V. Maksimov, *Saga o nosorogakh* (1979) (Frankfurt/a/Main: Posev, 1981).
3. See especially *Eto ya – Edichka*, (New York: Index, 1979) and *Dnevnik neudachnika* (New York: Index, 1982).
4. P. Vail' and A. Genis, 'Zagovor protiv chuvstv: Besedys Zinov'evym', *Kontinent*, 24, 1980 p. 423.
5. Paris: Sintaksis, 1985.
6. *Kolymskie rasskazy* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1978).
7. *Kratkie povesti* (Paris: La Presse Libre, 1983).
8. Israel: Moriya, 1982.
9. P. Hanson, 'Soviet State and Society. Alexander Zinoviev: Totalitarianism from Below', *Survey*, 26, no. 1 (144), 1982, p. 42.
10. Rebecca West, 'Busy Little Worker Bees', *Sunday Telegraph*, 29 April 1979, p. 12.
11. Z. Bar-Sella, 'Dialektika uroda, ili *Svetloe budushchee* Aleksandra Zinovi'eva', *Dvadtsat' dva*, 24, 1982, p. 190.
12. See P. Vail', and A. Genis, *Sovremennaya russkaya proza* (Ann Arbor: Hermitage, 1982) pp. 117–20, and P. Petro, 'A. Zinoviev's *The Yawning Heights* as an Anatomy', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 23, 1981, pp. 70–6.
13. *Novoe russkoe slovo*, 30 December 1984, p. 3.
14. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1985, p. 36.
15. *Sovremennaya russkaya proza*, p. 133.
16. M. Ioffe, 'Zinov'evskii paradoks', *Novoe russkoe slovo*, 17 February 1985, p. 4.
17. *Obozrenie*, 15 (July 1985) p. 5.
18. Ibid., pp. 8–9.
19. 'Proshchanie s avangardom', *Strana i mir*, 1985, no. 8, pp. 89–92.
20. New York: self-published, 1980.
21. A. Galich, 'Peizazh', in *Kogda ya vernus': Polnoe sobranie stikhov i pesen'* (Frankfurt/a/Main: Posev, 1981) pp. 314–15.
22. Bar-Sella, 'Dialektika uroda', pp. 185–7.
23. This aspect of the work is spelled out by the author: *Zapiski nochnogo storozha*, p. 113.
24. M. Kirkwood, 'Elements of Structure in Zinov'ev's *Zheltyi dom'*, *Essays in Poetics*, 7, no. 2 (1982) pp. 86–118.
25. Quoted from *Sovremennaya russkaya proza*, p. 114.

6 The Poems in *The Yawning Heights*

G. S. Smith

This chapter is primarily descriptive. The main objectives will be: to define the place occupied by verse in the structure of YH; to study the form of this verse; and to examine what specific role, if any, verse plays in the book.[1] Zinoviev's text will be analysed as if it were an orthodox literary work, while it is manifestly not such a thing; but this analysis may help towards a definition of Zinoviev the writer.

Apart from formal problems, another matter will be discussed: the question of how Zinoviev deals with Russian literary history in *YH*, and in particular how he deals with some aspects of the history of modern Russian poetry.

We may note from a first reading of *YH* that one of the principal sections is called a *poema*; that a number of the book's segments consist entirely of verse; that besides the actual passages of verse in the text a considerable amount of space is allotted to the discussion of them; that Zinoviev raises questions about the form and function of poetry in general and also about the history of Russian poetry in his time; that almost all the protagonists in the book write verse or have done so at one time or another; and that the text actually culminates with a passage of verse. Even at first glance, then, we can say that verse is a prominent constituent of *YH*.

As a preliminary to analysis, a diagrammatic view will be presented of the overall structure of *YH* and the verse within it. Table 6.1 sets out what will be termed here the 'explicit structure' of the book, that is, the disposition of those elements that are specifically indicated by the author through the use of numbering, sub-heading, typographical divisions, and other devices.

We see that the book has three primary divisions, as indicated by the Roman capitals. Of these three, the first outweighs the second and the third by two-and-a-half times. The second level of explicit structure is exhibited by Part I alone, which is divided into four sub-sections, each of which has a title. There are no such sub-divisions in Parts II and III, which are in fact roughly comparable in length with subsection iii of Part I. The third level of structure forms

Table 6.1 Explicit structure of YH

	I *Yawning Heights*				*II* *Decision*	*III* *P on B*	*Total*
1. Principal sections pp.	406				169	134	709
2. Sub-sections pp.	i	ii	iii	iv	(none)	(none)	
	10	151	148	94			
3. Number of segments	9	84	118	87	209	88	595
		(298)					
4. Average length of (3)	1.11	1.79	1.25	1.08	0.80	1.52	(1.19)
5. Number of verse passages	0	28	6	12	70	53	169
		(46)					
6. (5) per (3)	0.00	0.33	0.05	0.13	0.33	0.60	(0.28)
		(0.15)					
7. (5) per (2)	0.00	0.18	0.04	0.12	0.41	0.39	(0.23)
		(0.11)					

Major sequences: I, ii: Treatise (22 segments); I, iii: Rats (13), Slanderer (12); I, iv: * segments (10); II: Hours (26); He-She (10); Unity (9); History (8); Singer (8); III: Return (26); Legend (11); Queue (9); KISS/GGK (8)

the most distinctive characteristic of the book: this formal level we will call the 'segment'. All the segments have titles and are typographically discrete in the text. In Table 6.1, the total number of segments in each part has been indicated: 9, 84, 118, and so on.

The fourth level of explicit structure consists of what may be termed 'major sequences', that is, multiple segments that have identical titles.[2] Table 6.1 lists only the most prominent examples of the major sequences. The constituent segments of these sequences are discontinuous; they seem to have been shuffled, like a pack of cards. It is only the suits that are mixed, though, not the hierarchies of the cards, because the narrative strings involved in major segments tend to be chronological; it is perfectly possible to read the major sequences serially as independent narratives.

The verse passages in *YH* need to be seen primarily in relationship to these other explicit structures if their form and function are to be properly assessed.

It is clear from the data in lines 5, 6 and 7 of Table 6.1 that the verse passages are not patterned in any consistent way within the text of YH. Nevertheless, at the highest level of structure, one large-scale tendency is evident: the density of verse rises towards the end of the book. In Part I there is one passage of verse to about every six and one-half segments; in Part II, one to about every three segments; and in Part III, one to about every one-and-a-half segments. However, as was pointed out before, Parts II and III are roughly comparable in size to the larger segments of Part I, and the four individual sections of Part I differ in terms of verse density. But we should note that on the whole, the segments with least verse (i and iii of I) are found near the front of the book. The verse passages are not distributed evenly through the texts of the sections, though. They give the impression of having been incorporated in a haphazard, *ad hoc* manner. For example, the verse in I, iii is all concentrated in pp. 168–9 after a long stretch (pp. 121–67) where no verse appears at all.

Is verse, then, despite the prominence that was claimed for it at first sight, an occasional and secondary feature of *YH*? That would seem to be the case on the evidence of Part I alone, where verse is relatively sparse. But in Parts II and III, as was noted earlier, the density of verse rises, and a new structural feature begins to occur: the segment consisting entirely of verse. By Part III of the book, verse is almost as prominent as prose. However, verse certainly does not play any distinct unifying role, either in the book as a whole, or within the various levels of explicit structure; its status in this respect is just the same as the recurring elements of content, such as characters, situations, narrators, and themes, which give the book a certain continuity and coherence, but which are not tightly patterned.

The problem of the book's continuity and coherence is, of course, a matter that still awaits intensive study. Until such study has been carried out, all judgements about *YH* must be regarded as provisional. To define the function of the verse in *YH* fully would involve answering several formidable questions. Among them would be the problem of whether or not verse serves as the vehicle for thematic material that is not carried in prose; and the question of whether or not the content of the verse attributed to the various characters in the book is consistent with the views they express in the appropriate prose passages. The internal consistency of the views of each or any individual in *YH* is something that has not been studied. Such study may be unnecessary, in the sense that consistency is not one of the aims of Zinoviev's method, or that the lack of it is an inevitable

consequence of the conspiratorial circumstances under which the book was written. But a consideration of these problems is beyond the scope of the present study.

Obviously, one of the most important functions of verse in YH is satirical, and – equally obviously – the target of this satire is more often than not the nature and function of official verse in Soviet society. Soviet poets are expected to produce verse boosting Soviet institutions and promoting the Party line, and Zinoviev has a good deal of fun parodying the results and ridiculing the people that produce them. The most devastating monument to self-serving obsequiousness in *YH* is the two-line 'Ode to Duty' by Writer, which we will return to later (no. 10; *ZV*, p. 35; *YH*, p. 50). And Snottyhanky's posturings parody an easily recognisable variety of official Soviet 'permissiveness'. The truncated advertisements and the numerous rhymed slogans in the book satirise other aspects of public verse in the USSR.

Interestingly, though, the highest genre of Soviet official verse, the anthem (the word *gimn* is used in Soviet Russian) is not parodied by Zinoviev. Verse with this word in the title is dedicated to such authentic subjects of Soviet pride as the Member (no. 82; *ZV*, p. 357; *YH*, p. 525) and the Meeting (no. 108; *ZV*, pp. 447–8; *YH*, pp. 661–2), and also to sordid topics such as trousers (no. 64, *ZV*, pp. 318–19; *YH*, pp. 466–7); and the queue (no. 140; *ZV*, pp. 511–12; *YH*, pp. 757–8). But the titles of these pieces are misleading; the poems themselves do not in fact parody the pompous rhetoric of the official hymn. Rather, they ridicule the cosy familiarity that passes for Soviet satire on matters of everyday life. It was not uncommon to satirise narrow trousers in print in the USSR in the 1960s, and it is not uncommon to publish satirical poetry about the tedium of meetings or the inconvenience of standing on line. Zinoviev uses crude language instead of the polite bowdlerisations of Soviet satire; it is the means rather than the ends that form the specifically Ibanskian element in these texts.

A good deal more of the verse in *YH* has a satirical tone. However, it does not so much satirise Soviet reality as use satirical techniques that exist within (the informal male ambience of) Soviet culture, and which are naturally not permitted in print – or, more accurately speaking, are never submitted for publication. The non-native is on very difficult ground in judging the authenticity of this element. However, the numerous *chastushki* in *YH* are completely cognate with authentic examples of the genre that have been collected and

published. The most striking example is 'My little sweetheart often talks' (no. 28, *ZV*, p. 120; *YH*, p. 175), a variation on a well-known quatrain.[3] Embedded in the text of *YH* there are several other echoes of authentic male-society folklore that are recognisable even to the inexpert eye.[4]

But by no means all the verse in *YH* is satirical in a direct way. Some of the songs attributed to Singer, for example, are satires on Soviet society, but they are also able pastiches of Galich's songs, not satirical attacks on them. And in Singer's letters from abroad, Zinoviev gives straightforward imitations of Galich's complaints about the lot of the *émigré*. Almost entirely lacking even in low lexis and without apparent satirical purport are pieces like the five curious 'prayers' that appear in *YH*.[5] These texts are apparently to be taken at their face value, as genuine supplications to God, and their direct emotion makes them contrast sharply with the relentless cynicism of the context. The same might be said of much of the verse attributed to the young Bawler and to 'He'. It is in these examples, with their unadorned sentimentality, that Zinoviev's verse is at its weakest.

Generally speaking, though, the themes and styles of the verse passages in *YH* are cognate with the prose. Towards the end of the book, indeed, the two media seem to be interchangeable. This quality is particularly noticeable in two of the major segment sequences: the 'Hours', and 'The Legend'. Five of the latter's eleven segments are completely in verse. Apart from the occasions when it is other kinds of verse itself that are being satirised, there seems to be nothing in *YH* that could not be expressed equally well in prose or verse. The verse, then, serves on the whole as a stylistic device, but does not articulate its own specific themes. The one exception to the interchangeability of the two media from the point of view of content, perhaps, concerns those passages when philosophical discussion is taking place – either serious or satirical. Zinoviev does occasionally touch upon philosophical themes in the verse, but he does not use verse for actual argument of the kind we find in the prose sections.

One of the most difficult problems for orthodox literary analysis presented by *YH* concerns the mediation (motivation) of the text. Generally speaking, each element of a prose narrative may be attributed by the reader, if he so wishes, to a certain particular source. The author may or may not make this source explicit, and he may or may not be consistent, but he generally takes care to motivate the text in such a way as not to distract the reader's attention from the content – unless, that is, his work is a self-consciously experimental

one in which writerly technique itself is the focus of the work. In *YH*, however, Zinoviev neither concerns himself with providing motivation, nor focuses on the device for its own sake. He seems simply to ignore the problem.

Table 6.2 lists the various kinds of motivation that may be discerned in the text of *YH*.

The third section of the table lists those passages for which no information of this kind is provided. They have been divided into two types. In the first group, of 35 passages, the verse is embedded into a passage of prose and no clue is given as to the relationship between the verse and its context. In the other 13 cases, the verse itself forms a complete segment. These segments are simply 'there'; they have the usual subtitles, but their relation to the context is not stated. Zinoviev evidently considers that in these cases the provision of motivation is unnecessary, or that the provision of it would perhaps trivialise the material these sections contain.

Over two-thirds of the verse passages, though, are provided with motivation; they are listed in the first two sections of Table 6.2. Many difficulties have been ignored in compiling this table. For example, the status of the Ballad is ambiguous: it begins as a graffito but then enters the oral legacy. However, from this evidence we may see very clearly one of the most important characteristics of the verse in *YH*: contextually, it is oral/aural and public rather than read silently in private. In particular, song is the most frequent single type of verse. The authors of verse often utter it as an impromptu comment on something that has happened or been said.

Print is a marginal medium in the world of Ibansk. There is not a single case in it of verse being silently read by an individual from a book of poems or a literary journal. Those pieces of verse that are written tend to be on public display in the form of slogans or graffiti; a couple of them are even carved on marble slabs in letters of gold. In these cases, Zinoviev makes no attempt at verisimilitude in terms of Soviet reality. For example, the four pieces of verse that are said to have been published in the Newspaper are just as scatological as the manuscript pieces, if not more so. The most outrageous case of this kind is the two-line 'Poem on Duty': the context is a perfectly credible account of Soviet pre-publication censorship and accompanying rumour, but the text itself is quite unthinkable in this context. The same principle applies to the most hilarious travesty in the book, Writer's 'acting temporary anthem' (no. 49; *YH*, pp. 428–9; *ZV*, p. 293).

Table 6.2 Mediation of verse texts
Numbers refer to serial numbers allotted to verse texts in *YH/ZV*

	I. Written texts	
	Published	
1. Advertisements	77, 79–81, 136	5
2. Epitaph	65	1
3. Inscriptions	48, 51	2
4. Newspaper	17, 22, 67, 71	4
5. Other print	9, 10, 88, 127	4
6. Wall Newspaper	29–32	4
7. Graffiti	3, 4, 34, 117, 121, 131, 152–4	9
8. The Ballad	1, 2, 5–7, 12–16, 19–21, 23, 25, 37–9, 41, 43, 45	21
	Unpublished	
9. Singer letters	98, 99, 109, 110	4
10. Sand. daughter MS	133–5, 142, 146–8	7
11. Slanderer MS	44	1
	Total	62
	II. Oral texts	
12. Songs	18, 24, 26, 28, 33, 35, 36, 42, 53, 57, 58, 60, 73, 112, 113, 115, 118–20, 125, 129, 130, 139, 143, 168	25
13. Play	47	1
14. Read from MS	49, 55, 76, 78, 89, 94, 96, 167	8
15. 'spoken', etc.	8, 11, 40, 46, 52, 64, 66, 68, 74, 75, 90, 91, 95, 124, 128, 141, 145, 149, 155, 160	20
16. 'thought', etc.	50, 56, 61, 62, 169	5
	Total	59
	III. Unexplained	
17. Unmediated inserts	27, 54, 59, 63, 69, 72, 82–7, 93, 100, 101, 102–4, 106, 108, 111, 114, 122, 123, 126, 132, 137	35
18. Entire segments	33, 70, 92, 97, 103, 105, 107, 116, 140, 158, 159, 161, 163	13
	Total	48

The other major category among the written texts in verse is formed by the manuscript works: Singer's letters from abroad, the poems of Sandal's daughter, and the last surviving poem by Slanderer (which is promptly torn up).

Despite the elements of parody and satire, though, when taken

together the various types of motivation that are provided for the verse texts of Ibansk form one of the most striking representations we have of the nature and function of verse within the Soviet cultural environment.

By no means all the verse in *YH* can be attributed to an author. In fact, the principal author of verse in *YH* is 'Anon'. A total of 53 of the verse passages in the text are anonymous. They run from p. 24 to p. 561 of the Russian text. The anonymous passages are of two quite different kinds. On the one hand, there are short texts that are used to point up or summarise a particular line of argument; the vast majority of them are quatrains in *chastushka* form. These are 'genuine' folk verse, their authorship being forgotten,[6] and a high proportion of them are sung. On the other hand, there are anonymous texts that are much longer, between twenty and forty lines, whose authorship is disputed or forgotten, but which are nevertheless attributable to a recognised poet. Outstanding as an example of the second kind of anonymous text is the Ballad, which is in 21 parts that range between two and fifty-four lines. If this work ever existed as a continuous unitary text, Zinoviev has disguised the fact in the way he has used it in *YH*. It retains the signs, like the other segments, of having been written *ad hoc* and never reviewed as a whole.

The anonymous pieces and the Ballad together account for less than half the verse in *YH*. Most of the verse texts are unequivocally attributed to one or other of the book's characters. Among them, the leading authors of verse are the two characters which seem to be the most clearly autobiographical. They are Bawler, the author of thirteen pieces of verse, and 'He', a character who seems to blend into and out of the character of Bawler in Part III, and is responsible for eleven passages. So close to these two figures as to be practically inextricable at some points is Teacher, who contributes eleven passages to the closing segments of the book. All these three contribute some substantial single pieces, and they would probably be the most rewarding characters to analyse closely in terms of the consistency of their utterances in verse and prose. Nearer to the anonymous folk mode is Bloke, of whose eleven passages six are *chastushka*-type quatrains. At the opposite extreme is the daughter of Sandal (whose authorship is disputed, as we shall see later); of her seven contributions only one is less than sixteen lines long. She rounds out the number of substantial contributors of verse who are amateur occasional poets.

There are six characters who contribute only one passage each:

Brother, Louse, Slanderer, Vermin, Dauber and Panicker. In an intermediate position comes Fellow-Worker with five. The remaining authors of verse in the book are professionals. There are three of them. Two are dissidents turned official: Snottyhanky, with nine passages, which include the parodic texts mentioned earlier that are published in the Newspaper; and Writer, with eleven. Lastly, there is the dissident Singer, who contributes eleven passages, one of them the longest single piece of verse in the book.[7] One of the points Zinoviev has to make about the nature of Ibanskian literature is that the quality of amateur verse-making is no worse, to say the least, than it is among the professionals. However, since there are no 'serious' examples of professional verse in the book, but only travesties of the kind mentioned before, it is not possible to examine the internal evidence for this claim.

At one point in *YH*, Zinoviev crisply 'settles' one of the classic problems of aesthetics:

> 'Of course,' said Teacher, 'the form of art has a role to play, particularly when there's nothing to say. But if there is something important to say there's no need to think about the form. That appears of its own accord, and in a way appropriate to the content.'[8]

This may be a perfectly sincere statement of Zinoviev's own perception of the way form comes about during the act of composition. As is well known, however, what appears to come about of its own accord is inevitably conditioned by the creator's model of the cultural environment he inhabits, and is by no means arbitrary and spontaneous.

The characteristics of the verse in *YH* at the most salient formal level, that of metre, are set out in Table 6.3

The table uses categories that are conventional in descriptions of the metrical repertoire of Russian verse in its historical evolution. Column 1 contains M. L. Gasparov's figures for the metrical repertoire of Soviet literary verse of the most recent period. It is easy to see from this distribution that the 'classical' metres (iambic, trochaic and ternary) still account for the vast bulk of what Soviet poets write; in particular, a large slice of the material is accounted for by the iambic tetrameter and pentameter. In column 2 are the present writer's figures for the metrical repertoire of guitar poetry, the most important genre within modern Russian dissident poetry. If the distribution of column 2 is compared with that of column 1, it may be

Table 6.3 Metrical typology of YH, etc.

	1 1958–80	*2* Guitar poetry	*3* YH texts	*4* % 169	*5* YH anon.	*6* Bd	*7* Bw	*8* Tr	*9* He	*10* Wr	*11* Sr
I3			3						1		
I4	18.9	6.4	17	10.1	10				1	1	
I5	19.1	9.3	2	1.2	0			2			
I6			1		1						
I7			1								
4343	3.0	9.6	15	8.9	3		1		4	1	1
M			8	4.7	5		2	1	1		
Free			3		2					1	
Total	46.3	30.6	50	29.6	21	0	3	3	7	3	1
T3			1								
T4	6.5	4.2	40	23.6	6	21			1	3	
T5	7.7	4.0	3	1.8	2			1			
T6	0.4		9	5.3	3		1				4
T7			1		1						
T8			1		1						
4343	1.2	8.1	8	4.7	5		1	1		1	
M			2								
Free			1		2						
Total	17.8	25.3	66	39.0	20	21	2	2	1	4	4
Am2			1								
Am3	5.4	2.8	1	0.6	1						
Am4	1.7		5	3.0	1			2			1
Am5			1								
4343			2		2						
M			2								2
An2			1								
An3	7.1	6.2	5	3.0	2		1				
An4			2		1			1			
4343			3					2	1	1	1
M			2								
D4			2							1	
Total	24.1	27.1	27	16.0	7	0	1	5	1	2	4
Dk3	9.4	4.1	13	7.7	3		5		1	1	2
Dk4			5	3.0			1				
Acc4			1								
Acc2			1								
M			1							1	
Mtern			1		1					1	
Poly			1								
?			3				1	1			
Total	12.7	17.0	26	15.4	4	0	7	1	2	2	2
Totals	(3306)	(1192)	169		53	21	13	11	11	11	11

(i) Vertical arrangement is in terms of the four conventional metrical groups (iambic, trochiac, ternary, and others).

(ii) Columns 5–11 display absolute numbers of texts by principal authors only of verse in *YH*, not all authors; Bd = Ballad; Br = Bawler; Tr = Teacher; Wr = Writer; Sr = Singer.

(iii) In notating verse measures, I = Iambic; T = Trochaic; Am = Amphibrachic; An = Anapaestic; D = Dactylic; Dk = Dol'nik; Acc = Accentual; M = Mixed (a mixed metre has lines of differing lengths recurring in invariant order); F = Free (a free metre has lines of differing lengths in irregular order).

(iv) Numbers after abbreviations indicating measures refer to the number of metrically strong syllables in the line; thus, I4 = iambic tetrameter, etc.

(v) Data for Column 1 taken from M. L. Gasparov, *Ocherk istorii russkogo stikha* (Moscow, 1984) p. 296.

(vi) Data for column 2 taken from G. S. Smith, 'The Versification of Russian Guitar Poetry', *IJSLP*, xxx (1984), pp. 131–50.

(vii) Totals for columns 1 and 2 refer to numbers of texts analysed.

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seen that guitar poetry has a repertoire that differs in many respects from that of official verse. In particular, the iambic group is diminished to the benefit of the trochaic group, and the two staple metres of literary poetry are not nearly so prominent. These two sets of data provide an interesting background against which to study the metrical repertoire of *YH*, which is given in column 3 in absolute figures (numbers of texts) and then in percentages in column 4. We see that, to put it one way, *YH* shares certain characteristics of the repertoire of dissident sung verse: the trochaic group has emerged as the leader and there is very strong representation of metres with varying line lengths, a 4343 alternation being particularly prominent. The distribution we see in column 4 represents more than the features associated with sung verse in Russian, though; most strongly of all it reflects the metrical characteristics of imitations of Russian folk verse. The most prominent single metre is the trochaic tetrameter, which is the staple metre of *chastushka* and lyric folksong; while pentameters, which are the leading line-length of Russian literary poetry in the modern period, occupy a very modest place.

The remaining columns of Table 6.3 (5 to 11) give figures for smaller categories of verse in *YH*. We see from column 6 that the consistent use of T4 in the 21 passages from the Ballad gives this metre its prominence in the repertoire as a whole. The most interesting conclusion suggested by the data in columns 7 to 11 is that the contributions of individuals are marked by specific metrical preferences: Bawler, whose mainly juvenile verse is unique in *YH* for its open display of sentiment, has an appropriate preference for the

literary, sub-Blokian Dk3; Teacher has a cultivated eight-element repertoire, with I4 and the ternary group very prominent in the context of the book as a whole; 'He' has an even broader repertoire, in which a strong iambic group and weak trochaic are contextually salient; Writer has the distribution that most nearly approximates to that of the book as a whole; and Singer's repertoire demonstrates the acuity of Zinoviev's ear: it is a tolerably accurate representation of the metrical repertoire of Galich's songs.[9] Zinoviev passes all this off as a spontaneous and unmediated feature that somehow 'just comes' when the author has something to say.

Apart from the large-scale metrical characteristics of the verse in *YH* that we have just examined, characteristics that can only be described with any precision by using quantitative methods, this verse exhibits certain clear stylistic features that are more easily identifiable. In narrowly technical terms, the most characteristic feature of Zinoviev's verse is the banality of the rhymes, a feature of which the author is well aware. Rhyme pairs which use identical parts of speech are generally considered banal in serious Russian literary poetry of the modern period. Rhyme pairs involving two verbs in the same aspect, tense and person are so horrendously banal as to be shunned by all self-respecting Russian poets – and these seem to be one of Zinoviev's favourite kinds. This is the most technical way in which his verse is 'ugly' and deliberately falls below minimal literary requirements. But the most blatant shortcoming in this respect is that practically all the verse in the book uses the colloquial and low end of the stylistic range, making free use of 'unprintable' language. As we remarked earlier, this kind of style is even used for texts that are supposed to have been published in the official prints of Ibansk. The use of this register is – as all critics have noted – one of the leading stylistic characteristics of the book as a whole; but the prose passages employ other registers besides the low and colloquial. Most notably, they contain abstract philosophical discussion (however satirical), whereas the verse passages do not. For Zinoviev, verse is not an appropriate medium for argument; it is best suited to pointed illustration and pithy summary. And conversely, verse is sometimes used, as we remarked earlier, for non-satirical, directly emotional speech.

However, the most striking characteristic of all in the verse style of *YH* is the complete absence of metaphor and other types of figurative language. Zinoviev's verse is monosemic, and is evidently intended to be grasped immediately and in full, then to be left for the next part of the text. As such, it works very well for purposes of satire and

parody. But it is inadequate in those cases, some of which we listed earlier, where Zinoviev is being serious: the combination with emotional rhetoric in these passages makes the verse almost embarrassingly sentimental.

In the following passage, Blockhead accuses Sandal of being the author of the poetry the latter says is his daughter's:

> 'Nonsense,' said Sandal. 'If I could write verse [*stikhi*] like that, I'd take jolly good care not to. Adults these days are all dreadfully intelligent and well educated, and for verse you need a certain degree of stupidity and ignorance.'[10]

This last statement echoes a famous pronouncement by Pushkin to the effect that poetry 'needs to be a bit stupid [*glupovata*]'. And indeed, a certain suspension of logical disbelief is required if the verbal devices commonly found in poetry are to be entertained by the mind. In Zinoviev we encounter a mind for which – like the poet's – verbal reality is supreme, but in which – absolutely unlike the poet's – the logical mode annihilates all other modes and makes them seem trivial or absurd. For Zinoviev's verse-writing creatures in *YH*, as was implied before, metaphor and other figurative speech is nonsense. But along with metaphor we lose the possibility for the profoundest kinds of poetry to exist, and are left with its formal devices.

However, the verse of *YH*, and of Zinoviev's books in general, actually represents a challenge to received ideas of the proper nature and function of Russian poetry. The kind of poetry we find in *YH*, for which we may use Zinoviev's own term 'ugly',[11] is not found in his work alone. Several different kinds of genuinely dissenting poetry have been created in Russia since the 1950s. On the one hand, there is what might be called 'high' literary dissent, in which the leading name was and still is Brodsky, and the geographical focus was and remains Leningrad. Zinoviev is the ultimate Moscow intellectual dissident, and on the subject of 'high' literary dissent as practised in Leningrad he has nothing whatsoever to say. In his world, the only poets who take themselves seriously are the official Ibanskian ones, and this attitude is a token of their stupidity and lack of talent.

The only poetry – not just dissident, but of any kind – that Zinoviev seems to respect is poetry at the low or ugly end of the spectrum. It would be interesting to identify the real personalities and events that underlie Zinoviev's discussion of this subject in *YH*. But even without such an identification, it is clear that he is not

talking about the best-known representatives of this tendency, the so-called 'Barrack School' [*barachnaya shkola*], which included Kropivnitskii, Kholin, Sapgir, and later Limonov.[12] These poets, the heirs of Khlebnikov and Kruchenykh, have created ugly poetry which is not, in the eyes of Limonov at least, to be regarded as trivial and disposable in the way that Zinoviev describes the authors' and audiences' attitudes towards 'ugly poetry'. There is, however, a real contradiction between the emotional tone Zinoviev adopts in the concluding passage of his segment on 'ugly poetry' and the brutal cynicism of the vast bulk of his pronouncements on cultural history. There is sadness and genuine outrage in his lament for lost souls, culminating in the exhortation to remember that sometimes 'the crushing of one single man . . . is enough to prevent the birth of a new direction in culture'.[13]

In a throwaway sentence at the end of his discussion of ugly poetry, Zinoviev notes the intimate connection between it and sung poetry. As we have already noted, a significant proportion of the verse texts in *YH* are songs. Many of them are folkloric,[14] but most of them are literary songs, and of particular importance are guitar poems. On this latter phenomenon in modern Russian culture, *YH* has a good deal to say. Indeed, one of the principal characters in the third part of the book is Singer, who is clearly based on Galich, but by no means completely identifiable with him.[15] There is, however, a good deal of difference between guitar poetry as it really was in Russian literary history and the impression of it that is given in *YH*.[16] Characteristically, there is no equivalent figure in *YH* for Okudzhava, the original and most enduring of the guitar poets – undoubtedly because Okudzhava's gentle lyricism is a variety of poetry that Zinoviev ignores as a matter of principle.[17] More puzzling is the absence of a Vysotskii equivalent.[18]

The references to guitar poetry in *YH* probably illustrate well the way in which its representation of Russian literary history is distorted. Zinoviev only tells us about those things he encountered personally, that took place within the circle of his own contemporaries, and we should not look to his Ibansk for an accurate picture of the Russian artistic and intellectual history of his time. And the same is probably true of other aspects of Soviet reality that are touched on in Zinoviev's book.

This study of the verse in *YH* has pointed to several conclusions. In terms of the book's structure, verse plays a less prominent role than prose, but it is nevertheless an important element. In his choice of

verse forms, Zinoviev sets up an interestingly marked selection from the current repertoire of Russian literary, folk, and sung varieties. Stylistically, the verse is cognate with the remainder of the book, but is more restricted than the prose, since it is not used as the vehicle for philosophical argument. The principal function of the verse in the book is to act as a summarising and pointing device. And it also plays an important part in creating the book's atmosphere; the prominence of verse is an authentic feature of the cultural milieu from which the book derives and which it reflects. Some of the verse has great merit as parody of official Soviet poetry.

But judged as poetry, and seen in the context of the range of independent poetry currently being written in Russian, Zinoviev's poems are severely limited. They are stylistically monotonous, and they lack the enrichment and profundity that figurative language can provide. In the last analysis they are superficial. Re-reading a Zinoviev poem tends to diminish it rather than reveal new meaning; and poetry of which that can be said is not good poetry.

Notes

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1. There seems to be no published study of this specific topic. In the course of the only discussion so far that attempts to place *YH* in the general context of modern Russian dissident literature, Edward J. Brown mistakenly remarks that all the disparate elements in *YH* are '. . . tied together by the thread of a lengthy 'ballad,' found on an outhouse wall in Ibansk, which provides at certain intervals scatological commentary on all the matters touched upon'. (*Russian Literature since the Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard UP, 1982, p. 382.) The Ballad is in fact only one of the many different verse elements in the book, constitutes less than one-sixth of all the verse it contains, and makes its last appearance on p. 403 of *YH* (*ZV*, p. 276), which is less than half-way through the text.
2. Some important sequences in the book have segments with different titles; a definitive identification of all the sequences of *YH* is a primary problem in Zinoviev scholarship.
3. 'Kak u movo milenka v zhope', no. 88 in *Nepodtsenzurnaya russkaya chastushka*, compiled and edited by V. Kabronskii (New York: Russica, 1978) p. 51; also the variant no. 223 (p. 97).
4. The same collection includes a number of 'variations' on well-known Soviet songs, among them 'Tam, gde pekhota ne proydet' (p. 169), which is very close to Zinoviev's version (no. 18; *ZV*, p. 73; *YH*, p. 106). It also has some genuine examples of one of Zinoviev's favoured genres, graffiti from toilet walls (pp. 174–5); and (pp. 175–8) a series of hilarious examples of what the editor calls 'substitutes' (*zameny*) in which an innocuous word is substituted for an obscenity that is implied by rhyme ('Ona krasiva, kak zvezda./U nei shirokaya natura.') – the technique used in Zinoviev's 'Hymn to the Member' (no. 82; *ZV*, p. 357; *YH*, p. 525), with the additional refinement that the substitute word is a synonym of the implied obscenity.
5. They are: no. 62; *ZV*, p. 316; *YH*, p. 463; no. 69, apparently by Bawler, *ZV*, p. 331; *YH*, p. 485; no. 93, the 'intellectual's prayer', *ZV*, p. 384; *YH*, p. 565; no. 116, the 'prayer of the believing atheist', *ZV*, p. 467; *YH*, p. 690; and no. 156, 'Let me address . . . ', *ZV*, p. 538; *YH*, p. 797.
6. Zinoviev at one point discusses what 'genuine' folk verse might be: see *YH*, pp. 565–6; *ZV*, p. 384.
7. No. 107; *YH*, p. 656; *ZV*, pp. 444–5.
8. *YH*, p. 472; *ZV*, p. 322.
9. The leading characteristic of Galich's metrical repertoire is actually the use of polymetric structures, absent from Singer's work in *YH*. The measure that Zinoviev hears as T6 (e.g., the first line of Singer's first letter, 'Iz muzeya 1' modernistov ya bredu', no. 98; *ZV*, p. 423; *YH*, p. 624) is a conventionalisation of Galich's most original and best-favoured metre, a three-ictus logaoedic line with two-syllable anacrusis

and stem intervals of three and two syllables (e.g. 'Eto ch'e zhe, govoryu, ukazan'e/Chtob takomu vidayushchemu tsekhu/Ne prisvaivat' pochetnoe zvan'e?'; Aleksandr Galich, *Kogda ya vernus'* (Frankfurt: Posev, 1981) p. 384). On Galich's versification, see G. S. Smith, 'The Versification of Russian Guitar Poetry' (Table 6.3).

10. *YH*, p. 775; *ZV*, p. 523. This is not to mention the opening piece in Zinoviev's first collection of verse, *MDMCh*, p. 7, which leaves very little unsaid about Zinoviev's view of himself as a poet.
11. *YH*, p. 553 et seq.; *ZV*, p. 376 et seq. For some reason, Gordon Clough uses the phrase 'outrageous poems' to translate Zinoviev's *bezobraznyi stikh*; and the adjective 'existential' for Zinoviev's *zhiznennyi* is unfortunate in the sentence 'The aim of the outrageous verses was to compress some important existential content into small dimensions of literary form.' (ibid.)
12. See Konstantin Kuzminskii and Grigorii Kovalev (eds), *The Blue Lagoon Anthology of Modern Russian Poetry*, vol. 1, Newtonville, Mass., 1980; see also Evgenii Kropivnitskii (1893–1978), *Pechal'no ulybnut'sya* (Paris: Tret'ya volna, 1977); Genrikh Sapgir (1928–), *Sonety na rubashkakh* (Paris: Tret'ya volna, 1978); Eduard Limonov [1943–], *Russkoe* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1979). It is also worth mentioning in this connection the stylistically cognate work of the semi-official poet Nikolai Glazkov (1919–79; see *Avtoportret* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1984)); and also Igor' Garik [Guberman] (see *Evreisko datsybao* (Jerusalem: Moskva–Ierusalim, 1978), and *Bumerang* (Ann Arbor: Ermitazh, 1982)).
13. *YH*, p. 556; *ZV*, p. 378.
14. Apart from the song mentioned above (Note 9), these include some authentic folklore songs, e.g. 'Shumel kamysh' (no. 112; *ZV*, p. 459; *YH*, p. 679); the song is the equivalent of British 'Nellie Dean', performed to signal the end of a party.
15. In particular, Singer was once arrested for homosexuality (*YH*, p. 468; *ZV*, p. 320), an element missing from Galich's biography; on the latter, see G. S. Smith, 'Silence is Connivance', in Alexander Galich, *Songs and Poems* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1983), pp. 13–54. There is also the curious fact that in *YH*, written in 1975 and published in 1976, Singer is said to have committed suicide – which was a common rumour in the emigration after Galich's premature death in Paris – in December 1977 (see *YH*, p. 699; *ZV*, p. 471). It would also be very interesting to know whether or not Evtushenko ever wrote 'a long memorandum on Singer's work' for the Leader – or whether it was Voznesensky who did; the 'oval' poem (no. 89, *ZV*, p. 370; *YH*, p. 545) is stylistically more characteristic of the latter than the former.
16. On guitar poetry, see G. S. Smith, *Songs to Seven Strings: Russian Guitar Poetry and Soviet 'Mass Song'* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984).
17. Unless Zinoviev is thinking of Okudzhava when he has Neurasthenic, in advancing imitability as the criterion of unreal as opposed to real art, say: '. . . take Writer's verse in today's paper. I could churn out that kind of stuff by the mile. So it must be nonsense. I could have invented the whole of Writer's work in six months. But O's poems – never' (*YH*, p. 355; *ZV*, p. 243). There is also the following tribute to Okudzhava's

famous song 'The Last Trolleybus' in *MDMCh*, p. 39: 'Nynche znaet mlad i star/Sovremennyi "pertuar."/Vot upivshis' svyshe mery,/ Zapevaem, dlya primera,/Kak po ulitsam stolitsy/Trolleibus poslednii mchitsya,/V nem chudak kakoi-to edet . . . '

18. Teacher's guitar-accompanied song (no. 138, *ZV*, 506; *YH*, 750) is rather reminiscent of Vysotskii, and in particular of the latter's famous *The Captain*: Vladimir Vysotskii, *Pesni i stikhi* (New York: Izdatel'stvo 'Literaturnoe zarubezh'e', 1981) pp. 63–4.

7 Alexander Zinoviev's Language

Wolf Moskovich

The 'Period of Perplexity', as Zinoviev calls the reign of Khrushchev (1958–64), created less obstructive conditions for the development of literature and the arts in the Soviet Union. Zinoviev is one of several outstanding Russian writers who benefited from the intellectual climate of that period and 'Who have made the decision to renounce success, actual or potential, for the sake of their own vision of the truth' (Smith, 1983, p. 46).

Zinoviev is an outstanding logician and an original writer who in the *Ziyayushchie vysoty* purposely chose a specific literary form – a collection of short sociological essays intermingled with funny stories, anecdotes and verses – to present his message in an entertaining way.

Though acknowledged by *émigré* Russian literary critics as a great satirist and a master of an acid pamphlet style, he is sometimes accused of literary sloppiness and lack of professionalism (Rubinshtein, 1978). It was claimed that his books would benefit greatly if they were properly edited and shortened.

Zinoviev himself seems to pay little attention to the artistic perfection of his writings. The most important thing for him is his message, his criticism of Soviet reality and not the literary finesse of his books. His main literary works, and especially his magnum opus *Ziyayushchie vysoty* are intended for Soviet readers, and they inescapably lose some of the explosiveness of their message and their subtext in translation. Zinoviev's works can be easily identified by their language and deliberate use of certain linguistic techniques.

Zinoviev as a scholar has a deep interest in the structure of language and its functioning. In addition to his special papers on the nature of language published before his career as a writer, comments on various aspects of the functioning of the modern Soviet Russian language are scattered in his literary works, forming a specific meta-level. Such a combination of writer and researcher of language is rare and is reminiscent of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) and Umberto Eco. The scholarly background of both of these writers heavily reflects on the choice of stylistic means and the very structure of their literary works.

The most important point made by Zinoviev is the necessity to create an exact language for the analysis of Soviet society (*ZNS*, p. 23 et passim). Words and notions used to describe the non-Soviet world are not applicable here. For example, what does 'poryadochnyi chelovek' mean in the USSR? It may mean (1) a kind and generous person of high moral principles; (2) a person who plays a social role dictated from above. Only the second meaning corresponds to the official norms of Soviet society. Moral norms in the USSR are such that the word *donos* 'denunciation' is losing its negative connotations (*ZNS*, p. 51). If such a negative connotation should nevertheless continue to exist, the Soviet authorities will see to it that the word will be replaced by another one with positive connotations (*VPR*, p. 57).

Zinoviev considers the implanting of such 'Redspeak' words as *vybory*, 'elections', *podlinnaya demokratiya* 'real democracy', *stabil'nye tseny* 'stable prices', *ustoichivaya valyuta* 'stable currency' by the mass media to be powerful brainwashing that blocks the critical abilities of Soviet citizens (*VPR*, p. 126).

He regards the choice of family names to be an important aspect of human behaviour. A man with a name like Trotsky or Dzhugashvili had no chance to become the head of the Soviet state. It is only because Stalin understood it that he rose to the highest position (*ZNS*, p. 109).

Zinoviev comes to the conclusion that Soviet history cannot be described using normal human concepts. Such expressions as *t'fu . . .*, *tvoju'mat* 'fuck it!', *mat* 'fuck it!' are more suitable for its description (*ZNS*, p. 55). After all, indecent words constitute by Zinoviev's estimate 90 percent of any Ibanskian text, and they convey the main message in any utterance (*ZNS*, p. 62).

Zinoviev provides his own etymologies for the words *guba* 'military prison' (*ZV*, p. 17) and *sortir* 'loo' (*ZV*, p. 103). He describes in great detail the programme of an imaginary symposium on Ibanskian *mat* 'obscene language' (*ZV*, p. 375) and makes fun of the prudishness of the Soviet Russian standard language which taboos the word *gorshok* 'chamber pot' replacing it with *nochnaya vaza* ('chamber pot', literally 'night vase') (*VPR*, p. 260).

It is only natural that Zinoviev's theoretical views on the nature of the Soviet Russian language should be reflected in the style of his literary works.

Zinoviev's career as a writer can be roughly divided into two periods: the Soviet one and the emigration one. During the first and a

considerable part of the second period he wrote almost exclusively for the Soviet reader, but with time he is shifting towards a new readership: the *émigré* Russian and Western non-Russian audiences. It is when he writes for the Soviet Russian reader that the full impact of his theoretical views on the Russian language is felt in his literary works.

The real Russian language in Zinoviev's understanding is that of Russian people (ordinary ones and intellectuals) as opposed to the wooden official Russian language. A liberal use of the resources of Russian argot, without official limitations, is a sign of protest against the official Soviet order of things. Used in such an unrestricted way, Russian becomes an anti-language showing protest against official Soviet norms (on the notion of anti-language see Halliday, 1979).

Zinoviev is by no means the first Soviet Russian writer to introduce slang and obscene vocabulary into Russian *belles-lettres*. The Soviet establishment severely punished writers who dared to use such unrestricted language. V. Aksenov had to rewrite his *Apel'siny iz Marokko* in 1964, purging it of slang elements after he was continuously attacked in the Soviet media.

One influential Soviet establishment figure admitted that the hidden cause of attacks against such writers as V. Aksenov and D. Granin was their free use of jargonisms (Skvortsov, 1964, p. 48).

Speaking in defence of such writers, who use both jargonisms and 'words well known to everybody, but the knowledge of which it is considered necessary to conceal', a Soviet linguist T. G. Vinokur stated:

> Real art is first and foremost truth. Truth in things big and small. Truth is details. In this sense the language of works of literature has no pseudoethic norms, no pharisaical rules of what is permitted and what is prohibited. Everything depends upon the aim of the use of this or another speech element in literature (Vinokur, 1965, p. 28).

In 1974 a list of contemporary Soviet Russian writers in whose writings jargonisms were used freely was compiled (Skvortsov, 1974). It included such names as F. Abramov, V. Aksenov, V. Belov, A. Bitov, A. Gladilin, D. Granin, A. Kleshchenko, A. Kuznetsov, V. Kurochkin, A. Levi, V. Maksimov, A. Pobozhii, V. Semin, A. Solzhenitsyn, V. Chivilikhin, M. Sholokhov, V. Shukshin, G. Vladimov and V. Voinovich. The compiler of this list warned that the use of jargon by a Soviet author may be a sign of expressing his 'moral

abnormality and even alien ideology (antisocial, parasitic, etc.)' (Skvortsov, 1964, p. 63).

It is no coindicence that many of the authors on this list have been since forced to leave the Soviet Union, their creative life there having been made difficult. Emigration is a heavy penalty for a Soviet Russian writer.

The first actual Communist writer who renounced his allegiance to the Soviet state and asked to emigrate was Evgenii Zamyatin who wrote to Stalin in 1931:

> In the Soviet Criminal Code the penalty second to death is deportation of the criminal from the country. If I am in truth a criminal deserving punishment, I nevertheless do not think that I merit so grave a penalty as literary death. I therefore ask that this sentence be changed to deportation from the USSR (Zamyatin, 1972, pp. xvi–xvii).

Unrestricted use of jargonisms and obscenities is characteristic of many Russian authors in emigration – Yu. Aleshkovsky, V. Aksenov, A. Galich and others – and it seems that the use of such vocabulary in Russian *émigré* letters is on the increase.

Thus, in this respect Zinoviev is far from original, though his 'speech hooliganism' is perhaps more excessive than that of most other contemporary Russian writers.

Zinoviev writes only on subjects with which he is very well acquainted. When he writes a straight sociological text, like that of *The Reality of Communism*, he remains as a rule within the limits of professional sociological discourse, though on a popular level. It is in his literary works where all the diversity of his language may be observed in full.

Zinoviev's text is perhaps the most vivid representation of the living speech of certain strata of modern Soviet society to be found in modern Russian *belles-lettres*. In addition to straightforward scholarly discourse, several other registers are well represented. They reflect various roles played by Zinoviev in his life as a *homo sovieticus*: a military man, a student, a party member, a member of informal groups (of fellow intellectuals, of drinkers, etc.).

It is the description of military life, with its camaraderie and simplicity of relations, which seems to me to comprise the best pages of Zinoviev's bellestristic writing. The language here is colloquial, male, blunt and friendly. Food and alcohol are a major preoccupation: *zhratva* 'grub' (*ZV*, p. 238), *zhrat'* 'to guzzle' (*ZV*, p. 31),

navorachivat' 'to gobble' (*ZV*, p. 239), *lopat* 'to devour', 'to gobble up' (*ZV*, p. 239), *rubat'* 'to gobble' (*ZV*, p. 239), *est'/zhrat' ot puza* 'eat till one is full' (*ZV*, p. 286), *shrapnel'* 'oatmeal porridge' (*ZV*, p. 19), *antratsit* 'brown bread' (*ZV*, p. 249), *chernyashka* 'brown bread' (*ZV*, p. 534), *samogonka* 'home distilled vodka', 'hooch', *podnabrat'sya vitaminchikov* 'to accumulate vitamins' (*ZV*, p. 239), *nadrat'sya* 'to become sozzled' (*ZV*, p. 108), *vydut' pollitra vodki* 'to down, sink half a litre of vodka' (*ZV*, p. 292).

Another important subject is punishment: *guba* 'military prison', *vlepit' gubu na polnuyu zhelezku* 'to impose a maximum sentence' (*ZV*, p. 396), *vyshka* 'capital punishment' (*ZV*, p. 381).

Sex remains an all-important issue: *baba* 'woman' (*ZV*, p. 267), *blyad'* 'whore' (*ZV*, p. 267), *drat'/poimat' babu* 'to fuck a woman' (*VPR*, p. 188), *podtsepit' tripper* 'to pick up gonorrhoea' (*ZV*, p. 325). All the above-mentioned words and expressions are typical of common Russian male speech. The only specifically military terms seem to be of the following kind: *SHKASY* (abbreviation of *shirokie kirzovye armeiskie stroevye* 'Soviet army jackboots put on with leg-wrappings' (*ZV*, p. 64); *pomkomvzvoda* (abbreviation of *pomoshchnik komandira vzvoda* 'deputy commander of a platoon' (*ZV*, p. 115); *KHBBURS* (abbreviation of *obmundirovanie khlopchatobumazhnoe byvshee v upotreblenii ryadovogo sostava*) (*ZV*, p. 64).

In *Ziyayushchie vysoty* there is a scene called 'The language of intellectuals' where Zinoviev describes the way in which contemporary Russian intellectuals address each other: *starik* 'old boy', *staryi* 'old chap', *podonok* 'riff-raff', *poshel na* 'go to hell!' (literally: go to —!), *vonyuchka* 'stinker', *mudak* 'fool', *zasranets* 'Shitface', *poshel v zhopu* 'go to hell!' (literally: go into the arse!) (*ZV*, p. 394). An arrogant intellectual who dared to call a militiaman *starik* was arrested as the militiaman immediately realised what he was up against – an alien person, a potentially dangerous element. Zinoviev constructs a hypothetical dialogue of two typical Soviet Russian intellectuals which consists only of such unconventional words (*ZV*, p. 394).

Zinoviev's works give an accurate picture of the vernacular used in academic circles: *zashchitibel'naya dissertatsiya* 'a thesis which can be passed' (*SB*, p. 23); *razdolbat' dissertatsiyu* 'to fail a thesis' (*VPR*, p. 244); *razgovory za zhizn'* 'a candid friendly conversation on a variety of subjects' (*VPR*, p. 254); *napisat' muru* 'to write rubbish' (*SB*, p. 27).

An analysis of the full corpus of jargonisms which appear in Zinoviev's books in many hundreds reveals that some of them are

used by him more often than others. Perhaps they reflect to a certain extent Zinoviev's own linguistic habits (or characteristic features of his idiolect). Among the most natural words of this type are the following: *naplevat' na* 'to hell with it'; *trep, trepotnya* 'lies, nonsense'; *imet' v zanachke* 'to have in stock'; *khokhma* 'joke'; *khokhmit'* 'to crack jokes'; *lipa* 'forgery', *zhrat'* 'to gobble'.

An extensive set of Russian 'unprintable' terms for sexual parts of the body and for various sexual and excretory acts appears on the pages of Zinoviev's writings: *kher* 'prick', *khui* 'prick', *pizda* 'cunt', *ebat'* 'to fuck', *otodrat'* 'to fuck', *nadut'* 'to fuck', *trakhnut'* 'to fuck', *nakolot'* 'to fuck', *govno* 'shit', *zhopa* 'arse', *srat'* 'to defecate', etc

Among the set expressions of this kind used by Zinoviev are the following: *ni khuya* 'not a bloody thing' (literally: not a prick); *poshel na khui* 'go to hell!' (literally: go to prick); *khui s nim* 'to hell with him' (literally: prick is with him); *na koi khui* 'for what bloody reason' (literally: for what prick); *poslat' na khui* 'to send somebody to the devil' (literally: to send somebody to the prick); *za kakim khuem* 'for what bloody purpose' (literally: for what prick).

Though Zinoviev is not original in introducing 'unprintable' words into literature, he uses them far more often than most modern Russian writers. He is certainly overdoing it, but he nevertheless succeeds in giving a true representation of living Russian unofficial colloquial speech. As N. Rubinshtein noticed, 'all this loo, faecal and blunt obscene terminology cannot be explained just by Zinoviev's naughtiness and desire to shock. Zinoviev issued a book for which he could pay at any moment with his life . . . Obscene vocabulary forever removed outside the brackets of official word usage remains the last fortress of the free Russian work' (Rubinshtein, 1977, pp. 154–5).

Zinoviev's usage of 'unprintable' words is in itself a protest against the restrictions of Soviet life and an appeal for more freedom. The extent of puristic prudishness in the official Soviet literature is not fully realised in the West. A leading Soviet lexicographer O. N. Trubachev who translated M. Vasmer's Russian etymological dictionary from German into Russian revealed that he was forced by the publishing house to omit from his translation several entries for obscene words. V. A. Zvegintsev, the editor of the volume, explained in his introductory article that such words 'can be the subject of consideration only for narrow scholarly circles' (Trubachev, 1978, p. 21). The word *govno*, 'shit' which appeared in V. Mayakovsky's poem 'Vo ves' golos' for 37 years, was suddenly replaced in a 1967

edition by a more neutral word *der'mo* with the same meaning. V. Aksenov wrote: 'I do not understand purists fighting for the expulsion of jargon and other modern creations and expressions from the language of *belles-lettres*. It is the same as to drink every day only distilled water and to despise soup' (Aksenov, 1967, pp. 89–90). Notwithstanding protests and facts of current Russian usage the official Soviet line remains the same as it was formulated long ago: 'We have to wage a decisive fight against argotisms and jargonisms. Our vocabulary is varied and rich, it can express any thought without such words. Jargonisms and argotisms do not make thoughts clearer, they obscure them; they do not enrich, but litter our literary language' (Galkina-Fedoruk *et al.*, 1958, p. 68).

Zinoviev's 'unprintable' vocabulary is varied and rich. Only a small part of it is reflected even in specialised Russian dictionaries (e.g. Flegon, 1973; Carpovich, 1976) and it certainly presents a problem in the translation of Zinoviev's books from Russian.

In many of his writings Zinoviev uses as a powerful stylistic device the representation of incorrect Russian speech of Soviet leaders, his own half-educated colleagues, and ordinary Russian people. Stalin in his novels speaks Russian with a strong Georgian accent. In *Zheltyi dom* Stalin is represented as a person who speaks normative Russian without any accent (*ZhD*, I, p. 257). But at a certain point, when he has to become absolute ruler of the USSR, Stalin decides to cultivate a Georgian accent, because the Russian people will aceept only a foreigner as their new tsar. A Georgian is a kind of a foreigner for Russians (*ZhD*, II, p. 292).

Both Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's speech is represented true to life as dialectical Russian. Dialectical speech becomes a necessary feature of all their successors (*ZV*, pp. 450, 455, 557; *ZhD*, II, p. 232) to such an extent that some of them work hard to acquire a Georgian accent (*VPR*, p. 470). This type of speech of the leaders of the state is copied on all levels of Soviet bureaucracy so that the arrival of a new period in Soviet history can be unmistakenly felt by the change in the speech habits of Soviet bureaucrats (*ZhD*, II, p. 369).

The higher the rank of a Soviet official, the more difficulty he has in pronouncing correctly a foreign word.

'The term "perespectivy" means exactly the same as the term "perspektivy" but it is to be distinguished from it by the social rank of those who use it. The term "prespektivy" has acquired a still higher social rating' (*ZV*, p. 17, cf. *YH*, p. 24). Some of Zinoviev's colleagues, Soviet philosophers, are half-educated people. They are

represented as creators of such curious malapropisms as *radikulit* 'sciatica' for *ridikyul'* 'handbag' (*ZhD*, I, p. 7); *bedro dialektiki* 'the thigh of dialectics' for *yadro dialektiki* 'the core of dialectics' (*ZhD*, II, p. 19); *unyansy* (a non-existent, potential word, a derivate of the verb *unyat'* 'to stop, check') for *nyuansy* 'nuances' (*ZhD*, I, p. 25); *protivolapozhnost'* 'antithesis' (*ZhD*, I, p. 31) *kvazimut* (a potential, non-existent word with the prefix *kvazi* 'quasi' for *azimut* 'azimuth' (*ZhD*, II, p. 226); *ideya fikus* 'idea ficus' for *ideya fiks* 'idee fixe' (*ZhD*,II, p. 316); *lomanoe yaitso i vyedennyi grosh* 'a broken egg and an eaten away farthing' for *vyedennoe yaitso i lomanyi grosh* ('an eaten away egg and a broken farthing', a part of a Russian expression *eto vyedennogo yaitsa/lomanogo grosha ne stoit* it is not worth a bean (damn, brass farthing)) (*ZhD*, I, p. 34).

Foreign words are particularly difficult for such people to master. The leading ideologist once heard from an assistant the word *model'*:

> First he pronounced this word as 'mudel', then as 'model' with the accent on 'o'. Speaking at the Academy of Sciences he called on scholars to create 'modelya' (with the accent on 'ya') of our society. Linguists proved the correctness of such usage, referring to the army usage ('nadet' shinelya') and industry usage ('vvesti v stroi moshchnostya') (*VPR*, p. 135)[1]

> Academician Petin asks a junior scientific worker how the word 'sex' is translated into Russian and gets the answer that it is translated by itself. Afterwards, in his speech on the problem of sex, Petin, not knowing what to call it, blushed and pointed with his finger at the place where his sexual organ was situated (*ZhD*, II, p. 26)

The most hated category of people for Soviet bureaucrats are intellectuals. The bureaucrats pronounce the work *intelligent* in all kinds of ways: *antillegent* (*ZV*, p. 380), *intelixent* (*ZNS*, p. 25), *initelixent* (*ZNS*, p. 44). A real pearl among Zinoviev's examples of this kind is *nikagnita* (for *inkognito*)[2] (*VPR*, p. 272).

When the need for contacts with the West came, the leaders of ibanizm memorised a dozen new words (*gruppa* 'group', *povedenie* 'behaviour', *integratsiya* 'integration', *stratifikatsiya* 'stratification', etc.) without really understanding their meaning (*ZV*, p. 434).

Writing in verse Zinoviev tries in most cases to recapitulate the points made already in the prose text. Many of his verses are parodies on widely known popular poetry. His 'outrageous' verses are satirical

substandard poetic creations, and often they recall such common genres as graffiti on the walls of public lavatories, *chastushki*, and verses appearing in Soviet wall newspapers. Zinoviev's verses are permeated with the obscenities, curses and expressions of colloquial Russian. The following quatrain is typical of Zinoviev's poetic language:

I dazhe zhen my ne boyalis'
I slali na kh . . . partbyury
Kogda do zmiya nadiralis'
Kakoi-to s gradusom mury' (*VPR*, p. 465)

(And e'en our wives we did not fear;
We sent the Partburo to f——
When we got pissed as farts on "beer",
Or some such alcoholic muck)

Zinoviev's unrestricted use of substandard speech elements and obscenities is reinforced by his presentation of 'Redspeak', the Soviet official language. He cites extensively chunks of 'Redspeak' taken from Soviet political articles, speeches at meetings, textbooks on communist ideology, official documents, etc. He often demonstrates the emptiness of content in Soviet cliches by quoting pieces of hackneyed phrases: *Aktual'nye problemy marksistsko-leninskoi teorii v svete* . . . 'Topical problems of marxist – leninist theory in the light of . . . ' (*ZhD*, I, p. 116); *s polnoi otdachei* . . . 'with complete dedication' (*ZhD*, I, p. 49); *Partiya i Pravitel'stvo* . . . *ves' sovetskii narod* 'the Party and the Government . . . the whole Soviet people . . . ' (*ZhD*, I, p. 49); *My zakleimili nezdorovye nastroeniya i vzyali na sebya povyshennye obyazatel'stva* 'We held up to shame unhealthy opinions and pledged ourselves to higher obligations' (*ZhD*, II, p. 79); *Prinyali privetstviya. Vzyali obyazatel'stva. Vstali na vakhtu.* 'We accepted greetings. We pledged ourselves to obligations. We undertook a special stint.' (*ZNS*, p. 49) (cf. the analysis of this subject in Roche, 1982).

Such phrases combined with funny words coined by Zinoviev produce a strong comic impression:

'Rybolovy Ibanyuchya perevypolnili plan lovli mokrozhopusa (novyi sort ryby vyvedennyi ibanskimi uchenymi) vdvoe'

'The fishermen of Ibanyuch'e twice over-fulfilled the target for mokrozhopus (a new kind of fish bred by Ibanskian scholars)'

(mokrozhopus – literally; 'wet arse') (ZNS, p. 50).

'vystupaya po televideniyu, Vozhd' skazal, chto v druzhestvennom nam Ebipte rastut baboeby, sredi kotorykh gulyayut ebipopotamy. On vse pereputal, skazal po semu povodu norab, gotovivshii rech'. Vo pervykh, ne v Ebipte, a v Efiopii, vo-vtorykh, ne baboeby, a ebo-baby. I, v tret'ikh, ne ebipopotamy, a ebimoty. Kha-kha-kha!'

'Speaking on television, the chief said that in friendly Ebypt baboebs grow, and among them ebipopotams are strolling. Norab (the nomenclature official), who prepared the speech, said in connection with this that the chief muddled up everything. First, it was not Ebypt but Ebiopia, second, they were not baboebs, but ebobabs. And third, they were not ebipopotams, but ebimots. Kha-kha-kha!' (*VPR*, p. 315).

The comical effect is built here on the allusion to the Russian word *ebat* 'to fuck'; *Ebypt* and *Ebiopa* stand for *Egipet* and *Efiopiya*; *baboeby* and *ebobaby* (literally: woman-fuckers) for *baobaby* 'baobabs'; *ebipopotamy* for *gippopotamy* 'hippopotamuses' and *ebimoty* for *begemoty* 'hippopotamuses').

It was already noticed that Zinoviev is an accomplished master of humoristic discourse, of Russian anecdote – to such a degree that his humour seems to be not his own creation, but material overheard by him in Russian intellectual circles. Unofficial Russian folklore is thus truly represented in Zinoviev's works (Rubinshtein, 1977, p. 170).

The use of significant or telling names is a long-established device in satirical literature. Zinoviev creates a whole world around the name 'Iban' which is an allusion both to the commonest Russian name *Ivan* and the word *ebannyi* 'fucked'. A number of derivatives of this name are made by Zinoviev; Ibanova, ibanets, ibanizm, ibanskii, antiibanskii, vseibanskii, obshcheibanskii, drevneibanskii, podibanskii, po-ibanskomu, ibanolog, ibanoved, ibarnik, ibanist, Ibanyuchka, Ibanka, Ibatyansk, Zaiban, Zaiban'e, Zaibanchik, Nad-Ibansk, Pod-Ibansk, Ibany, Ibanuli. Each of these words has its own comic associations, e.g. *ibarniki izmaticheskogo truda* (for *udarniki kommunisticheskogo truda* 'shock-workers (udarniks) of communist labour', *mashina marki 'Ibanuli'* (for *mashina marki Zhiguli* 'a car of the brand 'Zhiguli'), the river Ibanyuchka (resembling the word *vonyuchka* 'stinker'). In fact, by *ibanski* (literally: 'fucked') Zinoviev means 'Soviet' and by making constant use of the large family of

derivatives of *Iban* he creates in *Ziyayushchie vysoty* an atmosphere of mockery of the Soviet way of life.

By capitalising the initial letter of common nouns Zinoviev creates a host of names for his dramatis personae. Some of them relate to the function or profession of a person: *Khozyain* 'Master', *Vozhd'* 'Leader', *Zaveduyushchii* 'Manager', *Zamestitel'* 'Deputy', *Pomoshchnik* 'Assistant', *Sekretar'* 'Secretary', *Khudozhnik* 'Painter', *Sotrudnik* 'Official', *Zhurnalist* 'Journalist'. Other names sound like nicknames: *Boltun* 'Chatterbox', *Krikun* 'Bawler', *Mazila* 'Dauber', *Klevetnik* 'Slanderer', *Khryak* 'Hog', *Zhaba* 'Toad', *Lapot* 'Simpleton', *Lopukh* 'Fool', *Nytik* 'Whiner', *Chlen* 'Prick', but also an allusion to *Chlen Kommunisticheskoi partii* 'Member of the Communist party', *Chlenik* 'Little Prick', *Patriot* 'Patriot, *Ubiitsa* 'Murderer', *Stukach* 'Informer', *Pochvoed* 'Earth Eater', a potential Russian word, an allusion to *pochvoed* 'soil scientist', *Pogonyala* 'Driver, Teamster', *Zhlob*, 'Lout', *Dvurushnik* 'Double-dealer,' *Pevets* 'Singer', *Raspashonka* 'Baby's Loose Jacket', *Pravdets* 'Truth Teller', *Brat* 'Brother', etc.

It is easy for an experienced Soviet reader to establish that *Khozyain* – is Stalin, *Khryak* – Khrushchev, *Zaveduyushchii* – Brezhnev, *Pravdets* – Solzhenitsyn, *Dvurushnik* – Sinyavskii, *Pevets* – Galich, *Raspashonka* – Evtushenko.

Zinoviev's heroes operate in a world having corresponding toponyms: *Khozyaiskaya ulitsa* 'Stalin Street' (afterwards renamed *Zaveduyushchevskaya ulitsa* = 'Brezhnev Street'); *Zabegalovka* 'Snack Bar' (a common designation for a place where vodka can be found); *Sortir* 'loo'; *Starobab'e Kladbishche* 'Cemetery for Old Women' (an allusion to a real Moscow toponym *Novodevich'e Kladbishche*, literally: 'new girls' cemetery'; *ulitsa tovarishcha Yagoditsyna* 'street after the name of comrade Yagoditsyn', renamed *ulitsa tovarishcha Pupenko* (it is a scathing critique of the Soviet practice of naming streets after Soviet officials; *Yagoditsyn* (of *yagoditsy* 'buttocks') and *Pupenko* (of *pup* 'navel') are telling names, which in reality do not exist); *pereulok Klary Tsytskin* (should be *pereulok Klary Tsetkin* as in Soviet reality, but Zinoviev wants to be funny, *tsytski* 'tits'; *Tsarskoe selo* (literally: 'Tsar's village', Zinoviev alludes to *Rublevo*, a village near Moscow where members of the Soviet ruling élite have their dachas).

Some of Zinoviev's characters occur in more than one of his books, and they may have variant names: *Pravdets, Lapot'* (ZV) – *Pravdetsov, Laptev* (VPR) *Portyan* (an allusion to *portyanka* 'puttee') (ZV)

– *Portyanov – Poluportyantsev* (ZhD); *Tvarzhinskaya* (ZhD, a reference both to *tvar'* 'creature' (pejoratively) and *Dzerzhinskii* – the first head of the Soviet secret police, the Cheka; the character in question being an old established agent of Soviet security) – *Stvarzhinskaya* (*VPR*).

Sometimes Zinoviev's Moscow colleagues–philosophers appear in his books under their own names, e.g. the well-known Soviet philosopher *Oizerman*, but usually under names that can be guessed only by people in the know (e.g. *Voroshillo* for *Voishvillo*, *Tvarzhinskaya/Stvarzhinskaya* for *Modrzhinskaya*, etc.) All the evidence suggests that Zinoviev himself is represented as a combination of several characters: *Klevetnik* 'Slanderer', *Krikun* 'Bawler', *Shizofrenik* 'Schizophrenic', *Boltun* 'Chatterbox', although *Boltun* 'Chatterbox' is perhaps the author's friend Pyatigorskii. All of this means that Zinoviev's books cannot be read as *romans-à-clef* unless one knows Zinoviev's background. Zinoviev is highly patronising when he plays with Georgian and Turkic family names: *Sheyavyyarazve* (for *Shevardnadze*; Sheyavyyarazve *literally means 'neck-neck-if', vyya* being the obsolete Russian word for *sheya* 'neck'); *Kvachkharakeriya* (for *Kvachkhakariya*; where *kvach* is apparently an allusion to the German word *Quatsch* 'Rubbish, nonsense' and *kharakeri* to the Russian word *kharakiri* 'hari-kiri'), *Sun'khuimulyukov* (for *seiful'mulyukov*, *sun'khui* = 'push the prick') (all of these names in Zinoviev's *VPR*); *Lomai-Sarai-Kirpich-Ugly* (an allusion to some non-existent Azeri surname, ending in *ogly*, the whole surname is nonsensical and means 'break the shed, bricks and corners') (in *ZV*).

Among other Zinoviev creations are *Don Iguan* (for *Don Zhuan* 'Don Juan', an allusion to the Russian word *iguana* 'iguana'); *Matrenadura* (*Matrena*, a common Russian female name, plus *dura* 'fool', *Lebedev – Stukach* (for *Lebedev – Kumach*, a Soviet poet, author of texts of Soviet patriotic songs, with *Kumach* 'red calico', from which red Soviet flags are made replaced by *stukach* 'informer' (in *ZhD*), *Tetya Khlyupa – tetya Tyapa* (name of a character who works as a charwoman, meaning 'aunt Squelch – aunt Snatch).

Zinoviev mocks the Soviet practice of renaming hundreds of towns after the names of current Soviet leaders. So from the name *Vozhd'* the following names are generated: *Vozhdyansk*, *Vozhdegrad*, *Vozhderadze*, *Vozhde-Kuru-khuralarly*, *Vozhdegadan*, *Vozhdet'mutarakansk*, *Vozhdeissykurdyuk* (*VPR*, pp. 9–10).

It is enough to substitute in this list *Stalin* for *Vozhd'* 'leader' in order to see that Zinoviev does not exaggerate. The following are the

names of bigger Soviet towns named after Stalin during his rule: *Stalinabad* in Tadzhikistan (now Dushanbe), *Stalingrad* in Russia (now Volgograd), *Staliniri* in Georgia (now Tskhinvali), *Stalino* in the Ukraine (now Lugansk) plus three more towns with the same name *Stalino* in various parts of the USSR. All such places have since been renamed, but during Stalin's times their proliferation was so great that several towns were simply called *imeni Stalina* 'in the name of Stalin'. Zinoviev's list of town names with the element *vozhd'* 'leader' contains *Vozhdegadan* (alluding to *Magadan*, the place of exile of Soviet political prisoners), *Vozhdet'mutarakansk* (alluding to *Tmutarakan'*, the symbol of the deep Russian provinces), *Vozhdeissykurdyuk* (where *Issyk* is the name of a small town in Kazakhstan and *Kurdyuk* is 'fatty tail of certain breeds of sheep').

In VPR (p. 517) Zinoviev suggest that a town be named *Brazhnyansk* after the Soviet leader of Brazhnin (evidently Zinoviev means *Brezhnev*; *Brazhnin* is derived from *braga* 'brew'). In *ZhD* he describes the future of the West European toponymy under communist rule: Paris will be called *Marshensk*, Rome – *Togliatti* and Venice – *Berliguentsia* after the respective communist leaders. He ridicules the practice common in the 1920 to 1930s of naming babies after communist leaders. One of his negative characters is a *Vladilen Marlenovich*, where *Vladilen* is formed of *Vladimir Lenin* and *Marlen* after *Marks* and *Lenin* (*ZhD*, I, p. 318).

Zinoviev's ingenuity is considerable when it comes to the coinage of words. The introduction of artificial words is a practice common to satirical literature in all languages. The most famous of Zinoviev's creation is perhaps *shirli – myrli* possibly alluding to the word *shirpotreb* 'consumer goods' but also to *shury – myry* 'love affairs' and *khuinya – muinya* 'rubbish'. *Shirli – myrli* is some kind of product, but the word remains undefined (*ZV*). Zinoviev's scholarly background is vividly represented in his fascination with the variety of new words that can be created with the second element – *logiya*: *sonologiya* (*son* 'sleep'), *spunologiya* (*spun* 'sleepy-head'), *ideolologiya*, *idiotologiya*, *poshlelogiya* (*poshlyi* 'vulgar'), *pribavkologiya* (*pribavka* 'a second helping'), *dobavkologiya* (*dobavka* 'a second helping'), *myasologiya* (*myaso* 'meat'), *matologiya* (*mat* 'foul language'), *ibanologiya* (instead of *Sovetologiya* 'Sovietology') (*ZV*), *inakologiya* (*inakomyslyashchii* 'dissident'), *zubologiya* (*zub* 'tooth' *VPR*).

He creates such pseudoscientific terms as *kibenematika* (Russian colloquial *kibenemat'* = *k ebannoi materi* – the commonost vulgar

Russian curse), *dubalektika* (for *dialektika* 'dialetics', *dub* 'blockhead'), *guboterapiya* (*guba* 'military prison' plus *terapiya* 'therapy'), *blyambing* (some imaginary machine, an allusion to both *blyuming* 'blooming mill' and *blyamba* 'bump'), *sinkhrofazotsiklobetatronnyi prolazyr* (some imaginary technically advanced device, an allusion to both *lazer* 'lazer' and *prolaza* 'swindler') (*ZV*), *loyalin* (a medicine to test or instil loyalty), *soznatorii* (modelled after *sanatorii* 'sanatorium' but in fact meaning a Soviet psychiatric institution for brainwashing dissidents, *soznanie* 'consciousness') (*VPR*).

Among portmanteau words coined by Zinoviev are *muddurak* (*mudak* 'fool' plus *durak* 'fool'), *zemleprokhodimets* (*zemleprokhodets* 'explorer' plus *prokhodimets* 'rogue') *dyavolekticheskii* (*dyavol* 'devil' plus *dialekticheskii* 'dialectical', *darmakhoz* (*darmoed* 'parasite' plus *kolkhoz*) (*ZV*), *snovizor* (*son* 'sleep' plus *televizor* 'TV set'), *Suslikhuita* (*Suslikov*, name of a Soviet leader, plus *khui* 'penis' plus *syuita* 'suite'), *babulerina* (*babulya* 'grandmother' plus *balerina* 'ballerina'), *sochek* (*Sovetskii* 'Soviet' plus *chelovek* 'man') (*SB*).

Among the stylistic devices used by Zinoviev is the ascription of certain meanings that are valid only within the context of one book. Hence, the word *bratyiya* 'fraternity' (a member of which is called by Zinoviev *brat* 'brother') is systematically used instead of the word *partiya* 'the (Communist) party (of the USSR)', (*bratiinyi* instead of *partiinyi*, *bezbratiinyi* instead of *bespartiinyi*, *antibratiinyi* instead of the *anti-partiinyi*, etc.) (*ZV*)

In the same book, the word *mal'chik* has not only its usual meaning 'boy, young man', but also 'a KGB informer' (*ZV*, p. 436 and also *SB*, p. 148). Similarly, *devochka* means not only 'girl' but also a KGB informer' (*ZV*, p. 468).

As Russian bureaucratic speech abounds in abbreviations, Zinoviev creates in his satirical descriptions of the Soviet way of life a lot of his own coinages of this type, many of them with a comic subtext: *VSHIVTS* (cf. *vshivets* 'lice-ridden'), *SRAK* (cf. *srak* 'arse'), *PUP* (cf. *pup* 'navel'), *PIZ* (cf. *pizda* 'cunt'), *ZHOP* (cf. *zhopa* 'arse') (ZV); *TRIPE* (cf. *tripper* 'gonorrhoea') (*VPR*, *OON* (for *KGB*, *OON-Obshchestvo Okhrany Naroda* 'Society for the Defence of People', cf. the Russian *OON-Organizatsiya Ob"edinennykh Natsii* 'United Nations Organization') (*ZNS*).

Some of Zinoviev's abbreviations are formed according to the pattern of so-called 'sandwich words': *Mosplodfruktdryan'yagoda* (*Mosplodfruktyagoda* is an actual name meaning 'The Moscow Organization for selling Fruits and Berries'; Zinoviev inserts into it the

word *dryan'* 'rubbish') (*SB*), p. 25) *SOPKHAMBO* (*SAMBO* is the Russian abbreviation for *samooborona bez oruzhiya* 'self-defence without weapons', a Russian kind of martial art, Zinoviev inserts into it the word *kham* 'boor' and gives it a new interpretation: 'self defence without weapons against boorishness') (*ZNS*, p. 99).

Linguistic techniques used by Zinoviev, like those in the works of other modern Russian satirical writers – V. Erofeev, V. Voinovich, Yu. Aleshkovsky and others, serve as an 'anti-language' protest against the restricted and dull Soviet official language with its slogans and stock phrases. Zinoviev's language is undoubtedly a close reflection of the patterns of colloquial usage in certain circles of Soviet intellectuals and parts of his works often sound like pieces of mass Russian folklore. But language is only a means for Zinoviev to convey his sociological message.[3]

Notes

1. In normative Russian *modeli* is the correct plural form of the word *model'* 'model'. The normative forms are *nadet' shineli* 'to put on greatcoats' and *vvesti v stroi moshchnosti* 'to put capacities into action'.
2. *Nikagnita* is an artificial word resembling the Russian *nikogo* 'nobody'.
3. I am grateful to G. S. Smith, N. Rubinshtein, M. Kirkwood and A. Donde for their comments on the first variant of this chapter.

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8 The Drawings and Paintings

Tomasz Mianowicz

Until recently Alexander Zinoviev was not widely known as a painter. It is probable that not all his readers knew that his book covers were reproductions of his own paintings. He had exhibited his works twice (in Lausanne in 1980 and Paris in 1982), limiting his selection to drawings, small gouaches and water-colours. The first broad review of Zinoviev's pictorial art was the exhibition held in the 'Galerie der Zeichner' in Munich in the summer of 1984. In 1985 he also showed his paintings in Senago near Milan. On that occasion a substantial catalogue was printed, which contained 115 reproductions of Zinoviev's drawings and paintings.

Many of Zinoviev's works are linked to the subjects of his books; some drawings or paintings can be viewed as illustrations of his novels. This is why I have chosen to concentrate on those titles which clearly connect his paintings with his books and the characters contained in them.

In the introduction of the catalogue Zinoviev explains the reasons for something which we notice when analysing his artistic *œuvre*. This is that his personality as a painter is not fully developed or – to be more precise – his drawings (chiefly caricatures and cartoons) in pencil, ink and indian ink and likewise his small gouaches and water-colours are far more accomplished in formal terms than his oil paintings. This cannot be explained simply by the greater simplicity of the technique used in the former. It seems to be a question of practice; Zinoviev started to draw in school and his pictures were pinned on the school notice-board. Afterwards he drew caricatures during his years at university, in military services and in his professional career. As he says himself, he did 'thousands of caricatures'.[1] Later he drew cartoons from everyday life and portraits of his acquaintances. After emigrating to the West, however, he has painted mostly in oil. We can therefore divide Zinoviev's art into two groups: (1)drawings in ink, indian ink, pencil and also gouaches, water-colours and mixed media; (2)oil paintings, which can be divided into several sub-classes.

There are perhaps two kinds of picture most closely related to his novels: the caricatures and the scene from Moscow life. In his Moscow caricatures Zinoviev depicted people from his environment who were representatives of the Soviet intellectual élite. For both exhibitions – in Munich and in Senago – Zinoviev provided each of his caricatures with a title (sometimes a different one from the original) which endows them with a supra-individual meaning. 'Stalinist', 'Liberal', 'Oppositionist', 'Illegal Poet', 'Optimist', 'Careerist', 'Artist' therefore become examples of a given group within Soviet society and can be seen as illustrations for Zinoviev's novels (if 'novels' is the correct term to apply). The author employs the same method in his caricatures and novels – personages or characters, who have their prototypes in real life, are provided with key-names. In some cases an individual can be identified as the model – in the pictures as well as in the novels – provided that one knows Zinoviev's environment or intellectual milieu in Moscow.

Two drawings constitute a satirical retort to Solzhenitsyn. The first is 'The Future of Russia from the Russian Point of View': it shows the bowed-down Truth-Teller, in patched slippers, breeches and cloak, with a balalaika in one hand and a cross of two knotted branches in the other, wearing a tsar's crown, topped, however, with a five-pointed star. He is treading along the Soviet border, bristling with tanks and missiles. Is he going into exile, or is he returning to the Fatherland? The second drawing, in indian ink, is the 'Prophet'. Neither work presents any difficulty in interpretation; in his books Zinoviev criticises, not without mockery, Solzhenitsyn's views on Soviet society. This critical response to Solzhenitsyn's perception of Soviet reality – and not the esteem for his moral position (which Zinoviev has expressed elsewhere) – evidently inspired both pictures.

In the first main group we can distinguish a sub-class – scenes from Soviet everyday life , of which the following are examples: 'Morning in a Moscow Sobering-Up Station', 'Party Meeting', 'Holidays', 'Guests'. These works also present a picture of Soviet society; Zinoviev tries to show various cells of the collective in different situations of private or professional life. In this group the same spirit dominates as in Zinoviev's novels: derision, grotesqueness and irony.

Some of the drawings contained in the catalogue are symbolic or prophetic. 'Rats' (the second version of which illustrates the cover of *The Reality of Communism*) depicts the relation existing between citizens living under the communist system; it is one of Zinoviev's most powerful images, conveying a subtle idea in a simple, formally

balanced and lucid design: two more or less identical rats, tails entwined and teeth bared, grasp one another simultaneously by the hand and by the throat. 'To the Congress in the West' shows an old hag provided with talons and pistols – this is a symbolic representation of the intentions of the Soviet Union in sending delegates to meetings in Western countries. There are also two rather lightweight visions of the future: 'Moscow in 50 Years' shows a Muslim-ised Ibansk, and 'The Soviet Army in the West' shows a lop-eared, country-bumpkin Soviet army conscript bewildered by the vista of flyovers and skyscrapers in the land he has (presumably) conquered.

Zinoviev drew many caricatures of Soviet leaders: Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev. As seen by Zinoviev they are not menacing – not even Stalin – but funny. The menace appears in his oil painting, a medium we shall deal with later. Worth mentioning is the absence of caricatures of Andropov, Chernenko, or Gorbachev. In my view this is not an accidental omission. Zinoviev, after his departure to the West, lost both his natural environment and his object of observation ('In the West I am a fish out of water'[2] he says in his interview with George Urban). In his preface to the catalogue Zinoviev writes: 'Faces in the West somehow do not interest me'.[3] We are confronted at this point with an important topic: the evolution of Zinoviev's intellectual attitude after he emigrated. His departure to the West also brought about a change in the themes of his paintings and consequently a change in technique; as I mentioned before, in the West Zinoviev paints mainly in oil.

His oil paintings differ from the works I have discussed above in another iconographic feature. The mood of this medium is different; it is dominated by a ghastly atmosphere and grim symbols. No doubt this is due to the dark shades in many of the works. But it is difficult to say how far this is a conscious choice of the author.

In an interview for 'Voice of America'[4] (which was not broadcast) Zinoviev explained that he often painted in sombre colours because at that particular moment he did not have any other paint. So we have to seek explanation for the atmosphere in Zinoviev's oil paintings by analysing their iconography.

The following motif reappears in many of his works: heavy, rectangular housing blocks, robbed not only of all ornamentation but also of any architectural divisions. This is undoubtedly an association with the block-style building of communism, which is the same everywhere from Hanoi to East Berlin. Apartment buildings in the Soviet systems are characterised, above all, by a lack of individuality.

They are identical, as are the apartments they contain and indeed (Zinoviev implies) the people living in them.

This is the communist collective. In Zinoviev's paintings it is not the Soviet leaders who pose the threat, because it is not they who form the reality of communism. The threat emerges from the depersonalised machinery of the system which has long since escaped from human control. 'The Soviet Union resembles in most of its features a mechanical system',[5] Zinoviev says in his interview with Urban. 'The Spirit of the City' (known from the cover of *Zapiski nochnogo storozha* (*Notes of a Nightwatchman*), clearly illustrates the threat of communism: block houses, the symbol of the collective existence, turn into a monster.

However, there is still more in Zinoviev's paintings – the substance, as it were, of an all-embracing system: the tissue that penetrates and envelopes the buildings and the collective inhabiting them as seen in 'Cancer' and 'Rats'. In one of the chapters of *Bez illyuzii* (*Without Illusion*) the author compares this system to cancerous cells which try to transform the environment into an extension of themselves.

And now the dismal paradox of Zinoviev's vision of communist society: the painting which was called 'The Radiant Future' in the Munich exhibition, and which provided the cover design for the book of that name. In the Senago catalogue it is entitled 'Crucifixion'; Zinoviev is suggesting that the system personifies or even deifies itself. From the tissue of the house a cross emerges of which the arms are joined by the grey face-mask of the communist Moloch, and thus communism replaces the traditional symbol of religion. It is useful to cite an extract from Zinoviev's lecture on Marxist ideology and religion: 'Historically ideology appears only after religion has gathered momentum and has developed to the full. Ideology appeared as a negation of religion but based itself on the foundations of religion. . . . Ideology pushes religion out'.[6]

Closely related to this is the painting entitled 'Homo Sovieticus', both the title of the book and the identification of the author. The tissue of the buildings forms the shape of a face which dominates the picture plane. The is the face of Soviet man and the Soviet system. The buildings and the people inhabiting them, both devoid of individuality, symbolise the communist collective. This face also dominates a small architectural structure of cylindrical and perpendicular shape in the bottom right-hand corner of the painting. In it we recognise the Oberfuhring bank in Munich. It is the construction of

this building that Zinoviev watched, not yet knowing its purpose, while he was writing *Homo Sovieticus*. The various stages of construction seem to have determined the chronological structure of his novel. The narrator in *Homo Sovieticus* observes the construction of the building and pins on his hopes and expectations. They are dispelled once the edifice is completed: 'Dawn broke. I remembered my building and rushed to the window; it shone with such a rare beauty against the blue skies that it took my breath away. But what is that? In a most prominent position I saw letters which clearly read 'BANK''.[7]

The Bank, the symbol of the West, although of 'rare beauty', is small and insignificant, in this painting, against the overwhelming collective of houses. The gloomy vision of Communism crushes and pushes this symbol of wealth and the superficial appeal of materialism of the Western world almost out of the picture, in other words, into total non-existence. This is the message for the West – Communism is a system which will conquer the world and transform it into a totalitarian collective.

Zinoviev magnifies the effect of his universal vision of the system by using open composition. This creates the impression that we are only watching fragments of a continuum which is the same everywhere and never changes.

The motif of block architecture is very characteristic of the personality of Zinoviev as a painter. It appears even in pictures with a fantastic content, e.g. 'Dream', 'Fantasy'. This is just a reminiscence from the Soviet Union. Zinoviev paints Western architecture in quite a different way; it is individualised, e.g. in 'The Soviet Army in the West'. Similarly in 'Homo Sovieticus', described above, the Munich bank is a strange element, if compared with the main subject created by the block architecture.

Zinoviev points out this dominant aspect of Sovietism, namely the collectivisation of human life and the suppression of individuality, in another way. It is noticeable that in his oil paintings, except for his portraits, as a rule there are no individuals. People in these pictures are identical, deprived of any individuality, and mainly painted in grey. In the 'Attack' grey indistinct faces emerge from a backdrop of block architecture. 'CC of the CPSU' (i.e. 'Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union') is a dense mass of identical heads. In the picture 'Eternally Living' an endless line of figures, just outlined in grey, file past the glass coffin of Lenin.

The system kills any individuality. The human being is only a unit

in the collective, he is condemned to merge with other elements.

We have discussed here those of Zinoviev's works which seem to be most typical of his artistic personality and which are the most interesting iconographically. We have omitted portraits, allegoric themes and abstract pictorial efforts. I have a feeling that here Zinoviev is still seeking formal means.

My division of Zinoviev's art into two groups is based on the following criteria: chronological (first the Moscow period; second, emigration); technical (first drawings, water-colours, gouaches; second, oil paintings), and thematic (first, caricatures and cartoons; second, 'Communism as a collective system'). This classification is further justified, because each of the two groups can be related to Zinoviev's writings. The spirit of the first group corresponds with the author's novel (Michel Heller introduced the term 'zinoviada' to name them) – some caricatures can serve as their illustrations, e.g. 'Khryak' ('Hog'). On the other hand, the second group can be related to Zinoviev's political books and journalistic work, in which he described Communism as a collective system, suppressing individuality and menacing Western civilisation, which itself is founded on human liberties. So, we have two representations of the Soviet system: first, its satirical depiction based on observations of everyday life; second, its social and political diagnosis – the system as a machine which steers the communist collective.

Among Zinoviev's paintings I have not found any which could be linked to his recent, controversial statements, when he seemed to be trying to justify the crimes committed in the USSR, and called Stalinism 'the flight of our youth'. Doubtless Zinoviev is more interesting when he deals with mature totalitarianism, that is, the Soviet regime in its present form. In other words, the real value of Zinoviev's *œuvre* is the presentation of the nature of communist society, which helps us to penetrate beyond superficial interpretation of the Soviet system. His statements identifying himself with *Homo Sovieticus* are of less interest. Zinoviev's pictorial creativity, as well as his first literary works, were developed from a confrontation between individualism and the collective system. This is why it is possible to establish links between his paintings and his writings.

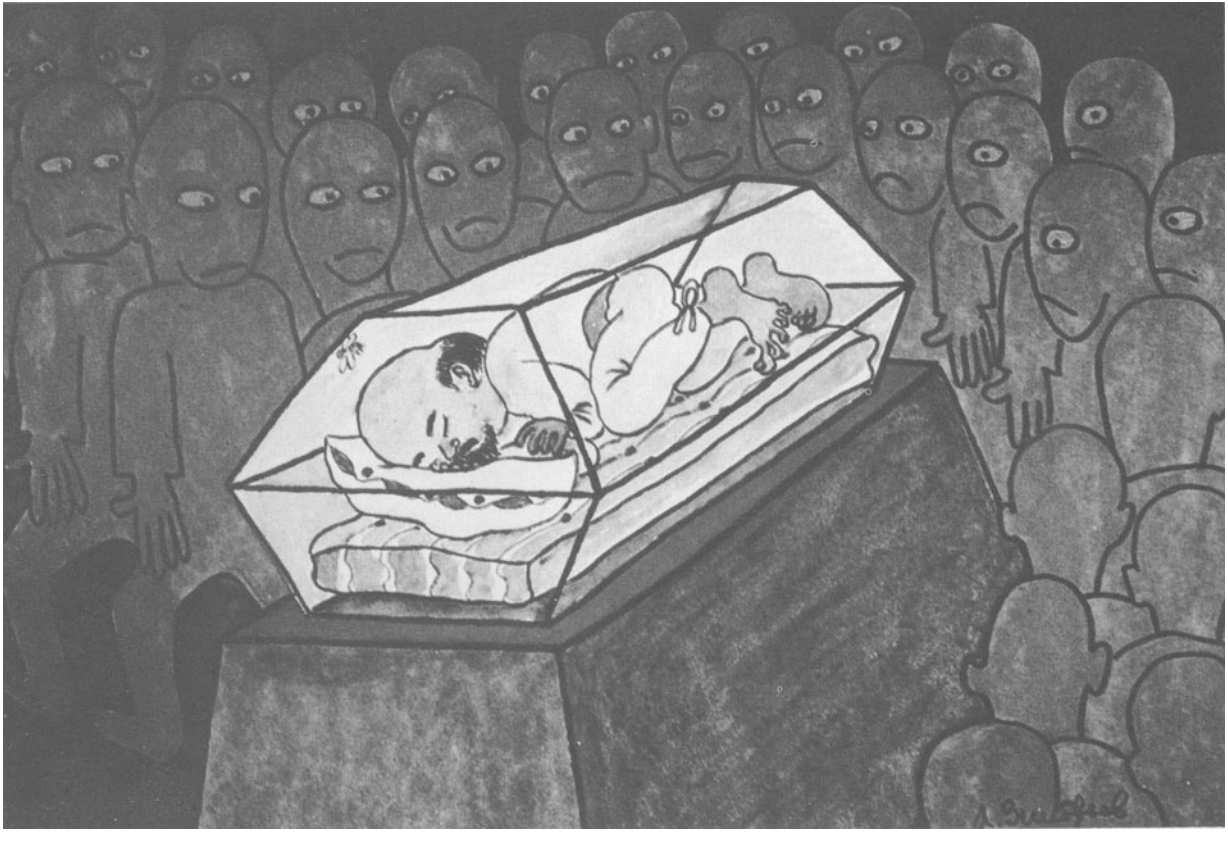
I have no intentions of disguising my criticism of Zinoviev's utterances about Stalinism, contained in *The Flight of our Youth* or in interviews given during recent years. As Michael Kirkwood has pointed out,[8] one can find some of these views in Zinoviev's earlier books. However, they appeared mainly in novels which can be

interpreted as polyphonic (Bakhtin's term seems to be correctly applied in this case); in the multiplicity of voices the author's position is not unequivocally defined. The situation changes when Zinoviev expresses a positive opinion in his own name on collectivisation or the entire Stalinist period. Maybe this change in Zinoviev's position is in part due to psychological factors: for example, nostalgia for a previous environment, or it is his eccentricity, or else it may be '*Besserwisserism*' – the superior knowledge with which he always tries to shock the public. An analysis of his pictorial creations cannot explain fully the reason for this change. Nevertheless, it may be helpful, for it is indeed the case that in Zinoviev's paintings in exile the themes of nostalgia and loneliness occur: e.g. 'Emigration', 'Nostalgia', 'Lonely Wolf'. In the same way, many of the poems in *Evangelie dlya Ivana* (*The Gospel for Ivan*) are related to the author's past.

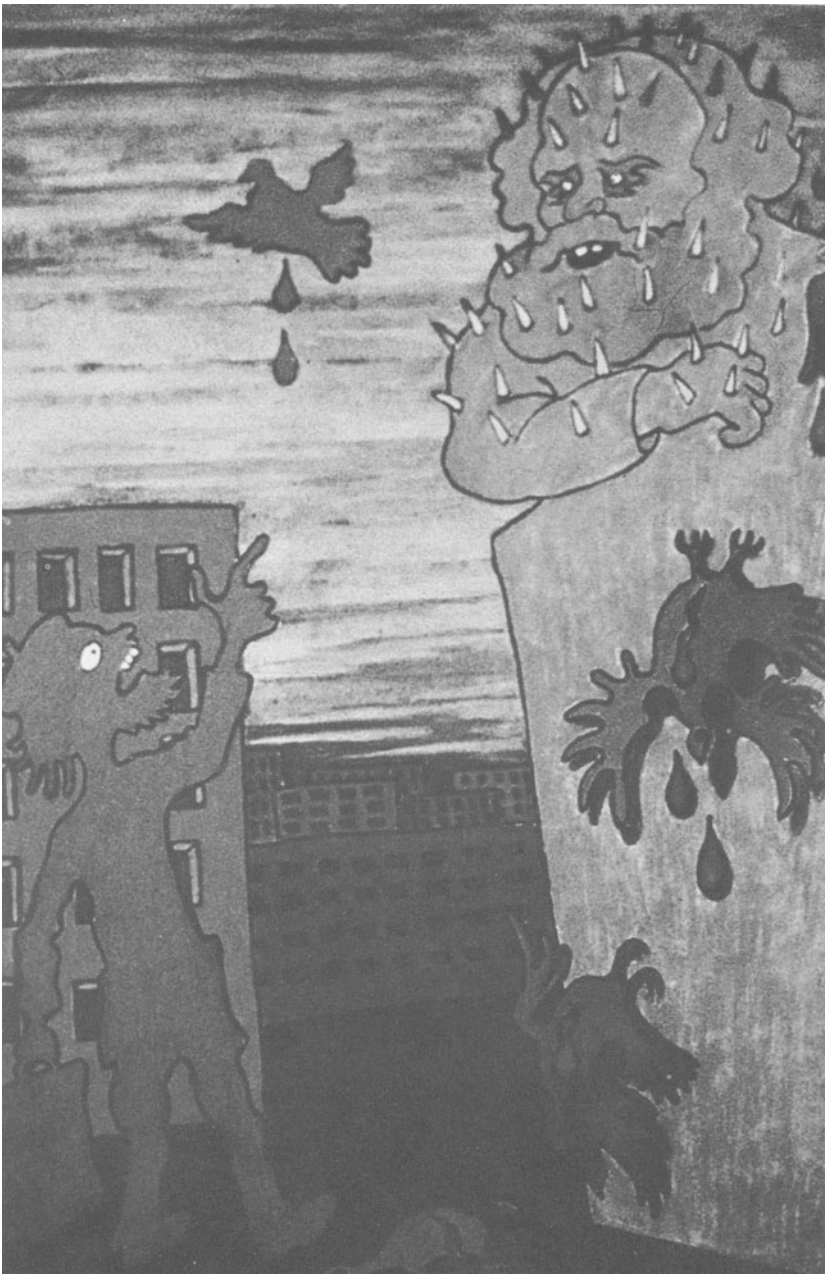
Has Zinoviev therefore entered a new phase of his creative work because, as he himself claims, there is nothing more of the Soviet system to reveal or unmask?[9] The answer to this question will be given in his subsequent books.

Notes

1. A. Zinoviev, 'Naznachit' "khudozhnikom" ('To call oneself an Artist') in *Zinoviev* (catalogue of the exhibition held in Senago, 27 May–27 July 1985) (Spirali, 1985), p. 10. Further references to the catalogue are contained in the main text.
2. G. Urban, 'A Dissenter as a Soviet Man (II). A Conversation with Alexander Zinoviev', *Encounter*, vol. 42, no. 5 (May 1984), p. 34.
3. A. Zinoviev, *Zinoviev*, p. 10.
4. An interview given in 1984 to Mrs S. Deja to whom I wish to express my gratitude for making the text available.
5. G. Urban 'Portrait of a Dissenter as a Soviet Man. A Conversation with Alexander Zinoviev', *Encounter*, vol. 42, no. 4 (April 1984), p. 16.
6. A. Zinoviev, 'Marxist Ideology and Religion' (Lecture given in Vienna, probably in 1983). I use the Polish translation published in *Archipelag*, no. 11 (July–August 1984).
7. *HS* p. 206; *GS*, p. 199.
8. See 'Stalin and Stalinism in the Works of A. A. Zinoviev', p. 198.
9. 'L'Etat Zinoviev'. Interview given to G. Nivat. *L'Express*, no. 1762, 19 April 1985.

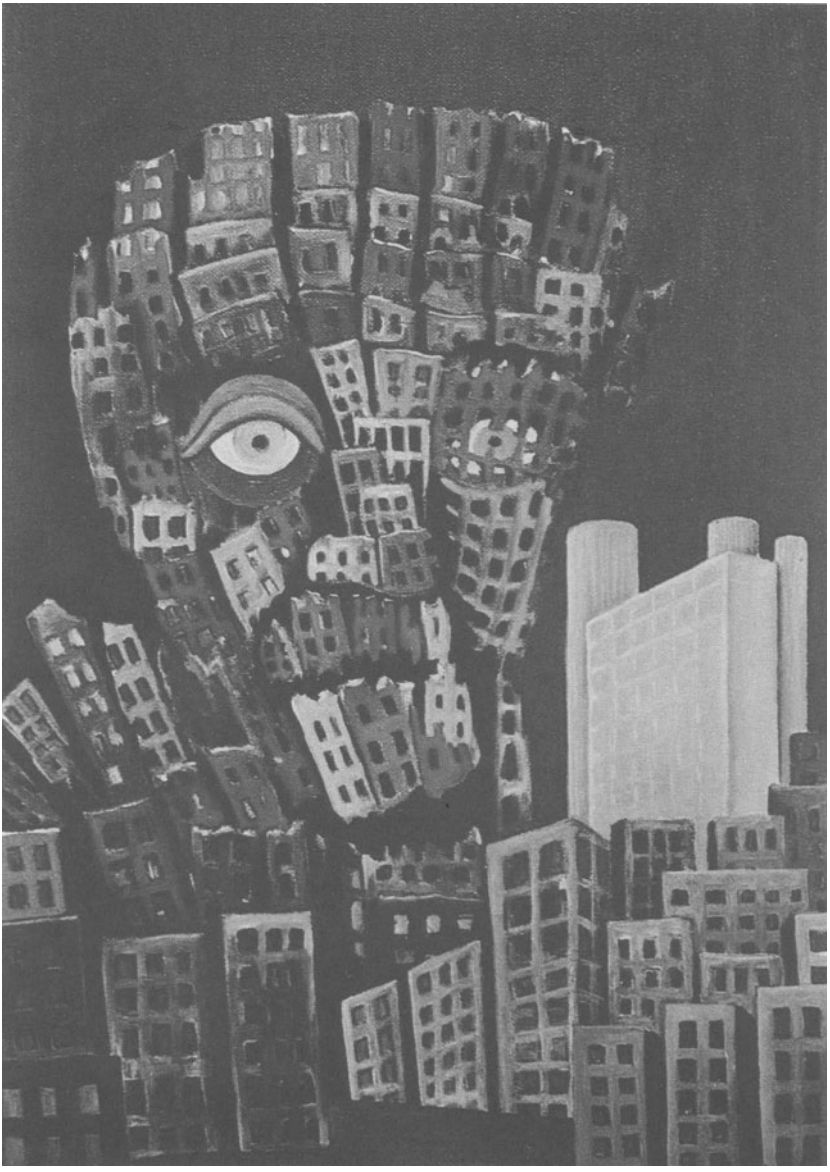


1. Eternally Living

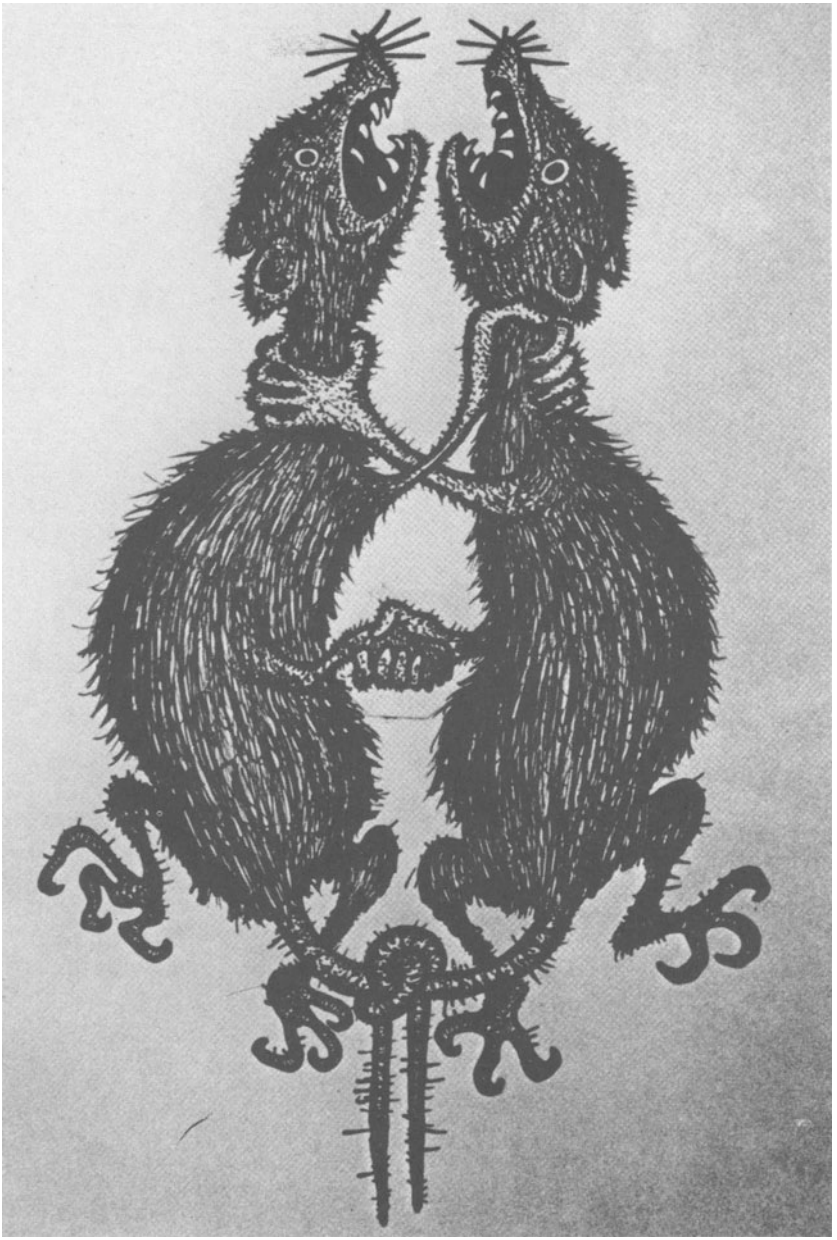


2. Marx and Doves

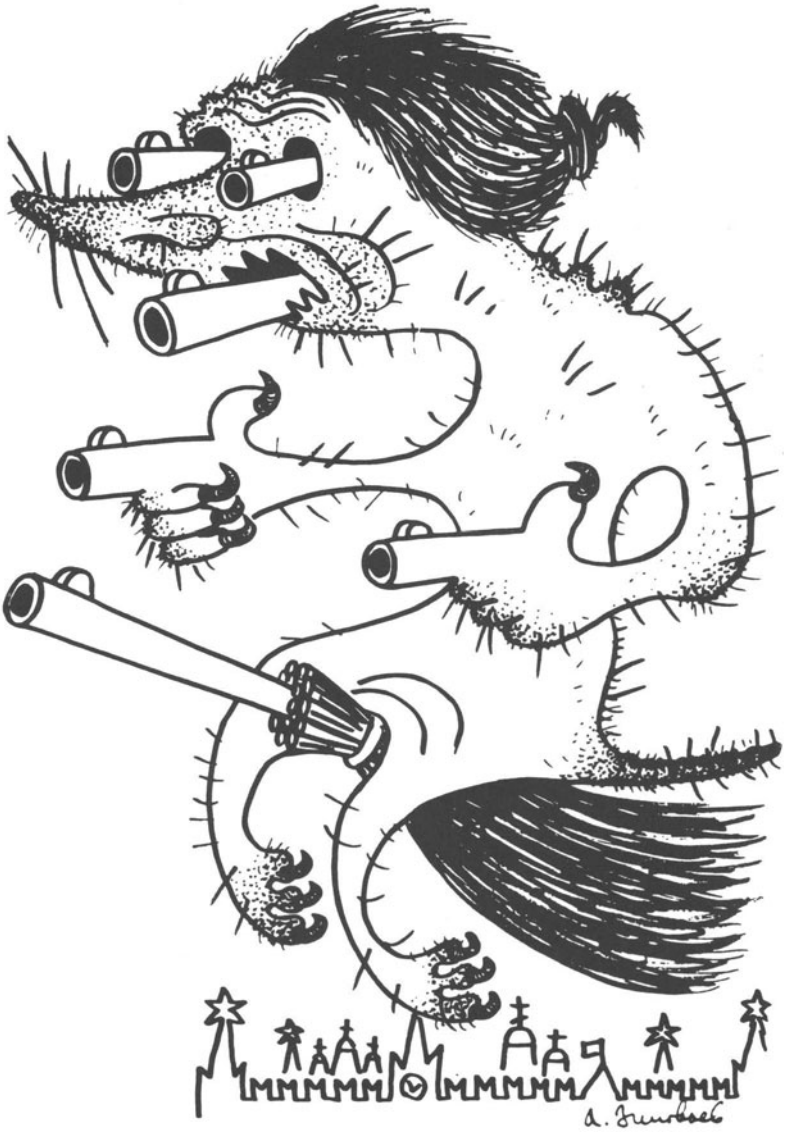
3. Report



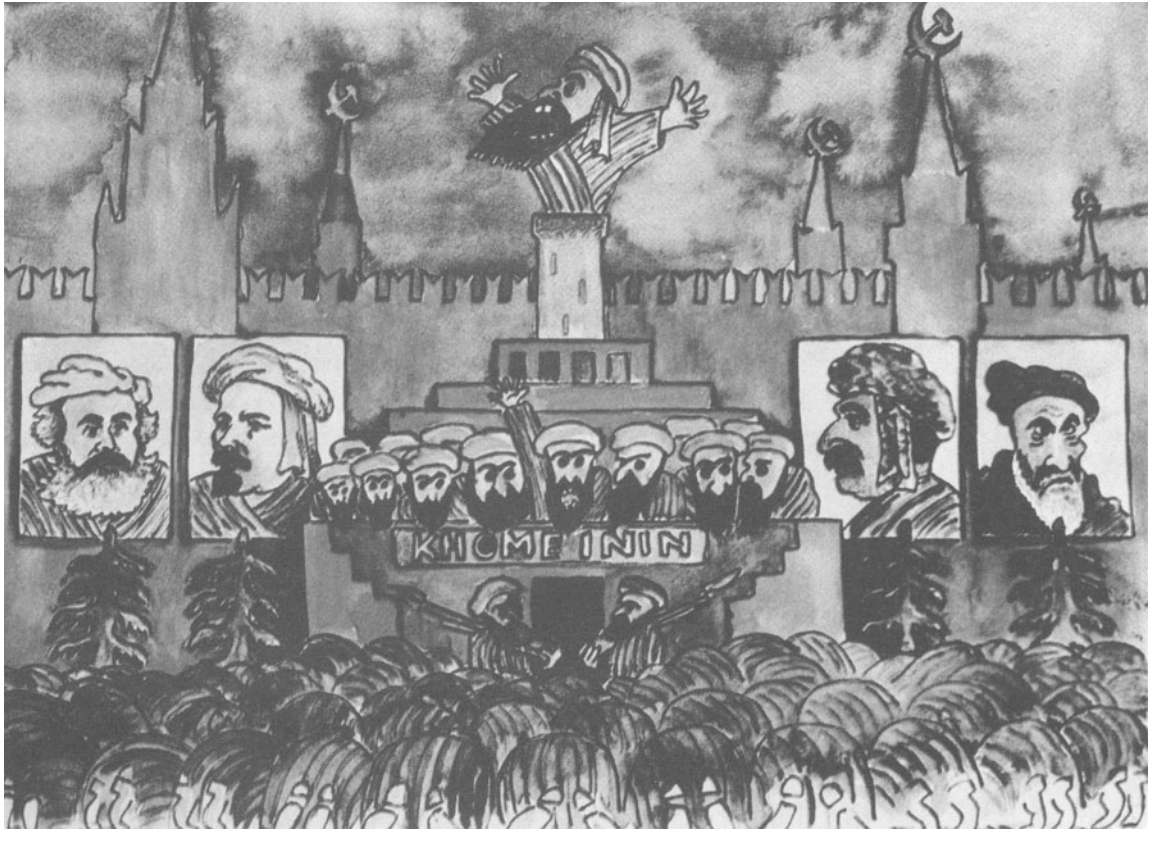
4. Homo Sovieticus



5. Rats



6. To the Congress in the West



7. Moscow in 50 years

8. The Soviet Army in the West

9 Zinoviev's Art and its Context

Julian Graffy

Zinoviev is clearly not primarily of interest to us as a painter. Yet his readers encounter him first in precisely that guise, since his Russian language publisher, L'Age d'Homme of Lausanne, has chosen to present almost all his books in identical form, with a cover consisting of one of Zinoviev's paintings in a wide white frame. This uniformity has come to play an important role – it is a sign that Zinoviev's writings are a single text, a collected works, a continuing analysis. It is regrettable that the formula was varied for *Bez illyuzii* and *Evangelie dlya Ivana*.

Are these and Zinoviev's other art-works therefore to be seen only in the context of and as adjuncts to the texts, only as illustrations? The caricature portraits are obviously of little interest unless the original is known. Caricatures of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev are clearly accessible to a Western audience. Most others are interesting only to those who have read the books or are familiar with Moscow intellectual life. When exhibited in the West with generalised titles they become almost meaningless.

The genre-scenes from Soviet life are also *illustrative*. They need their titles, and a water-colour such as 'Morning in the sobering-station'[1] requires some exegesis for Western viewers. Many of the oil paintings produced in the West, on the other hand, deal in accessible, universal iconography.

It would be interesting to consider Zinoviev's cartoons, caricatures and satirical paintings in the context of official Soviet art, as an inversion of prescriptive formulae. A vigorous Russian satirical graphic art dates from the period of the 1905 revolution, which politicised several artists and led to the appearance of dozens of short-lived satirical journals.[2] The success of the 1917 revolution, in art as in literature and other spheres, led to the paradoxical phenomenon of the institutionalisation of the formally revolutionary and subversive. Art was increasingly bureaucratised. The culmination of this development was the creation of the Academy of Arts of the USSR and the Union of Soviet Artists. In the immediate post-

revolutionary years the poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky, the cartoonist, Dmitri Moor, the painter, Mikhail Cheremnykh and others were involved in the production of the so-called *Satire Windows* and *Rosta Windows* – satire for the state. State control of art and of the means of dissemination of that art made official art, and official satirical art, not only prescriptive but ubiquitous. The phenomenon of the illustrated wall newspaper (the *stengazeta*) in Soviet institutions is alluded to in Zinoviev's description of himself as an artist (Spirali, p. 10). He recalls that his drawing of Stalin for his school wall newspaper at the age of eleven was considered so shocking that from then on he was limited to writing slogans and drawing pictures.

In the 1960s and 1970s, 'official' satire was ever-present for the Soviet citizen in the form of cartoons in newspapers, satirical journals illustrated in colour such as *Krokodil*, and the large, cheap and ubiquitious wall-posters. At the time, many of these had virulent anti-American and generally anti-Western themes. Others concerned themselves didactically with internal themes – family life, social problems such as drunkenness, efficiency at the work-place, the economy. Zinoviev's style is often strikingly reminiscent of these official cartoons, but the message is reversed, which parallels the way he uses official language. Zinoviev's rats, for example, remind us of the frequency with which animalised humans occur in official Soviet satirical art.

Equally important is an examination of Zinoviev in the context of unofficial Soviet art. The period since the death of Stalin has seen the growth of a vigorous and diverse unofficial painterly avant-garde that parallels the phenomenon of unofficial writing. Increasing access to information about and illustrations of recent developments in Western art; increased contacts with (and sales to) Western journalists and diplomats; the relative decrease in state repression of nonconformism are all factors of relevance here. Stress should be laid, however, on the word relative. A key event, indicative both of the increasing self-confidence of artists and of the limits of state tolerance, was the organisation of an unofficial open-air exhibition at Cheremushki on the outskirts of Moscow on 15 September 1974 and its bulldozing by the authorities. There is now substantial illustrative material available on Russian nonconformist art, particularly in the *émigré* journal *A-Ya*.[3] On the history of the phenomenon, see especially the articles of Igor Golomshtok and Alexander Glezer in *Unofficial Art from the Soviet Union*.[4] As an example of a thematic link between Zinoviev and nonconformist artists one might suggest

the series of satirical paintings of Stalin by Komar and Melamid.[5]

Little seems to be known about the phenomenon of unofficial cartoons. Since the means of reproduction is the photocopier and not the typewriter, the difficulties of samizdat dissemination of cartoons are clearly greater than those for literature. Many cartoons are anyway of only ephemeral interest.

Zinoviev seems to me to be a talented and resourceful cartoonist. His portraits of the leaders are amusing, particularly his Brezhnev, with eyebrows poised for flight, and clothes and even face, entirely covered in medals. *Moscow in fifty years* (Spirali, p. 114), mentioned by Mianowicz, seems to me politically pointed – this is the mausoleum of *Khomeinin*, alluding to Soviet demographic fears – witty, the hammer and sickle have become the hammer and crescent; and beautifully drawn, with Marx, Lenin and Stalin as ayatollahs.

Women are almost entirely absent from Zinoviev's cartoons, as indeed they are from the highest echelons of Soviet political life. 'To the congress in the West' (alluded to by Mianowicz, Spirali, p. 97) is a rare exception, and drawn with a savagery that reminds one of the charges of misogyny levelled against Zinoviev. This work too, however, can be seen as an *inversion* of the symbolisation of women in official Soviet art, for example in the enormous *Rodina-Mat'* (Motherland) statue outside Volgograd. The tradition of the allegorisation of women in Western art has been the subject of a fascinating recent study by Marina Warner.[6] Though in decline in the West, it remains a powerful force in Soviet art.

'Marx and doves' (Spirali, p. 58) works through the same inversion principle. It combines a key hero of official Soviet statuary and a key image of official Soviet propaganda art about peace. Doves are anyway known to have a fondness for urban statuary. But by the addition of lethal spikes all over grandfather Karl's face, hair, beard, arm, hand it makes a devastating statement about the Soviets and peace.

In the introduction to the Spirali catalogue, Elisabeth Heresch quotes Zinoviev (p. 18) as referring to the influence on him of Paul Delvaux, and herself mentions Magritte and Ernst. These choices are unsurprising, for they were among the most popular and influential 'unofficial' Western painters in the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s. Elements of their vision, particularly that of Ernst, can certainly be detected in his paintings. The Russian context, both sociopolitical and artistic, seems however to be of greater importance. As in his prose, as with the overwhelming majority of *émigré* artists and

writers, Zinoviev's concerns remain predominantly those of his own country. To quote him (Spirali, p. 10): 'In emigration I continue my activities as amateur-artist, but, of course, not as intensively as in Moscow. I have very little time. And anyway, for some reason I am not interested as a painter by western faces.'

Notes

1. Reproduced on p. 89 of *Aleksandr Zinov'ev*, catalogue of the exhibition at Senago, Italy, 27 May – 27 July 1985 (Spirali, 1985). Henceforth references to this catalogue appear in the text as Spirali.
2. On this, see Robert C. Williams, *Artists in Revolution. Portraits of the Russian avant-garde 1905–1925* (London: The Scolar Press, 1978), Chapter Three, pp. 59–80, 'Antagonism and Political Satire: the Cartoon and the Poster'.
3. *A-Ya* (Paris: A-Ya Publishers), annually since 1979.
4. London: Secker & Warburg, 1977. The book accompanied an exhibition of the same name which opened at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London on 18 January 1977.
5. Vitaly Komar and Aleksandr Melamid met at art school in Moscow and have been painting together since the mid-1960s. They emigrated in 1978. Their obsession with painting portraits of Stalin, executed in mock-Neo-Classical style, is amply illustrated in *Komar and Melamid*, Oxford, Museum of Modern Art, 1985, the catalogue of an exhibition of their work held that year in Edinburgh and Oxford.
6. Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: the Allegory of the Female Form*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985.

10 Active and Passive Negation: An Essay in Ibanskian Sociology*

Jon Elster

Logician by profession, novelist and sociologist by vocation, Alexander Zinoviev[1] has created a literary genre whose only example is his own. In order to have an idea of the specificity of his approach, one has to imagine the ferocity of Swift, the burlesque of Rabelais, the paradoxes of Lewis Carroll (like Zinoviev, a logician), the moral height of Solzhenitsyn, and the sociological intuition of Simmel. But a description by juxtaposition is perforce inadequate. In order to summarize the work of Zinoviev, I would use, rather, a comparison that would perhaps not be to the author's liking (but who knows?): He does for Soviet communism what Marx did for the capitalism of his time. Like Marx, who strove to demonstrate the mechanisms of capitalistic irrationality, Zinoviev has us enter an hallucinatory world that is, however, not a chaotic one, but one ruled by principles as irrational as they are intelligible. *Understanding the irrational:* such is the task that Zinoviev proposes. The irrational object is Soviet

*Editors' note. This chapter is the only piece in the present volume that was not written specifically for this symposium. We considered it to be well worth reprinting for its perceptive and illuminating treatment of the games played with logical propositions in Zinoviev's fiction. These games are purposeful, and are among Zinoviev's major preoccupations.

Elster's chapter was first presented in 1979 as a paper at the Ninth World Congress of Political Science in, of all places, Moscow. It was published in French in the *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, and in English in Paul Watzlawick (ed.), *The Invented Reality* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984).

Remarkably enough, the essay is based on a reading only of *Yawning Heights* and *The Radiant Future*, which were the only books by Zinoviev that were accessible to Elster at the time, apart from the translations of Zinoviev's works on logic. Elster has continued in other writings in political theory to develop some of Zinoviev's ideas – see the comments in Philip Hanson's 'Homo sovieticus among the Russian-watchers', p. 156.

The text is reproduced here exactly as it appeared in the book edited by Paul Watzlawick, except that footnotes have become end-notes and small typographical errors have been corrected.

society; the method used to study it derives in great part from formal logic. It will be seen that Zinoviev takes a place not only in the tradition of formal logic, but also, perhaps without realizing it,[2] in the lineage that includes Hegel, Marx, and Sartre. In his analysis, Soviet irrationality is not produced, as under capitalism, by the shock of incompatible and uncoordinated intentions; we are reminded, rather, of the snake that bites its own tail, of the right hand that steals from the left, of the dog that chases its shadow, or of the man who verifies the news in a newspaper by buying a second copy of the same newspaper.

From the very first page of *YH*, the reader understands what it is all about: "The objective of the measure was to discover those elements which did not approve of putting it into practice" (*YH*, p. 9). On the one hand, this idea suggests a political system stripped of content, or whose content would be its form itself; on the other hand, it is characteristic of the logical paradoxes that have upset formal logic in our century.[3] In its theoretical version, the paradigm of such a paradox is the proposition, "This proposition is false." Zinoviev suggests a more practical version: "One has to obey this order, under penalty of death." Which order? The self-reference and the infinite regression bring about a feeling of vertigo, no doubt analogous to the vague feelings of guilt that hover permanently over every citizen of Ibansk, mythic locale of *YH*. We could quote other examples of the same type,[4] but the essence of Zinoviev's idea is not there. Central to his analysis is a logical distinction between what I will call *active negation* and *passive negation*, a distinction going back as far as Kant, and that later assumed an importance crucial to modern psychiatry and psychology. Zinoviev makes a double usage of it. On the one hand, he sees in the confusion of the two forms a fundamental aspect of the irrationality of the régime; on the other hand, he uses the distinction as a conceptual tool important for the analysis of Soviet institutions. As for the first usage, we could put forth the definition that the negligence of this distinction characterizes the *primitive mentality*, by resolutely making abstraction of all other connotations that this discredited term has had in the past.[5] Whatever the fecundity of this notion might be, we shall see that, starting with the tendency to confuse the two negations, the analysis of the irrational is called for in several cases.

Starting with logical analysis, we will trace the history of the thought and arrive finally at Zinoviev. Consider the following propositions:

I. Person *A* believes statement *p* to be true [abbreviated: *A* believes *p*]:
II. It is not the case that *A* believes *p* [abbreviated: Not (*A* believes *p*)].
III. *A* believes the contrary of *p* [abbreviated: *A* believes not–*p*].

Proposition II is the passive negation of I; proposition III is its active negation. In general, the negation of formal logic is passive negation. For example, the laws of thought always invoke that form of negation. Thus the principle of contradiction "Not(I and not–I)" is to be understood as "Not(I and II)"; the principle of the excluded middle "I or not–I" understood as "I or II." The first characteristic of a primitive mentality would be, then, to accept these principles for both active negation and passive negation. Therefore one would be faced with the impossibility of simultaneously having two contradictory opinions or, in a more general sense, having an ensemble of opinions from which one can deduce a contradiction.

This conclusion—as attractive as it is fallacious—is found in several recent books[6] and even in Aristotle.[7] In an analogous manner, the primitive mentality would deny the distinction between atheism, active negation of God, and agnosticism, the passive negation.[8] Who wouldn't recognize here the, "Either you're for me or against me!" of everyday Manichaeism?

The example just given is a specific case of a larger group of problems studied in modal logic.[9] In the classic paradigm of this theory, *Np* represents the necessity of proposition *p*, and *Mp* its possibility. The passive negation of *Np* is therefore Not(*Np*), which is the equivalent of *M*(Not–*p*); the active negation is *N*(Not–*p*). Now the operatives *N* and *M* lend themselves to other interpretations, namely, the following. In *deontological logic Np* is read as, "It is mandatory to do *p*," and *Mp* as, "It is permitted to do *p*"; the distinction between active and passive shown here is important and will be taken up later on. Then there are several versions of *epistemological logic:* In the *logic of knowledge* we read *Np* as "*A* knows *p*," in the *logic of opinion* as "*A* believes *p*," *Mp* being understood as Not[*N*(not–p)] in both cases. Notice that the logic of opinion is an axiomatization of the *rational* opinion, which implies a principle of contradiction even for the active negation. On the other hand, there is no principle of the excluded middle for active negation. Among the modal systems, we can mention *temporal logic* and *logic of intention*. In this last instance, then, we have to make the distinction between

the desire to not do x and the absence of desire to do x. We will come back to this.

We can point out two other distinctions closely linked to those in the preceding paragraph. Firstly, there is the distinction between the negation of a conjunction and the conjunction of negations. In the primitive mentality,[10] to deny the conjunction of the propositions $p,q, \ldots ,r$ is the equivalent of denying each of them; consequently a system of thoughts or a political platform is to be abandoned or taken as a whole. In a Norwegian fairy tale,[11] we can see this style of primitive thinking in its purest form. Two girls, one nice and angelic, the other bad and wicked, have to go through a series of obstacles arranged in such a manner that the final outcome depends on success with each and every obstacle. The good girl, of course, overcomes all the obstacles, and *the bad girl fails in them all*, even though one failure alone would have sufficed to assure a final failure. In traditional societies, it is difficult to imagine that excellence can come in degrees, that it can be ranked, that there can be multiple scales of superiority.[12] In general, the recourse to stereotypes simplifies life and provides an inner peace.[13] Undoubtedly the units of a denied conjunction are often linked to each other in a cause–effect relation, justifying their treatment as a whole, but it is in the nature of the primitive mentality to go beyond experience and fall into preconception.

The second distinction comes under the heading of an esoteric problem of logic: how to render in formal language *definite description*, that is to say, expressions beginning with the definite article *the*. In a now famous article[14] Bertrand Russell demonstrated that these expressions are only subject to analysis when in the context of a proposition. Thus, "The King of France is bald" asserts (1) there exists an object x, such that x possesses the quality "to be King of France"; (2) that while possessing this quality, $y = x$; and (3) that the object x is bald. Read in 1982, this proposition is simply false, since the first of the three constituents of the proposition is false. Now, how do we evaluate its negation, "The King of France is not bald"? The passive negation is the true proposition that denies the conjunction (1), (2), and (3); the active negation is the false proposition which asserts (1) and (2) while denying (3). Faced with the question, Is the King of France bald? we sense that both yes and no are equally inadequate responses, since each presupposes the inadmissible fact of a King of France whose baldness alone is in question. And what about the trap question, Do you still beat your wife?[15] Ibansk joins

the universe of *Catch* 22 on the list of places where all questions are similarly rigged. The primitive mentality is not only the one that falls into the trap; it can set them, also, while all the time not knowing that the dilemma posed is not really a dilemma at all. We can even say that the primitive mentality does a good job of setting traps, deliberate manipulations being in general less efficacious than complicity in the absurd. We will return to this point below.

In his short precritical treatise "Versuch, den Begriff der negativen Grossen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen," Kant introduces the distinction between active and passive negation. The text is obscure, being part of a physicophilosophical controversy that no longer concerns us[16]; nevertheless, we can profitably consider the examples Kant puts forth in order to explain the distinction. (1) The passive negation of movement is repose, the active negation being movement in the opposite direction. (2) The passive negation of wealth is poverty, the active negation indebtedness. (3) The passive negation of pleasure is either indifference or equilibrium, corresponding to the absence of causes of pleasure and of displeasure and to the presence of causes that are suppressed in their effect; the active negation is displeasure. (4) The passive negation of virtue is not the sin of omission that, no less than the sin of commission, constitutes an active negation of virtue; only the deficiency in a saint or the mistake of a noble person would represent passive negation. (5) The passive negation of attention is indifference, the active negation is abstraction; in other words, the absence of consciousness of x is something other than the consciousness of the absence of x. (6) The passive negation of obligation is nonobligation, and the active negation is interdiction. (7) The passive negation of desire is, again, indifference, the active negation disgust; we could say that the absence of desire in x is something other than the desire for the absence of x.

As we can see, these examples fall into two categories: In one are cases (5)–(7), which correspond to the modal distinction between Not(Np) and N(not $-p$); in the other are the examples (1)–(4), which cannot be classified using that distinction. In other words, strictly speaking, negation is an operation attaching itself only to propositions: To speak of the negation of a movement, of a pleasure, or of a virtue makes no sense. Kant obviously had in mind the idea of a movement, action, or sensation that in some way would nullify an initial disposition, a notion that is understood for movement in space, but which loses all meaning in the domain of morality. One could be pardoned for a wrong action; one would not know how to act as though it had never happened. We can add that one can be pardoned

in more than one way, so that it is difficult to speak of *the* negation that reestablishes equilibrium. Having said this, we can see that Kant's idea remains stimulating even in these less rigorous cases. We will see that Zinoviev himself uses it in the strict sense and, at the same time, in the larger sense.[17]

In the desire for the absence of x, or in the consciousness of the absence of x, x is at the same time absent and present, present as intentional object of the desire of absence. In Hegel this observation, made by Kant only in passing, is the object of a systematic development. We note, in particular, Chapter IV of *Phenomenology of Mind*, where the consciousness is initially presented as *desire* whose fundamental goal is to dominate the exterior world (and to assert itself) by *consuming* it. Now the resultant satisfaction turns out to be fragile:

> In this state of satisfaction, however, the consciousness of oneself has experience of the independence of its object. Desire and the certainty of its self obtained in the gratification of desire are conditioned by the object; for the certainty exists in cancelling this other. *In order that this cancelling may be effected, there must be this other.* Self-consciousness is thus unable by its negative relation to the object to abolish it; because of that relation it rather produces it again, as well as the desire.[18]

In the sentence I have italicized, Hegel explains in the clearest possible terms the paradox of active negation. This paradox, whose independence requires the destruction of an exterior object, actually depends on it in its very being and could never, without contradiction, desire the destruction of that exterior object. Two hundred years earlier John Donne had already written the following in *The Prohibition:*

> Take heed of hating me,
> Or too much triumph in the victory
> Not that I shall be mine own officer,
> And hate with hate again retaliate:
> But thou wilt lose the style of conqueror,
> If I, thy conquest, perish by thy hate.
> Then, lest my being nothing lessen thee,
> If thou hate me, take heed of hating me.

On reflection, it is a question of an omnipresent phenomenon. Thus militant atheism would never be able to exist without the believers it opposes, just as a certain form of communism lives in

symbiotic union with private property[19]. We can also mention the anticommunist whose world would collapse if one day he succeeded in destroying "the God that failed." In the case of atheism two distinct paradoxes arise: On the one hand, there is the already mentioned difficulty of accepting the distinction between atheism and agnosticism, a distinction too sophisticated for the primitive mentality; on the other hand, there is the negative belief of the atheist who is as bound to God as is the believer (or even more so).[20] In fact, the two paradoxes are linked, for the inefficacy of atheism comes about precisely because it wants to achieve the impossible: to establish, by active negation, a state of passive negation.

Rather than stop here to discuss the prolongation of these ideas in Sartre, by way of Koyré and Kojève, we will conclude this historical glimpse with remarks on their importance in contemporary psychiatry. According to the so-called Palo Alto group,[21] an important element of the etiology of certain pathological family situations is the *contradictory injunction*, an order whose overt content contradicts its pragmatic presuppositions. Hence the order, "Don't be so obedient"—corresponding to the Sartrian idea of love—places its recipient in an impossible situation: In order to obey, he has to not obey. In a like manner, the injunction, "Be spontaneous," asks for a deliberate effort to achieve a state whose essence is nondeliberation. Bad emperors of classical antiquity commanded, "Adore me"[22]; American slave traders demanded recognition from their slaves,[23] propositions as incoherent as they are impossible. A last example, the most important for this context, concerns a mother who commands her daughter, "Remember that you must not even think of that forbidden thing," which is the same as telling her to give it much thought so that she won't think about it. Consider this passage of Emily Dickinson (*Complete Poems*, Thomas H. Johnson, ed., Faber and Faber, London, 1970):

> The Heart cannot forget
> Unless it contemplate
> What it declines

The will to forget is an example of what has been called "to want what couldn't be wanted,"[24] an impossibility, since it relies on the confusion of active and passive negation. Forgetfulness, or indifference, is a passive negation—simply the absence of consciousness of x—while the will to forget requires the consciousness of the absence of x. Wanting to forget is like deciding to create obscurity from light.

Just like forgetfulness, or indifference, states of mind like sincerity, spontaneity, innocence, or faith could never be created by an act of intentional will.

In order to get at the importance of these distinctions in Zinoviev's works, we will first look at his analysis of the Ibanskian regime, then at the relations of the regime to its opposition (interior and exterior), and finally at the internal structure of the interior opposition. Out of this will come an initial conclusion as to the profound impotence of the regime, permitting us ultimately to distinguish two meanings for the notion "negation of the negation" as a form of historical evaluation.

The tragiburlesque air of *YH* comes about because Zinoviev submits to sociological analysis phenomena such as denunciation and "arrivism" (ladder climbing, ambition), both burlesque in the particular, tragic on the whole. Indeed, "a farce which is regularly repeated is actually a tragedy" (*YH*, p. 468), for "trivialities come and go, but the system of trivia stays in place" (*YH*, p. 374), to which it can be added that history repeats itself "the first time as tragedy, the second as catastrophe" (*YH*, p. 710). As for denunciation, a constituent phenomenon of every social group in Ibansk, it tends to be the substitute for information: "Information is a mass of lies, in that it is a public and official phenomenon, and it is quickly transformed into denunciation, in that it is a secret phenomenon" (*YH*, p. 107). One could naively surmise that in every totalitarian regime there must be a branch within the Interior Minister's office that would have complete and reliable information at its disposal, if only to make oppression more efficient, but, according to Zinoviev, this is hardly the case, since it is in no one's interest to tell the truth.

We have to consider Zinoviev as the founder of the sociology of arrivism, a fundamental and universal trait in Ibansk. In *RF* the author-protagonist shares with us his reflections on this phenomenon, beginning with its most intelligible form, one characterized by cynicism, the total absence of moral consciousness, and skill in the game of personal interactions. But there is more:

> But Agafonov has confused all my ideas about Soviet careerism. He is a handsome enough lad, although not exactly a film star. You can't say that he is particularly bright, but neither is he stupid. He won't say no to a drink. He's not malicious. He is good natured. Idle. A bit sleepy. And he has no family connections. No one to protect him in the way than Kanareikin has protected me. He's

> published a couple of down-market pamphlets on philosophy (philosophy for housewives and mental deficients, as they were described by such outstanding degenerates as Kanareikin and Petin). And yet he took off like a rocket for no particular reason. He was suddenly included in the editorial board of a leading journal, given a professorship, appointed editor and elected a corresponding member all before my very eyes [p. 143].

Equally mysterious is the awarding of a literary prize to an author who not only lacks any trace of talent, which goes without saying, but who has not rendered service either to the state or to the party (*RF*, p. 235 ff). It is in *YH* that we find the key to this second type of arrivism, in the observation that Stalin was not an arrivist of great talent but, rather, someone extraordinarily mediocre (*YH*, p. 398). To be a talented arrivist implies the possession of outstanding negative qualities; to be extraordinarily mediocre implies an outstanding lack of qualities. In Ibanskian society, the greatest success belongs to the latter: "The most able careerist (arrivist) is the one with the least talent as a careerist" (*YH*, p. 398); or better,

> the most successful method of making a career in Ibanskian conditions, and this is certainly the method chosen by that undoubtedly talented careerist Claimant, gives enormous advantage to the *un*-talented careerist. Even the Boss himself [i.e., Stalin] seized power and established his own system of power not because he was a genius at his own filthy business, but exclusively because even in that very business he was a total nonentity. He was completely fitted to that business as a person. The leader of rats cannot be a lion [p. 214].

From this we get the "impression . . . of being up against an extraordinarily insignificant force which, by virtue of this very fact, is invincible" (*YH*, p. 399). It would be out of the question to oppose an absence; it is much more preferable to have the presence of a negative that would serve as an object of opposition. Here Zinoviev takes up the theme of the triviality of evil, transposing it from the individual to the societal level. According to Yeats, the most dreaded situation is that one where "the best have lost all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity"; for Tocqueville the crisis in religion would be to have only "lukewarm friends and ardent adversaries"[25]; and according to the early Marx, the danger for freedom of the press in Germany resided in having platonic friends

and fervent enemies.[26] In a sense, they are right, but to exist as an object of negation is still a form of existence preferable to the total absence of consciousness in men. Evil triumphs only when it has become the passive and banal negation of Good.

In order to explain the success of mediocrity, we can invoke the following general principle: Certain conducts are efficacious only when they don't have efficiency as an end.[27] Intention always does a poor job of hiding itself; "man merkt die Absicht und wird verstimmt." One could neither shock the bourgeois in wanting to shock the bourgeois,[28] nor always profit from a love that one inspires,[29] nor engender in a systematic manner random numbers.[30] We all know of the difficulties a talented writer experiences when he sets out to write a best seller in order to earn a living. The result will invariably be either too good or too bad; to find the right tone, he would have to share, and not exploit, the narrow vision and prejudices of the general public; "The better you do your work, the more trouble it gets you into. And if you do it poorly, you'll only be ruined that much more because, when it comes to botched up work, they know much more about it than you do" (*RF*, p. 102).

But this analysis of the Ibanskian man would seem to contradict the view revealed in the following passage:

> An outstanding intelligence is regarded here as an abnormality, and outstanding stupidity as outstanding intelligence. Highly moral people are regarded as amoral villains, and the most abject nonentities as models of virtue. What is in question here is not the absence of one quality, but the presence of another. As a result a strangely negative type of personality is formed which reacts to the positive in the same way as the electron to the positron (or vice versa). Just as the presence of a negative charge is not the absence of a positive, and of a positive charge is not the absence of a negative, so in the given case, I repeat, a negative type of personality is a personality which has certain specific attributes [*YH*, p. 102].

Is the Ibanskian man the active negation of the moral and rational man, as the preceding passage seems to suggest, or the passive negation of the Agafanov type? We have to think that passive negation is the most highly developed form of the Ibanskian personality, even if the active negation of it is the most striking by virtue of its specific attributes. This interpretation is supported by Zinoviev's insistence on the *normality* of the universe he describes: There is no

question of trying to effect a cure, for it is perfectly normal and healthy (*RF*, p. 191). The universe is not inhabited by evil and immoral people; at the very most, we can speak of amorality. It is true that "moral consciousness has declined, just like the classical types predicted" (*RF*, p. 134), but the result is on this side of morality, rather than beyond it.[31] If moral behavior is the negation of blindly reckless behavior, then Ibansk represents the negation of negation—but in the logical sense rather than in the dialectical sense.

Contradiction dominates every aspect of Ibanskian life, be it economic planning, education, or the struggle against criminality. The following general principle can be posited: instead of looking for efficient solutions for real problems, it is necessary to look for a problem which corresponds to possible or desired solutions. (Note the procedure in mathematical economics that looks for those conditions permitting the demonstration of a theorem judged to be important—for example, the existence of general economic equilibrium—rather than the theorems which follow from conditions judged to be plausible.) A grotesque example: To reduce the percentage of unpunished crimes, the number of fictitious crimes can be raised. Setting n as the number of real crimes, m as the number of real crimes punished, and a as the number of fictitious crimes attributed to innocent people punished, authorities have an interest in making a as large as possible since the percentage $(m + a) / (n + a)$ is an increasing function of a, the only problem being that "they need to reconcile objectives that are in dialectical contradiction: there should be no crimes committed in any unit; it has to be demonstrated to higher authorities that any crimes committed are successfully uncovered" (*YH*, p. 72). The synthesis that suppresses the contradiction would be to "destroy the criminals before they manage to commit their crime" (*YH*, p. 819), a ludicrous idea that finds, however, an important analogy in the struggle against speculators and other crooks who "try to overhaul the monetary system": To suppress them, it would suffice to stop the "production of goods which are the object of speculation" (*YH*, p. 804).

On the subject of education, we can quote the brilliant passage where Zinoviev explains the necessity for being relatively hypocritical in order to escape the frankly hypocritical practices in Ibansk:

> I become more and more convinced that the critical literature of the recent past has done a great deal of harm by attacking wordly hypocrisy. It's been based on a very banal principle, that a man

> who behaves decently towards others (smiles, says he's pleased to see you, sympathises when things go wrong, and so on) thinks something else privately—(that he looks down on you, envies you, is pleased with your failures, upset by your successes, and so on). This was seen as hypocrisy. It was considered that people who were of little worth were passing themselves off as decent and good. But that isn't only (or always) hypocrisy. It can also be the result of good education, which is one of the social means of self-defence that people use against their own selves. It's the ability to control oneself, without which no normal relationships are possible. Without this good education life becomes a nightmare. Without it, it's virtually impossible to meet anyone. We cannot talk of man as if he possessed something secret and genuine which developed a mask to suit any given situation. A man's character includes what he is at home and what he is at work, and what he is among his friends and acquaintances, and what he thinks and what he says." "Yes, but there's more than a lack of worldly education here," said Chatterer. "You'd have to talk more about anti-worldly education. To ignore and trample underfoot everything that is outstanding and to hold up mediocrity for praise is a particular kind of education, not a void. Hypocrisy that takes the form of a negation of hypocrisy is hypocrisy squared [*YH*, pp. 350–351].

Therefore, the Ibanskian citizen is inwardly the passive negation of the moral and rational man, but he is the product of an education that is the active negation of a rational and moral education. Antieducation does not produce the anti-man. Surprising at first, on reflection this conclusion is affirmed, because the systematic absence of outstanding traits—be they positive or negative—could never be realized in the absence of a systematic education. The mere lack of education would produce all sorts of men, which would be incompatible with the Ibanskian standard of mediocrity. Even if I had no way of producing a state of negation within myself, by an act of active negation,[32] nothing prevents me from achieving this result in another. Even if I couldn't make up my mind to forget, I could induce a state of forgetfulness in others.

I now take up the relation of the regime to the opposition by beginning with the question of Ibanskian law, whose fundamental given is the confusion of nonobligation and interdiction. In a rational society "a distinction must be drawn between the absence of a standard and the existence of a negation-standard" (*YH*, p. 618), but

in Ibansk the absence of an obligation implies the presence of an interdiction, except where the contrary is expressly stated. "And there are cases, too, when it is not enough to have no ban on an action, but official permission has to be sought as well. Sometimes even that is not enough, and a rule is needed to prevent the obstruction of acts which are permitted or at any rate not prohibited" (*YH*, pp. 78 and 179).

We will see below how this confusion even looms over the attempts to dispel it. We can, however, first point out two other contrasts between rational law and Ibanskian law. The right to emigrate is a fundamental principle of human rights, as is the absence of a governmental right to exile,[33] but in Ibansk people live in an upside-down world[34]: The government reserves for itself the right to exile whomever they choose, denies the right of emigration, considers the desire to emigrate a crime whose seriousness can lead to expulsion, but nevertheless refuses requests to emigrate. We have only to consider the stunning passage where Zinoviev sums up the Ibanskian mechanism and its specific irrationality: "And a free people cannot allow that. They even want to fulfill their own will as regards me despite my own will" (*YH*, p. 541). The world of *Catch* 22 comes immediately to mind[35]; this association is reinforced by the following passage:

> [The Patriot] had been sentenced to ten days for requesting to be sent to the front, but that he could see no logic in this, since fifty cadets were being dispatched to the front without the slightest desire to go. Deviationist observed that this merely demonstrated the iron logic of the social laws since, according to these laws, Patriot's destiny was at the whim of his superiors and not under his own control, and by putting in a request for transfer to the front, he had offended against the social laws by evincing a wish to control his own fate by his own will—so he had got everything he deserved [*YH*, p. 64].

Another crucial problem concerns the rapport between the letter and the spirit of the law. It is generally known that the Chinese wanted to avoid an elaborate code of laws, fearing that corrupt people would invoke the letter of the law against its spirit.[36] On the other hand, the Western notion of law permits the possibility—and even the inevitability[37]—of unwanted interpretations of the law and prescribes that in such cases one must change the letter of the law rather than invoke its spirit. In the Western world, people are not

found guilty of libel for having said, "If I told my opinion, I would be found guilty"; in Ibansk the letter of the law is ignored, and they go directly to its spirit:

> What matters above all is not whether a law is bad or good. What matters is whether or not the law exists. A bad law is nevertheless a law. Good illegality is nevertheless illegal. I shall take it upon myself to prove the mathematical theorem that any society with a rule of law, no matter how bad that law may be, allows the existence of an opposition. The very existence of an opposition is a sign that the society lives by the law. And the absence of an opposition is an indication that a society is lawless. But let us look more closely at the question. Let us take a certain text A. Let there be a legal system B, according to which this text is assessed to be hostile to the given society (as an "anti" text). Consequently the author of A is prosecuted. And if, for example, I say "N asserts that A," I am not asserting A, I am asserting that N asserts A. What then, from the point of view of society B, is the nature of a text of the type "N asserts that A"? Is that an "anti" text? Fine, but how will the prosecutor look, when in court he accuses me of asserting the text "N asserts that A"? Will he be seen as a man pronouncing an "anti" text? No? But why? Where is the formal criterion which lets us make this distinction? Admittedly I have used the word "asserts" once, and the prosecutor has used it twice. But if such a law is adopted, all I have to do is pronounce in advance the following text: "M asserts that N asserts A." I have only cited one logical progression. But there are many more. Construct for me a code B of laws which permit texts to be assessed as "anti", and I will undertake, for any text which is so assessed, to construct a text which can not be assessed according to code B, but which all the same will be understood as an opposition text. Every rigorous law is 'a priori' a possibility of opposition [*YH*, p. 306].

The relation of the regime to the opposition can be defined in the mode of either passive or active negation: silence or condemnation. This choice poses the following dilemma: "It was time, it was necessary to make a high-level response to that individual. But on the other hand, that would attract attention to his filthy little books. However, if we keep silent, people will think that they are right" (*RF*, p. 230). In other words, to condemn is to recognize and to make known, even if it also means to point out a threat. Therefore, from a certain point of view, the opposition sees the movement from silence

to condemnation as a step forward; accordingly, in criticizing modernist painters, their works have to be reproduced and consequently made known (*RF*, p. 134), from which we get the stronghold of the opposition: "Condemn me."

Actually the silence of the regime is not an active negation in the complete sense; it is a desired silence that differs from simple indifference. It is an effort toward active negation hidden behind the appearance of passive negation. Now the distinction between desired and true indifference can be easily made, by virtue of the exclusively systematic form of the former. Here, again, attention is too lightly veiled; never speaking of a person whose existence one can hardly ignore can be just as good evidence of an obsession as can be nonstop discussion of that person: Any husband knowing that his wife cheats on him knows this; the Ibanskian dissidents don't ignore it either:

> It's not only the attacks that are frightening, said Chatterer. Persecution amounts to official recognition. It's the deliberate indifference to everything you do. And the more important your work is, and the better its results, the greater the indifference becomes. I'm not talking about indifference as a mere lack of interest, but an active indifference. That's something positive [*YH*, p. 745].

As one would expect from an expert in many-valued logic,[38] Zinoviev makes here a distinction between *three* types of negation; it seems possible, however, to reduce them to two basic forms. Active indifference is, as stated previously, active negation hiding behind passive appearance. One could undoubtedly imagine an endless stream of such appearances, each more complex than the preceding one and capable of deceiving a great number of people; nevertheless, they would never be able to ignore their origin in active negation. By affecting indifference—from the first to the *n*th degree—one will never *become* indifferent, like Pascal's believer who would become a believer by pretending to be one.

Aside from interior opposition, there is exterior opposition—the West. In Zinoviev's works there are constant references to trips abroad, notably to scientific meetings. For the Ibanskian, the foreigner is fascinating, provided that he rejects Ibanskian ways:

> Ibanskians adore foreigners and are prepared to give them their last shirt. If the foreigner doesn't take the shirt, he's called a swine. And quite rightly. Take what you're given, without wanting to get

> yourself thumped. So take it, damn you, if you don't want a thick ear. There' s no need to play hard-to-get. They're being good-hearted, showing good feelings. So go on, make the most of it, they're not like this every day, and if you don't. . . . But if the foreigner accepts the shirt and goes on behaving as he feels like doing, he's still called a swine. And that's only right. He could've refused it. But if he accepts, he ought to abide by the rules. We've acted with the best intentions, with open generosity. But as for him. . . . It's no use looking for gratitude. They're swine, and that's all there is to it. But if the foreigner takes the shirt and behaves like a proper Ibanskian, then he's an even bigger swine, because then he's clearly one of our own people, and with our own people there's no need to stand on ceremony [*YH*, p. 460].

As Groucho Marx said, "I'd never belong to a club that would accept me as a member." This is a case of the effect of contamination: If the foreigner were really stupid enough to recognize us, we would be even more stupid to recognize him.[39] It is also an ironic variation on the "Timeo Danaos" theme: Ibanskians are to be feared, even when they are bearing gifts.[40]

Khrushchev occupies a special place in the Ibanskian world. He symbolizes the inability of the regime to effect change or to change itself:

> Even if they suddenly were to wish to stop being oppressors they could not desist from oppression, since their lack of will to oppress could only be realised in the form of oppression, which would entail nothing more than a change in the aspect and sphere of application of oppression [*YH*, p. 582].

We have to recall the deceptively liberating command: Don't be so obedient. Khrushchev's failure can be summed up in his project of de-Stalinization. There was too rapid a passage from the permission to no longer quote Stalin to the recommendation to not quote him (*RF*, p. 58), as if the former state of passive negation were too fragile to last. Therefore Stalin triumphed, even in defeat. The method used to renounce him was based on the same confusion that exists between nonobligation and interdiction; this is, incidentally, Stalin's area of expertise. The distinction between active and passive negation serves also to explain why Khrushchev's plan could never be successful:

> Half-measures in such situations always end in defeat. You say that he wouldn't have been allowed to? That he would have been

> toppled? They would have had no chance! Before they could have got themselves together, he could have done so much that it would have been far too late to have taken any steps against him. The further he had gone, the stronger his position. It is true that he could not deal a really heavy blow. But not because he understood the objective impossibility of a heavy blow, but because he did not understand the subjective possibilities before him [*YH*, p. 188].

"He was not able to" is a key expression that can be looked at further. Khrushchev was in his way powerless, as one can be in the two other ways explained in the following passage:

> "How do you know what's senseless and what's not?" asked Panicker. "Maybe they have no option." "What do you mean by that?" asked Humorist. "Do you mean that they acted the best way they could in conditions over which they had no control? Or that they acted as they did because that was in their nature? That's very far from being the same thing. The former example presupposes intelligence and a rational approach. The latter, not" [*YH*, p. 417].

If every action is conceived as the final result of two successive filters, the first of which is made up of the structural constraints of the situation and the second by the mode of choosing an action in the ensemble of actions that simultaneously satisfies all constraints, it is indeed possible to deny the rational choice in two different ways[41]: Either the structural constraints are so strong and the ensemble of possible actions so confined that there is no place for choice, rational or not, or the mode of choice is something besides rational, dictated by tradition, chance, and obsessive idea. This is approximately the distinction Zinoviev makes in the last text quoted; it is also the distinction Joel Feinberg makes between the *exterior constraints* (positive or negative) and the *positive interior constraints*.[42] On the other hand, the distinction between understanding the impossibility and not understanding the possibility—between active and passive negation—amounts to a distinction between exterior constraints and *negative interior constraints*. As Sartre would put it, *nothing* prevented Khrushchev from waging a victorious struggle against Stalinism, this nothing being passive negation or lack of knowledge. His blindness was undoubtedly not fortuitous, but there is no reason to think that it was desired. But acting with an undesired lack of knowledge is less irrational than acting with an obsessive desire.

Opposition is itself affected by the confusion of active with passive negation. Thus a dissident

> said previously that he didn't want to submit himself to the ballot, but he was proposed, and he signed the papers. And he was accused of inconsistency. Now was he inconsistent? When I came here today, I didn't want a drink. You offered me one, and I took it. Inconsistent? No. We merely have to distinguish between the absence of desire to do something, and the presence of a positive inclination to do it [*YH*, p. 104].

If other dissidents did not recognize this now familiar distinction, it is because they bear the stamp of the society in which—and not only against which—they struggle: "It is impossible to live in a society and remain free from it" [*YH*, p. 561], or better,

> as a man overcomes these resistances he gradually assumes an ever closer resemblance to that society's Mr. Average. If he fails to do so, he will not be able to penetrate the fissures in the obstacles he faces. It may seem to him that he has preserved his creative individuality and is bringing his ideas to fruition; but in fact he is increasingly conforming to the standard [*YH*, p. 761].

This remark is particularly applicable to the sculptor Dauber, an ambiguous main character in *The Yawning Heights* who is transformed before our eyes from a born dissident into an opportunist who doesn't know himself. When he mentions that the tombstone he sculpted for Khrushchev is an uncompromising work, a friend remarks, "That's true, if the lack of any demand for compromise can be regarded as uncompromising" [*YH*, p. 467]. It is possible to arrive at a compromise without seeking it; we have only to recall the distinction made between the two types of arrivists.

We now come to the question of *power*:

> Ibanskian power is both omnipotent and impotent. It is omnipotent in the negative sense that it can do any evil it likes and remain unpunished. It is impotent in the positive sense that any good it may do remains unrewarded. It has a huge destructive force, and a wholly insignificant power of creation [*YH*, p. 483].

Indeed, the notion of power is doubly fraudulent; it implies that we can attain goals *whatever they might be* and *whatever the goals of others might be*.[43] Ibanskian authorities fit the second part of this definition, but not the first. For Tocqueville, centralized power

"excels in preventing, not in doing"[44]; "it rarely forces to act, but it is always opposed to action; it destroys nothing; it prevents birth".[45] We see that Zinoviev goes much further, by attributing to the regime an immense destructive power; perhaps we should see in that a difference between an authoritarian regime and a totalitarian one. Whatever the case might be, the asymmetry of doing and undoing does not come about simply because "it is easier to destroy than to construct" (*YH*, p. 484). Above and beyond that universal obstacle that the second law of thermodynamics poses for any plan creating order, certain specifically Ibanskian obstacles arise. Let us list them: (1) the already mentioned tendency of information to deteriorate into denunciation; (2) the tendency to evaluate solutions according to their ideological rather than their technical efficiency, looking for "a correct social solution for an insoluble economic problem," (*YH*, p. 683); (3) the omnipresence of contradictory plans, such as the attitude toward crime or the directive to "enhance the leadership role of the leadership cadres and to activate an initiative from below" (*YH*, p. 179); (4) the systematic creation of mediocre personalities that are at the most capable of hindering others' plans; (5) "the effect of social relationships is such that any important problem is regarded as being gnostically difficult" (*YH*, p. 572), which presents obstacles for every simple and efficient solution; and (6) "an amoral society wastes a huge amount of energy because of its very lack of a high enough level of morality" (*YH* p. 800), since men "expect the worst" (*RF*, p. 187) and take their precautions, thereby contributing to the realization of the worst that they fear.

We can now state the first fundamental law of Ibanskian life, "the well-known rule whereby people who want to make a change never change anything, while changes are only effected by people who had no intention of doing so" (*YH*, p. 198). In other words, in Ibansk the ensemble of political possibilities is a void.[46] Not that there can never be changes and even profound transformations; it is only that they could never be brought about in a desired and intended manner. A distinction has to be made between a solution and a result of the search for a solution (*YH*, p. 749), just as it is necessary "to make a distinction between what is the product of time and what is the product of the new social system (*YH*, p. 530). Since "any decisions taken by the leadership about a particular problem have one and the same result" (*YH*, p. 154), it can be seen that "directives are a result, not a cause" (*YH*, p. 338). In Ibansk, it is understood in advance that

all attempts to undertake whatever action sets off a counteraction that will nullify it:

> I was in no way surprised to learn that two diametrically opposed meetings had been held virtually simultaneously, and that each had adopted measures which paralysed measures adopted by the other. That's in the normal run of things, and I have been used to that for a long time. For example, Stupak's father in one and the same day received the Order of Lenin and was expelled from the party (he was arrested later that night) [*RF*, p. 58].

In Ibansk guilt takes the place of causality. A second fundamental law states that "successes achieved under any leadership must be successes achieved by that leadership" (*YH*, p. 156). "The leadership attributes for itself everything positive and calculates its actions so as to never be held responsible for failures and any negative phenomena" (*YH*, p. 410). Expressing this differently,

> from the scientific point of view . . . one must talk of the causes of certain manifestations. But from the official point of view, such a statement of the problem is unacceptable. In any situation, the official consciousness always poses the question: "Where does the fault lie?" And as for the official consciousness, guilt must be personified, since only conscious beings can be accused, and not inanimate nature or dumb beasts, the problem is posed even more sharply: "Who is responsible for this?" From the official point of view, even natural disasters like earthquakes, droughts and floods, must be the responsibility of specific people [*YH*, pp. 99–100].

Thus we arrive at the third fundamental law: For every disaster one can find a guilty person outside the leadership. In a sense, this attitude has existed for ages: The ruler is "the source of good but not responsible for the bad",[47] even though a leader is sometimes overthrown if it rains too much during his administration. But in Ibansk, no one really believes that: The second and third laws do not reflect the spontaneous attitude of the people but, rather, principles of bureaucratic promotion. The regime, therefore, takes credit for the good it is incapable of doing and washes its hands of the bad that it alone can do.

We finally arrive at the theory of the negation of the negation, presented and better developed in *The Radiant Future* than in *The Yawning Heights*. Actually, it is only in a short sentence (*RF*, p. 71),

penned in passing, that we learn of Zinoviev's logical acceptation of the notion, according to which the negation of the negation merely reestablishes the point of departure. Both Marx and Zinoviev see the Communist Revolution as negation of the negation, the former in the dialectical sense, the latter in the logical sense.[48] The dialectical is, of course, poorly defined; it has even been said that it doesn't exist and that the negation of the negation forms part of those conceptual tools that are too powerful, since they exlude nothing.[49] But it is possible to encompass—in a fairly rigorous definition—the essence of classical examples. I put forth that a method *p–q–r* follows the outline of the negation of the negation when (1) any pair of elements among (*p, q, r*) are mutually incompatible, (2) the passage *p–r* is impossible, (3) the passage *q–p* is impossible, and (4) there is no q' $q \neq q'$ making the passage *p–q'–r* possible. Therefore one could never pass directly from feudalism to communism; one could never go back from capitalism to feudalism—only capitalism can constitute the indispensable intermediate step. For Zinoviev the negation of the negation can only be understood in its logical acceptation, which implies the rejection of the third condition:

> 'In Russia,' said Rebrov, 'a traditional way of life has been preserved despite everything. Just as in China. In the last century Russia instituted a movement towards the Western way of life. But nothing came of it. The Revolution threw us back into a state of serfdom, back to the squalid, gory origins of our imperial history. How many victims will there have to be, and what quagmires will we have to plunge into before the abolition of serfdom becomes a real issue again?' [*RF*, p. 157]

In general, the notions of revolution and counter-revolution are asymmetrical, despite their verbal likeness. The revolution against the revolution against *x* gives something other than *x*, and for good reasons, well expressed by Giscard d'Estaing: "There is certainly no question of returning to a pre–1968 situation, first and foremost because that pre–1968 situation includes the very elements that caused 1968."[50] The goal of counter-revolutionists is most assuredly not to create a situation where revolution would again be possible; Eduard Frei should have realized that he could never have assumed power after Allende. Now the preceding remarks reflect the supposition that revolutionary and counter-revolutionary methods are intentional and intelligent actions. Given the Soviet regime's inability to transform society in a deliberate and desired manner, it is only left

with purely causal transformations, whose end products no one desires or, if desired, they come about by an unwanted or misdirected process.[51] It is only by this route that one could conceive of the reestablishment of a precommunist order, but, still, the active negation[52] of communism is not a struggle to establish what preceded it:

> I don't want to put the clock back. I want to go on going forward, accepting what has happened in the past as an indisputable fact. Criticism of communism on communism's home ground is not a battle against communism. It cannot in principle lead to the restoration of the pre-communist order. It's rather the opposite; it is precisely the suppression of the criticism of communism which tends towards such a restoration, or in the extreme case it tends to a metamorphosis of communism within the spirit of such a restoration [*RF* p. 273].

Thanks to an unrelenting process of indifferent degradation, one can set in place a *third servitude* impossible to create deliberately. In a like manner, only a causal process capable of wiping out its own memory could engender states like faith, innocence, sincerity, and forgetfulness.[53] "History leaves no traces. It only leaves consequences which have nothing in common with the circumstances that gave rise to them" (*YH*, pp. 31 and 632). In a more general way, the past survives into the present either in the form of a memory of the past or in an objectified form where its origin is hidden.[54] Only a society keeping alive the memory of the past is capable of controlling the processes that form the future. Zinoviev has demonstrated in a most striking manner that formal logic and dialectical analysis are not only not incompatible, but that the latter is understood only through the former.[55] This is not to say that this methodological demonstration is his most important feature. In the field of political science Zinoviev's work opens entirely new perspectives, by treating a previously neglected phenomenon—*political irrationality*. But Zinoviev's undeniable accomplishment is especially the creation of a fictitious, hallucinatory, detailed, and convincing world where even false teeth go bad (*YH*, p. 771) and even artificial flowers fade (*YH*, p. 780), a world similar to nothing—except to reality.

Notes

1. This essay is based on the two works published as of this date by Zinoviev outside the field of logic: *Les Hauteurs beantes* (L'Age d'homme, Lausanne, 1977; *The Yawning Heights*, translated from Russian by Gordon Clough, New York, 1979; in the following abbreviated *YH*), and *L'Avenir radieux* (L'Age d'homme, Lausanne, 1978; *The Radiant Future*, translated from Russian by Gordon Clough, New York, 1980; in the following abbreviated *RF*). It deals solely with the sociological method of works, setting aside both any literary judgment and any evaluation of the merit of the analysis. Undoubtedly, Zinoviev's account has the ring of truth, even in its obvious exaggerations, to an extent that we cannot *not* accept if fully, especially since it corresponds to the general impressions that can be gathered from various sources. It must be said, however, that for the present, Zinoviev's work remains a (privileged) source of hypotheses, rather than an ensemble of established conclusions. Just by chance, my reading of Zinoviev coincided with that of the great work of Paul Veyne, *Le Pain et le cirque* (Seuil, Paris, 1976) and with the re-reading of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. From time to time I will have the opportunity to point out several areas where these three works converge. I hope to be able to devote a separate study to them. I would like to thank Clemens Heller for encouraging me to read Zinoviev and to take a serious look at this aspect of social irrationality.
2. Of course, dialectics is an integral part of the Soviet system; therefore it is derided time and time again. But Zinoviev also seems to recognize a dialectics less stagnant than the *diamat*: "That's how I can get rid of Anton. I'm irresistibly attracted to him. I can't pass one single day without thinking of him. And at the same time, I have no more urgent desire than that of fleeing him. People put down dialectics, but we can't make one step without its help" (*RF*, p. 124). This thought belongs to the very ambiguous protagonist of the book, and nothing would justify attributing it to Zinoviev. We will see, however, that Zinoviev is describing here his own method behind the "dialectics."
3. For some amusing and informative insights, see R. Smullyan, *What Is the Name of This Book?* (Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1978) and D. R. Hofstadter, *Godel, Escher Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (Basic Books, New York, 1979).
4. For example, on p. 81 of *YH*, where it is a question of an Ibanskian delegation returning to Ibansk bringing "pairs of tight pants trimmed in leather and with the bizarre label 'Fabriqué abroad'"; or better, the motto of Ibanskian democracy, "Everything obsolete and out of date has to be nipped in the bud" (*YH*, p. 161) or on p. 237 of *RF*, which points out "one more paradox of our life: one of the fundamental tendencies of the communist way of life is the attempt to escape from the rules of that very way of life"; or, finally, p. 819 of *YH*, which humorously depicts a character called Collaborateur who "could be seen . . . in the the shortest line, the one where people had the right to not wait to cash their paychecks."
5. For another attempt at reviving this notion, see R. Shweder, Likeliness

and likelihood in everyday thought: Magical thinking in judgments about personality, *Current Anthropology* 18, 1977, 637–658.

6. See references in my *Logic and Society* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1979), pp. 81 and 94.
7. In *Metaphysics*, §1005b.
8. For this problem, see P. W. Pruyser, *Between Belief and Unbelief* (New York, 1974), as well as Tocqueville: "In the periods just covered, people abandoned beliefs out of indifference, rather than out of hate; one doesn't reject them, they leave" (*Democracy in America*, Paris, 1961). But following William James, Pruyser (*op. cit.*, p. 126) points out that one can also be agnostic out of a passionate conviction, and not only out of indifference; this is the case of the desired indifference discussed below. In this context, we can also quote Paul Veyne (*Le Pain et le cirque*, p. 589) where he writes of Roman emperors: "The godliness of the ruler had no believers, but they did have their non-believers—Christians!" The emperors' godliness existed only as an object of negation in the mind of Christians; no one attached a positive belief in them, despite appearances. It would be difficult not to think of the Marxist-Leninist cult.
9. See the fine introduction in D. P. Snyder, *Modal Logic and Its Applications* (New York, 1971); see also *Logic and Society*, Chapter I for a general discussion.
10. On this topic, see B. Inhelder and J. Piaget, *La Genese des structures élémentaires* (Neuchâtel, 1976), Chapter V.4.
11. P. C. Asbjørnsen and J. Moe, Manndatteren og Kjerringdatteren, *Samlede Eventyr*, Vol. 2, Oslo, 1957.
12. P. Veyne, *op. cit.*, pp. 114 and 773. This phenonemon can no doubt be linked to the fact that "every solution tends to oversolve its problem" (*ibid.*, p. 708). In fact, the example suggested by Veyne in the following quote is very reminiscent of the distinction between active and passive negation: "Christian ascetic theology teaches that is is not enough to renounce evil pleasures, not even enough to sacrifice dangerous pleasures; one also has to deprive oneself of permitted pleasures" (*ibid.*, p. 790). A passion can never be supplanted, except by another passion; see A. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1977), p. 20ff.
13. See, for example, R. A. Jones, *Self-fulfilling Prophecies* (Halsted, New York, 1974), chapters 2 and 3.
14. Bertrand Russell, "On denoting," *Mind* 14, 1905, 479–493.
15. See P. Watzlawick, *The Language of Change* (Basic Books, New York, 1978), p. 108ff, for other examples of this dilemma, whose general form is to pose as contradictory two ideas not at all opposed; thus a child is asked if he prefers to go to bed at eight o'clock or at a quarter to eight. Among these dilemmas, the real trap questions are those that only have yes or no as choices, two contradictory responses masking two ideas in opposition to each other.
16. See my *Leibniz et la formation de l'esprit capitaliste* (Aubier, Paris, 1975, p. 224ff.
17. It is still no less true that even in this less rigorous sense, the confusion of the passive negation and the (or an) active negation remains possible.

There is a classic example of this in Leibniz: "*regredimur nisi progrediamur, quia stari non potest*" (Textes inédits, Paris, 1948, p. 94), and in a related example, the idea that love either grows or disappears (if it hasn't already). The novelist is familiar with the danger of painting his characters too vividly, having experienced the problem of bringing a less colorful character to the forefront; how, then, can we speak of a nonentity? See also P. Veyne's example in note 12.

18. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, Vol. 1, 1807.
19. "Just as atheism ceases to be significant when the affirmation of man is no longer dependent on the negation of God, in the same way socialism in the full sense is the direct affirmation of humanity independent of the negation of private property" (L. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism* , Vol. 1, Oxford, 1978, p. 140).
20. See the observation of Paul Veyne quoted in note 8.
21. See P. Watzlawick, et al., *Change* (W. W. Norton, New York, 1974).
22. P. Veyne, *op. cit.*, pp. 488, 569, 701, 721.
23. See my *Logic and Society*, Wiley, London, 1978, p. 71 ff, for this Hegelian idea taken up in the works of Eugene Genovese on American slavery (*The Political Economy of Slavery*, Pantheon, New York, 1974).
24. See L. Farber, *Lying, Despair, Jealousy, Envy, Sex, Suicide, Drugs and the Good Life* (Basic Books, New York, 1976).
25. *Democracy in America*, Vol. I; see also the observation of Paul Veyne in note 8.
26. *Rheinische Zeitung*, May 5, 1842.
27. Paul Veyne, *op. cit.*, p. 679, treats this in incomparable style.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 98.
29. We think of the love of Stendhal's character Lucien Leuwen for Mme. de Chasteller.
30. According to John von Neumann, "anyone who considers arithmetical methods of producing random digits is, of course, in a state of sin" (quoted in H. H. Goldstine, *The Computer from Pascal to Neumann*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1972, p. 297).
31. See my *Ulysses and the Sirens* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979), p. 107 ff. for this distinction between the two ways of not or no longer living morally, corresponding on the whole to the distinction between the id and the ego in Freudian theory, respectively, on this side and on that side of the superego.
32. Except, of course, by means of indirect strategies of the kind Pascal used: to become a true believer by pretending to believe. For this idea see my *Ulysses and the Sirens*, Chapter III.
33. Using terms of S. Kanger and H. Kanger (Rights and parliamentarism, in *Contemporary Philosophy in Scandinavia*, R. Olson and A. Paul, eds., Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1972), the individual possesses vis-à-vis the state both a *power* and a *counterimmunity* with regard to the act of leaving his country.
34. Without insisting on this term, it is nonetheless curious to re-read the section in *Phenomenology of Mind* that deals with this concept of the upside-down world.
35. In the novel of Joseph Heller this paradox takes the following form:

Whoever accepts to fly combat missions is by definition insane and, being insane, has the right to be exempted for psychiatric reasons. He only has to ask to be relieved. But the very fact of asking, the very desire to no longer fly combat missions, is proof of sanity and prevents one from being grounded.

36. See J. Needham. *Science and Civilisation in China.* Vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press Cambridge 1956 p. 522. see also Paul Veyne *op cit.* p. 623 et seq.
37. The law always says too much; it is in its unwanted consequences that it is unjust. It always says too little; it is silent regarding unforeseen cases. As Tocqueville said (*op. cit.*, Vol. 1), Americans "believe that the courts are powerless to control the press, and since the flexibility of human languages always eludes judicial scrutiny, crimes of this nature remain, in a sense, hidden from the hand [of the law] that reaches out to seize them". More generally, only a very naive lawmaker would think that, after the passage of a certain law, men will continue to act as they did before its passage, which doesn't prevent naiveté from being widespread: Take, for example, a law that forbids employers to lay off workers with more than x years of seniority. The same law greatly increases the layoffs of those with x years minus six months of seniority, thereby reducing rather than assuring stability of employment. (On this problem see F. Kydland and E. Prescott, Rules rather than discretion: The inconsistency of optimal plans, *Journal of Political Economy*, 1977.) I do not think that Zinoviev took up this sociological tradition; as a logician, he only had to translate into legal terms the theorem of Lowenheim-Skolem on the nonstandard interpretations of logical systems (see especially in the text quoted the reference to "mathematical theorem").
38. See A. Zinoviev, *Philosophical Problems of Many-Valued Logic*, D. Reidel, Dordrecht, 1963.
39. The same effect of contamination, but in the opposite sense, is at work in the dialectic between the master and the slave: The individual who seeks recognition from a slave whom he does not recognize shows by this very fact that he is unworthy of recognition. For a brilliant analysis of bad emperors, corrupted and corrupting, see again Paul Veyne, *op. cit.*
40. Concerning an analogous case in classical antiquity, Paul Veyne (*op. cit.*, p. 229) observes that

    > to refuse a gift is to refuse a friendship which can be intrusive; Phocion refused gifts from Alexander, who had him told angrily that he did not consider those who refused to receive gifts from him to be true "friends"; indeed Phocion did not want to be taken as anyone's unqualified friend; to accept a gift and to not obey in every way was the equivalent of not keeping one's word.

41. For this distinction, see my *Ulysses and the Sirens*, p. 113 ff.
42. Quoted in Steven Lukes, Power and Structure, in his *Essays in Social Theory* (Macmillan, London, 1977, p. 11 ff. The analysis with which Lukes proposes to explain the failure of Bukharin to resist the rise of Stalin is very near to that Zinoviev proposes in order to explain Khrushchev's failure to realize the ruin of Stalin: "It wasn't possible" (in one way or another).

43. The first of these fraudulent hypotheses is the essence of a study by A. Goldman, Towards a theory of social power, in *Philosophical Studies* 23, 1972, 221–268; the other is important in the theory of collective choice, where the concept of a *dictator* is defined as an individual capable of dictating social preferences, regardless of the preferences of other individuals. This shows the absurdity of any attempt to demonstrate the existence of a dictator, even where preferences do not differ. Such an individual would only be an *average man*, in the sense that he would have the same preferences as society as a whole. This demonstration was nevertheless attempted by A. Parks, in An impossibility theorem for fixed preferences: A dictatorial Bergson–Samuelson welfare function, *Review of Economic Studies*, 43, 1976, 447–450.
44. Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1.
45. Ibid., Vol. 2.
46. See my *Logic and Society*, Chapter 3, for this idea.
47. Paul Veyne, *op. cit.*, pp. 558ff.
48. Since a principal thesis of this essay is the great compatibility of dialectics and formal logic, it is understood that this opposition is the exception and not the rule.
49. See also H. B. Acton, Dialectical materialism, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Vol. 2 (Paul Edwards, ed., Macmillan, New York, 1967), pp. 389–397.
50. See his interview in *Le Monde*, January 8, 1975.
51. See my *Logic and Society*, pp. 49 and 144, for this last condition. Power is not just the causal production of a desired result; one has also to make sure that the result is reached in the desired manner.
52. Can we see here an analogy between the "active negation–passive negation" distinction and the two senses of negation of the negation? The answer is only partially in the affirmative. The passive negation of passive negation reestablishes the point of departure; but the active negation of the active negation—in the strict sense where the active negation of *Np* is *N*(Not–*p*)—also reestablishes the point of departure. It is only in the larger and vaguer sense of the notion of active negation that one can say that its repeated application takes us beyond the point of departure, as in the example "revolution against the revolution against χ." Thus the denial of the denial of χ is something other than the simple affirmation of χ, the denial being conceived as a political action and not simply as a logical operation.
53. *Ulysses and the Sirens*, p. 50.
54. See my "Notes on hysteresis in the social sciences," *Synthese* 33, 1976, 371–391.
55. Such is also one of the main conclusions of Chapters 4 and 5 in *Logic and Society*; it was, therefore, a source of great satisfaction to see it confirmed by Zinoviev.

11 We and Zinoviev: A Political View

Wenzel Daneil

THE IMPACT OF ZINOVIEV AS A POLITICAL WRITER

Among the Soviet *émigrés* of recent times who have tried to disturb the peace of mind of the Western intelligentsia Zinoviev occupies a place completely of his own. His work is possibly the most disturbing and most challenging of all. Not because of the moral intensity which – contrary to what he himself claims – he shares with other dissidents. And certainly not because of his prophetic warnings about the fatal consequences of Western blindness *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, which all too often read like an echo from conservative manuals about the illusions of *détente*. The heart of the matter lies elsewhere: Zinoviev forces us to take the Soviet Union seriously, to treat her as a genuinely novel social system and to come to grips with her *as she is*. He will no longer allow us to evade this necessity by approaching the Soviet Union as if she were merely a temporary socio-political experiment gone astray that either *détente* or Western firmness will ease back or will force back on what we would like to see as the right path of historical progress.

Zinoviev's greatest contribution as a political writer may well be of a negative kind: that he succeeds in destroying three fallacies which have dominated general Western thinking about the Soviet Union for much too long:

(1) The *conservative* fallacy that the Soviet system cannot last because it defies the nature of man and society and runs counter to all standards of behaviour which have made human society function.
(2) The *liberal* fallacy that the Soviet system must perforce sooner or later – albeit only gradually – give place to the eternal human longing for political and economic freedom.
(3) The *marxist* fallacy that the system must inevitably change because the revolution which gave birth to it was historically premature and because the system consequently cannot solve the basic

contradiction between its ideological promises and its actual inability to deliver on them.

But there is more to Zinoviev's work than mere destruction of obsolete hopes. I would not hesitate to credit him with the achievement of having sketched the first genuinely *sociological* theory of Soviet society. His evident unfamiliarity with the classics of Western sociological literature makes this achievement even more important. At the same time it complicates any attempt (unavoidable in the long run) to somehow place Zinoviev's conceptual approach within, let us say, comparative sociology as practised in the West. Be that as it may be, for me Zinoviev's solitary and in a methodological sense quite heroic attempt to distill from Soviet society its *typical* characteristics brings to my mind the corresponding efforts of the great Western sociologists (Durkheim and Parsons for instance, to mention just the best known) to analyse society in terms not of political ideas or of historical forces but of the day-to-day behaviour of individuals, groups and social institutions.

Perhaps Zinoviev's grand theory of the Soviet Union as the first historical example of a society completely dominated and permeated by what he calls, a bit awkwardly, 'communal behaviour' can be considered the definitive or at least the most valid explanation of what goes on in the Soviet Union. Whether it can or not seems to me a moot point. It will have to be settled by further discussion among the experts. As with all original thinkers in the social sciences, Zinoviev's greatest contribution is to have irrevocably changed the framework and the terms of the discussion and to have raised a whole new set of questions for further empirical studies.

For those of us who watch the Soviet Union professionally the test of relevance of Zinoviev's findings would lie in his ability to explain certain phenomena of Soviet life which up to now we have not really been able to come to grips with. Among these phenomena I would count the following:

(1) The complete incongruity – tantalising for the normal Western observer – between the private attitudes of a given Soviet individual and his public behaviour. Zinoviev convincingly demonstrates that the fundamental irrelevance of all personal opinions is not so much the consequence of direct political pressure but of the fact that unceasing struggle for one's share in the system's rewards can only be conducted on the basis of unquestionable outward conformity.

(2) The glaring contradiction between the discovery that marxist–leninist ideology has lost all importance as a genuine motivating force and as serious intellectual matter and the equally correct view that ideology continues to remain all-pervading. Zinoviev solves that contradiction by emphasising the *functional* aspects of Soviet ideology as the centrepiece in a system of mutual control,
(3) The apparent impossibility in Soviet economic life of any conformity with notions of achievement and of social justice as we in the West would understand them. By emphasising the crucial importance of the 'social position' (as distinct from the actual performance) of each individual in the work and distribution processes Zinoviev not only gives us a key for understanding social stratification in the Soviet Union. He has also made us aware of the fact that the peculiar combination of a low work ethic with a purposefully differentiated set of socio-economic privileges is the logical result of a system in which everybody is forced to concentrate all his energy not on objective tasks but on improving his own *position* in the social hierarchy.
(4) The weakness of all opposition movements in the Soviet Union despite the fact that almost every Soviet individual is openly dissatisfied with many facets of his daily life. Zinoviev uncovers the deeper *social* reasons for the lack of response which the dissidents have found among the Soviet masses.

SOME IMPLICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

There are a few other elements in Zinoviev's work which are worth mentioning as offering a much needed corrective to premature optimism on the part of Western observers. Among these I would count his warning not to overestimate the extent to which Soviet society has evolved towards some form of rule of law. His analysis also raises the question to what degree it makes sense to approach public life in the Soviet Union in terms of a continuing process of institutional and legal differentiation. Zinoviev reminds us that given the inherent arbitrariness of decision-making in the Soviet Union, Soviet society, although dominated by a vast executive apparatus, cannot be called bureaucratic in the traditional sense of the word. And, although subject to a multitude of norms, it cannot be regarded as being under the rule of law. Zinoviev leaves one with the conclusion that the ways and means of exercising power and control in the Soviet Union are

still much cruder, much more direct and much less differentiated than we have come to expect, given the growing complexity of Soviet life. At the same time power appears much more diffuse and personal than the traditional concept of totalitarianism implies.

One could carry Zinoviev's basic arguments further to the conclusion that when it comes to the essence of the question of who is wielding power in the Soviet Union things might actually be more simple than they look from the outside. Perhaps we should give up attempts to explain decisions primarily by referring to the role of 'the party', 'the state', 'the bureaucracy', 'the military', and so on but voluntarily risk a bit of conceptual imprecision by confining ourselves to such notions as 'the leadership' or 'the people in power' or – to take up one of Zinoviev's concepts – 'the system of state power'. This might actually do more justice to Soviet reality which in Zinoviev's presentation is characterised by a *unified* system of power transcending all institutional differentiation. His logical conclusion that we should not speak of the Soviet Union as a party regime since the party itself as an organisation is not the dominant force of society but merely an instrument in the hands of those at the apex of the pyramid of power, seems to me a point which deserves further discussion.

Zinoviev's treatment of political power in Soviet society is among the most interesting aspects of his work. It is, however, also one of the most questionable ones. No doubt his emphasis on what one might call the self-regulating societal forces making for intellectual and political uniformity in the Soviet Union gives a salutary warning to all those who still misunderstand the Soviet system as being essentially a set-up wherein a small minority is exploiting and subjugating a vast majority of innocent and well-intentioned people. But there seems to me a basic flaw in Zinoviev's presentation: it logically implies the ability of Soviet society to deal with deviating behaviour by means of economic punishments and social ostracism. There should be no need then for institutions such as the KGB or the labour camps. Yet it is obvious that the Soviet leadership (possibly being less optimistic about the inherent stability of the system than Zinoviev) sees physical repression as a central element in preserving the social and political order.

Even in sticking to Zinoviev's own logic one could make a case for the continuing vital importance of raw political power including physical repression: without this all-pervading threat from above 'communal behaviour' on the part of the individual and primary cells making up Soviet society would by necessity degenerate into sheer anarchy since no independent but mutually shared moral and intel-

lectual standards of behaviour have been left. This by the way seems to me the most disturbing conclusion which forces itself upon the reader of Zinoviev's work: that if indeed all genuine autonomous, personal values, moral standards and political beliefs have disappeared, a break-down of the system can only have the most dreadful consequences: individuals and groups would not be able instinctively to fall back on alternative models of social and political organisation but would become protagonists and victims in a most terrible struggle of all against all, leading not to freedom and democracy but to chaos and new repression. Thus, paradoxically, Zinoviev's logic brings him close to certain conservative apologists of the Soviet dictatorship according to whom the regime at least deserves credit for its ability to preserve order and stability among such traditionally anarchic and potentially violent people.

It is in this context that another major objection could be raised against Zinoviev's picture of Soviet society: it may well be the case that this society at present operates around a moral and spiritual void because all elements in it are driven exclusively by the urge and by the necessity to improve by whatever means and at whatever costs to individual integrity their own position in the hierarchy of material rewards, social privileges and political power. Obviously this reflects the fact that marxist–leninist ideology as a fountain of genuine motivation has been drying up for quite some time. Yet it is difficult to see, on the basis of past historical experience, how cynicism and spiritual and moral homelessness can permanently remain central features of any given society; if only in the crudest way individuals, groups and institutions need and will look for a set of values and beliefs with which they can identify. My own guess would be that some kind of chauvinism will slowly fill the void diagnosed by Zinoviev, a chauvinism broad and crude enough to be reconciled both with formal allegiance to communist ideology and with a continuing practice of what Zinoviev calls 'a communal behaviour' but also strong and persuasive enough to give a sense of direction to Soviet society quite independent of the question of whether and when it will reach the promised shore of communism.

ZINOVIEV'S IDEAS AND WESTERN POLICY

If we take Zinoviev seriously as an analyst of the Soviet system, as I think we should, are there any obvious conclusions for Western policy towards the Soviet Union which impress themselves on the

reader of *My i zapad* (We and the West) and *The Reality of Communism*? I think there are, even if they are not always the most welcome ones, especially for those of us, who, despite Zinoviev's contempt, see no alternative but to continue the political dialogue with the Soviet Union.

The first conclusion is that we should not put much trust in our ability to influence the policies of the Soviet leadership 'from below' by expanding contacts with the Soviets 'at the grass roots'. Given the complete divorce between private concerns and public behaviour, no familiarity or even sympathy Soviet citizens as individuals might develop with regard to the West will have any noticeable impact on political decisions in the Soviet Union as long as the system operates as it does today. Anything the West wants from the Soviet Union can only be gained by dealing with the small minority exercising ultimate political power and not by trying to gain access to a public opinion supposedly full of common sense and love of peace. Such a relatively independent public opinion simply does not exist. How important it is to realise that fundamental asymmetry between the two systems has been demonstrated quite recently, by the decision of the Nobel Peace Prize committee to award the prize jointly to a private organisation in the West and to its supposed counterpart in the Soviet Union – in fact to a functionary of the Soviet regime.

Another obvious conclusion from Zinoviev's analysis has dawned on us for quite some time: the futility of any discussion with the Soviets about political concepts which at first glance seem common to political thinking in both East and West, but the concrete political implications of which are a matter of dispute. It would indeed be rather ridiculous if people in the West took Soviet ideological rhetoric more seriously than the Soviet élite itself. To argue with Soviet counterparts whether Western or Soviet notions of 'democracy' and 'human rights' correspond more closely to the true meaning of these words is a waste of time since almost nobody in the Soviet Union cares about such problems to begin with. This insight should be applied wherever abstract notions for one reason or the other start to dominate East–West debates. For the sad truth – confirmed by Zinoviev – is that Soviet ideological practice has drained all political ideas of any substance that could be at all debated. The primary if not exclusive function of these ideas is to be used by the Soviets as instruments of control at home and of spreading Soviet influence abroad among those circles willing to make their intellectual and political peace with the Soviet system. In short: the Soviets have

forfeited any claim to be treated as equals in the arena of the great political–philosophical debates of our time. Correspondingly Western representatives should confine discussions with the Soviets to very specific and concrete questions and should address themselves essentially – and on the basis of empirically solid knowledge – to Soviet *behaviour* (or misbehaviour) in specific matters.

Most important: Western statesmen should not consider it their task to bring about a refashioning of the Soviet system according to Western standards. It is far beyond their power. They should resign themselves to the fact that, true to Soviet claims, Soviet society does indeed represent a historically new type of social and political relations among men. Western observers should stop concentrating their attention on every conceivable bit of evidence that might attest to the inherent instability of the Soviet system and to the alleged need for fundamental changes in the Soviet Union. They should instead – at least in the absence of convincing proof to the contrary – proceed from the assumption of an inherent *stability* of the Soviet system, a stability quite independent of the repressive nature of the dictatorship ruling Soviet society. This does not necessarily contradict the view – actually strengthened by Zinoviev's analysis – that *in the long run* only fundamental internal changes can bring about some kind of 'normalisation' of Soviet foreign policy in terms of Western notions of peace and international cooperation. But in the short and medium run political leaders in the West should be much more moderate in their expectations of what can be acheived *within* the Soviet Union through this or that variant of either a more militant or a more forthcoming policy *vis-à-vis* the Soviet government.

One more word about the relationship between Soviet domestic and foreign policies. The most conservative conclusion one should draw from Zinoviev's writings is that it is important to avoid at least one basic mistake: namely to project upon Soviet policy, especially foreign policy, aims and considerations characteristic of Western thinking and – most dangerous of all – to base one's own policy on the expectation that the Soviets will define their interests (economic and political) more or less as Western governments would define them, were they in the place of the Soviet government. One need not follow to the last word Zinoviev's pessimistic warnings about a quasi Zombie-like urge of the Soviet system to expand. But one has to acknowledge the fact that he makes a strong case for the view that the internal mechanisms of Soviet society favour an impulse to increase Soviet control over the international environment to a degree which

cannot be explained satisfactorily in terms of great power interests as traditionally understood.

One of Zinoviev's most valuable contributions seems to me his way of pointing out that it is precisely the *defensive* element in Soviet relations with the outside world which makes for a latent expansionism in Soviet foreign policy: expansion becomes the most effective form of self-protection on the part of a system which cannot risk exposing itself to standards of thought and behaviour thoroughly incompatible with its own functioning but would rather prefer to destroy everything that could be used as a basis for comparison.

We deal here with a phenomenon the general Western public has particular difficulty in comprehending: the fact that the decline of ideology has *not* necessarily lessened the urge to extend Soviet influence. If we follow Zinoviev, it may even have enhanced it further. For the need for self-protection has grown while the lack of moral restraints characteristic of Soviet political behaviour has not disappeared. And Zinoviev directs attention to another typical element in Soviet behaviour: the impulse to solve foreign problems in much the same way the Soviets have been accustomed to tackle their domestic difficulties: by extending one's power over even more resources and even more sectors of economic and social life.

In this context one other aspect of Zinoviev's work deserves some attention: the fact that his analysis raises a rather disturbing question for those of us concerned with the threat to human rights posed by right-wing and left-wing dictatorships in the Third World. There can be no doubt that Zinoviev's treatment of Soviet society as a prototype of communist societies gives tremendous additional weight to the views of American and other neo-conservatives who claim that Soviet-type regimes present by their nature a much more serious threat to those subjected to them than right-wing regimes which abstain from a comparable thorough transformation of all economic and social relations in the country they rule. Have we got our standards wrong? Should we indeed conclude that even the relatively peaceful establishment of a marxist–leninist system of government bound, however, to stay in power for an indefinite time represents a far greater threat to humanity than the blood spilled by a tyranny which can be expected to remain only a passing episode in the history of the people it oppresses? This is not the place even to attempt to settle this conflict of moral priorities. But more than everything that has been said on this subject by Miss Kirkpatrick and the like it is Zinoviev's work, it seems to me, which sharpens our dilemma.

CONCLUSIONS

Only the future will tell whether the Soviets will be able to break through the vicious circle of their own making: the paranoia of the leninist–stalinist system feeding its own antagonism towards the outside world, this antagonism engendering in due course the well-earned hostility of its neighbours and this hostility being in turn taken as justifying the original paranoia. Zinoviev's fatalistic pessimism concerning East–West relations need not be the last word in this matter. For the time being however there is no reason for the West to lower its guard.

As far as Zinoviev's readers are concerned, they seem a rather fortunate lot to me. They are about to witness a rare phenomenon: the test of a social theory by historical events. In the Soviet Union an experiment is taking place the outcome of which will decide whether Zinoviev has given us a lasting analysis of Soviet reality or merely a fleeting impression of a particular epoch in Soviet history, of the period of stagnation under the Brezhnev leadership. The whole thrust of Gorbachev's programme of streamlining and rationalising the Soviet system without changing it appears directed precisely at invalidating Zinoviev's grand theory of Soviet-type societies. It seems not even beyond doubt to me where one's sympathies should lie: while a vindication of Zinoviev's views through a failure of Gorbachev's programme would certainly be a prop to Western feelings of superiority, the potential implications of such a failure for those living in the Soviet Union and even more for those most likely to have to bear the brunt of Soviet resentment and hostility make one hesitate actually to wish for such a triumph.

12 Homo Sovieticus among the Russia-watchers

Philip Hanson*

Nearly fifty years ago, by his own account, Alexander Zinoviev decided that his mission in life was to understand and explain Soviet society.[1] For more than seven years now he has been living in the West, writing vigorously and without censorship on his chosen subject. Being an established resident of Munich, he must now be counted as a Western Russian-watcher. He is a Russia-watcher of exceptional dedication and talent, and one who has lived for more than fifty years inside the society he seeks to understand. Yet he has not become part of the Western sovietological establishment. The reasons for this are interesting on several counts: in particular, for what they reveal about Zinoviev's approach and method as an analyst of Soviet society, and for the light they shed on the relation between fiction and social analysis.[2]

Zinoviev's standing as a writer is another matter. I shall touch on it only briefly. It seems to me that it is both substantial and secure: unusually hard to describe with any precision, but substantial and secure all the same.

The novels, Zinoviev has said, were intended to give an accurate description of socialist society for a general audience. They were 'not for a narrow circle of specialists, whose approval I do not anticipate'.[3] Perhaps he expected the one straight treatise on communist society that he has so far written (*The Reality of Communism*) to get through to the narrow circle of specialists, but I doubt it. He certainly did not go out of his way even in that book to woo the 'narrow circle of specialists'. For a start, he did not refer to any of them. Furthermore, he expressed his opinion of the standard apparatus of scholarship by not bothering with it: no tables, no footnotes, no references, no index, no dates and hardly any proper names. This is not the way to obtain notices in the *American Political Science Review* or to be anthologised in books of readings. Probably, if any such banal result had followed, he would have wondered where he had gone wrong.

* I am indebted to Vladimir Kontorovich and to participants in the Zinoviev conference for comments on an earlier draft.

Zinoviev may describe Soviet society as his chosen battlefield,[4] but only lack of time, I think, prevents him from taking on the world.

None the less, not even Zinoviev can write with the conscious aim of not convincing his readers. To convince a great many of them would not suit him; popular appeal is for him the prerogative of stupid ideas like the Ism. A few perceptive converts are what is wanted. Various *alter egos* in his novels (Anton Zimin in *The Radiant Future*, Schizophrenic and Slanderer in *Yawning Heights*, for example) are described as getting unusually close to the truth in their theorising, but succeeding only in '[giving] a few isolated individuals a certain intellectual satisfaction and a sense of direction'.[5] That is perhaps the result on which the creator of Zimin, Schizophrenic and Slanderer would most pride himself.

In fact, Zinoviev's account of Soviet society has been highly praised, despite all his precautions, by a number of members of 'the narrow circle of specialists'. Alain Besançon, for instance, has spoken of Zinoviev's 'revolutionary point of departure, his Copernican revolution in the approach to the Soviet phenomenon'.[6] Geoffrey Hosking has said that 'Anyone who wants to understand the Soviet Union today must take Zinoviev into account.'[7] The notion of a few isolated individuals finding a certain solitary intellectual pleasure in the ideas of an isolated social theorist may be applicable in the USSR, but it is too romantic to apply in the West. The isolated individuals will expound the reasons for their pleasure in some public forum: in Zinoviev's case, in *L'Express*, or *Corriere della Sera* or the *New York Review of Books*.

For all the praise, however, the influence of Zinoviev's approach on Western sovietology has so far been slight. Those who have been most impressed by his ideas and have responded to them, have all expressed reservations of one sort of another.

Geoffrey Hosking, for example, argues that Zinoviev's attempt to be 'scientific' about Soviet society is at odds with his portrayal of that society from the point of view of a participant in it.[8] Alain Besançon distinguishes between Zinoviev's 'vision', as a writer, of Soviet society and the 'awkward and incomplete skeleton of [his] theory'. The incompleteness of the theory, in Besançon's view, comes from its failure to give sufficient weight to the role of ideology in Soviet life. The public life of each collective – the obedient voting and speechifying in Party meetings, and the like – is an enforced kind of game-playing, Besançon suggests, required by the higher authorities for their own legitimation but not really needed by the primary collective

for the conduct of its 'real', semi-clandestine life. It is a camouflage cover which is more detachable, according to Besançon, than Zinoviev maintains.[9] I think that what Besançon is postulating is that most Soviet citizens are less habituated to official charades, and more consciously resistant to them, than Zinoviev contends; therefore there is more scope for change than Zinoviev allows.

My own criticism, which I have set out elsewhere,[10] is also that the theory is incomplete, though in a different way: it describes how people's behaviour within their primary workplace collectives operates to keep the system stable, but it does not show what it is that keeps the whole structure of hundreds of thousands of collectives so stable and so similar one to the other that they have this effect; in other words, the role of the Party – state leadership is under-played, and it is not the almost inert by-product of the everyday behaviour of ordinary citizens which Zinoviev implies. This criticism may well be compatible with Besançon's.

Ronald Tiersky, similarly, is strongly influenced by what he calls the 'marvellous insight' of Zinoviev's writings, but does not accept all of Zinoviev's conclusions.[11] Jon Elster, who is a political philosopher rather than a Russia-watcher, finds Zinoviev's method of analysis of social phenomena illuminating, particularly his stress on *unintended consequences* of actions. He considers that Zinoviev's picture of Soviet society is exaggerated but preserves basic features of the system, including the fact that the rulers are themselves prisoners of it. Elster shares my reluctance, however, to accept that the subjects are every bit as responsible for what happens as the rulers. He thinks Zinoviev is too pessimistic about Soviet society's ability to repress talent and prevent reform. 'Against this I would like to suggest that social systems are more malleable than the individuals who make them up, and that great changes will occur once the lid is taken off. Perhaps one could even hope for a drift towards freedom.'[12]

Some assertions of hopefulness, however faint, occur in nearly all criticisms of Zinoviev's analysis of Soviet society. Even those Western specialists who are most impressed by the picture of Soviet society as stable and founded on grass-roots support (a special kind of grass-roots support, but a strong kind nevertheless), agree in finding Zinoviev 'too pessimistic'. Zinoviev, however, maintains that on this subject, a pessimist is simply a well-informed optimist.

Zinoviev has offered two main criticisms of Western perceptions of the USSR. First, sovietologists have no useful knowledge about the Soviet Union, or about communist society generally. This is not

because we do not know lots of facts about the USSR, but because we have no adequate theory which would enable us to predict developments in that country. In other words, he takes the standard, conventional view that success in science is measured by the development and testing of general theories and specific hypotheses, and that the crucial test is success in prediction; and he sees that a great deal of Western scholarship on the USSR, even when it is conducted under the rubric of economics or sociology or political science, is historical and descriptive. '. . . it is only on the basis of such dilettantism [as Anton Zimin's] (and not from the fashionable books of Western sociology, Sovietology, anti-communism and so on) that a genuine science of our society can begin.'[13]

The second criticism is directed at the general public in Western countries, but without any exemptions for sovietological experts: people who have not lived in the Soviet Union or some other communist society simply do not begin to understand how it works. Zinoviev treats as self-evidently absurd (to the initiated) Western notions of Soviet society as a primarily Russian, not a communist, phenomenon or of the possibility of 'socialism with a human face'. Such notions are simply laughable to anyone who has lived under real socialism.[14] In a similar vein, Zinoviev attributes to Westerners generally a belief that Orwell in *1984*[15] or Kafka,[16] or both, captured key features of Soviet society. In general, he says, 'I have developed the conviction that the West is not so much unable as actively unwilling to understand the Soviet Union'.[17]

Of these two criticisms, the second is more easily dealt with. Zinoviev has observed the usual incomprehension that most people have about societies with which they have little acquaintance and which are substantially different from those they are acquainted with. He and I, I should imagine, share a common incomprehension about Japanese society. For Westerners, Soviet society is particularly problematic: so many things about it are both the opposite of what they seem and the opposite of what they would be in the West. One example would be the eagerness with which a large part of the Soviet liberal intelligentsia embraces ideas which are conventionally abhorrent to their Western counterparts: the desirability of greater income inequality and of a threat of unemployment to make people work harder; the notion that nature may be more important than nurture; even a distaste for people of other races. These views, though not shared by all Soviet intellectuals, have wide currency as conventional received ideas. Yet they are contrary both to official Soviet public

statements and to what a conventional Western left-liberal intellectual routinely expects to hear from congenial persons.

This difficulty in seeing the world through foreign eyes is a difficulty which specialists on particular foreign countries should have overcome. Zinoviev is right, I fear, when he says that Western sovietologists have not done so. Or rather, he is right to say this about quite a few of us, and particularly those who confine their attention to a single so-called 'discipline' – economics, politics or sociology – and who ignore Russian and Soviet literature and history. On the other hand, anyone who actually followed the Western literature about the nature of the Soviet political system would have noticed that this accusation of *not really understanding Soviet reality* is a commonplace charge directed at some sovietologists by others. Similarly, Zinoviev observes that the idea of interest-group conflicts in Soviet policies is an inappropriate transfer of notions derived from Western experience to a fundamentally different system of power relations under communism.[18] He may be right, but if he supposed when he wrote it (1979–1980) that he was saying something new, he was under a misapprehension. Ever since Jerry Hough stuck a (carefully-qualified and narrowly defined) label of 'institutional pluralism' on the Soviet political system,[19] entire forests have been cut down to enable other sovietologists to assert that he did not *really understand Soviet reality*. In itself, it is not an assertion that helps to determine who is right.

Zinoviev's dismissal of Western sovietologists generally ought to be difficult for him to square with the fact that many of them agree with his analysis. Those Western Russia-watchers who have expressed their admiration for Zinoviev's account of Soviet society consider that he is saying in a clear, powerful and connected way several things which they themselves had previously accepted but had not quite clarified in their own minds. In other words, like all new ideas of any scope and depth, Zinoviev's analysis of the collective, of communalism and of the self-imposed nature of the Soviet system, seemed obvious to at least some people as soon as it was stated, but had not previously seemed obvious to anyone. If, however, some of those people were Western specialists, it follows that one does not have to have lived for years in the Soviet Union to see what Zinoviev is getting at.

Furthermore, being a Soviet citizen or a former Soviet citizen provides no guarantee that one will accept even some of Zinoviev's most basic axioms. He ridicules an unnamed internal 'critic of the

regime' for making the elementary error of supposing that the Soviet regime is un-marxist:

> The critic, after being expelled from the third year of some decrepit technical institute, and after doing five years in prison (which is generally considered a necessary and sufficient condition for understanding Soviet society) announced that the Soviet leaders had betrayed marxism. A sovietologist who had spent twenty years in libraries studying marxism and Soviet society, contributed the additional proposition that the Soviet social order is not socialist at all. Idiots![20]

He also observes that the 'critical literature' on the structure and role of the Party in communist society reaches a 'monstrous degree of incomprehension', and adds: 'It is curious that former Party members, and even people who once occupied posts in the Party apparatus, talk exactly the same unimaginable rubbish on this subject as the rest.'[21]

In other words: to make the most elementary mistakes about Soviet society, you do not have to be a Westerner. Experience of Soviet life will not ensure that you understand it. Zinoviev's tilts at Western sovietology for its general dimness and irrelevance come from no more than the traditional Russian superstition about the inner mystery of Russian life which none but Russians can apprehend.[22]

Alain Besançon, while continuing to praise Zinoviev's artistic vision of Soviet society, has recently sharpened his criticism of Zinoviev as a social theorist. He has observed, succinctly, that Zinoviev has, in that capacity, two serious defects: the Russian prejudice that only Russians can understand their society, combined with the Soviet prejudice that there is a precise science of history and of society.[23]

I would say that the first of these prejudices is not logically entailed in Zinoviev's admittedly assertive intellectual stance, though the arguments he deploys bear traces of it. The second prejudice, however, seems to me to be indisputably present in much of what Zinoviev has written; moreover, Zinoviev's characteristic claim is that he has laid the corner-stone of this precise science of Soviet society. Claims of this sort are simply not accepted in Western intellectual discourse about society – at least, not in non-Marxian Western discourse or, for that matter, in the flexible, tentative neo-Marxian discourse of a writer like E. P. Thompson. The ambitious assertion that a grand theory of communist society is possible,

and that he has already partly built it, is the biggest barrier to communication between Zinoviev and more conventional students of communist policies and society.

That barrier does not, however, constitute a reason for ignoring Zinoviev's message. And the extent of the barrier may be somewhat exaggerated. If one disregards the polemical fireworks in which Zinoviev indulges in his interviews, and simply pays attention to what he says in his books, it appears that what seem very often to be exaggerated assertions about general 'laws' are apt to be qualified or more flexibly interpreted somewhere else in his writings. This is what leads many readers to say that he contradicts himself. I do not myself find it a very sporting habit, but it can be characterised rather differently: it is very hard to think of an objection to something that he or one of his characters says that he (or one of his characters) has not also thought of – and inserted somewhere else in the enormous, continuous text which his writings compose.

There is another difficulty about Besançon's diagnosis of the defects in Zinoviev's social analysis. Can a writer convey a 'more profound picture' of Soviet society 'than any other dissident writer', as Besancon puts it, if his intellectual analysis of that society is – as Besancon also puts it – 'gravely deficient'? Suppose that a literary portrait of a society, however abstract or surrealistic in technique, seems to well-informed readers to capture attitudes, unwritten rules and power relationships which the readers judge to be both characteristic and important in that society. Suppose that it conveys them clearly and vividly and tells a convincing story about how they all fit together. That would presumably be what Besançon means by a 'profound picture'. One can easily conceive of the author of such a picture being unable to provide a comprehensive and entirely coherent theoretical analysis of the social relations in question. (Could Balzac? Dickens? Trollope? Tolstoy?) But can one easily conceive of the author of such a literary picture offering an analysis which was not merely incomplete and poorly articulated but plain wrong?

In the case of most good novelists, perhaps this is conceivable. Their imaginative powers enable them both to present sympathetically attitudes which they themselves would repudiate and to reveal the dark side of attitudes and views which they themselves espouse.[24] To that extent, the fictional picture they give of a society may be one from which an analysis of that society can be derived which conflicts with the analysis which the author would put forward if he also had to play the role of social analyst.

Alexander Zinoviev, however, is a very unusual kind of novelist. What Vail' and Genis refer to as his 'Menippean' style[25] really is about halfway between fiction and social-philosophical exposition. Most of the voices in his fiction seem to be his own, in slightly different moods. The imaginative conjuring-up of other minds is not part of the act. His character's eternal subject is the nature of Soviet society, and the views they express may not be identical but they are strikingly congruent. The fictional framework allows Zinoviev the chance to leave some logical loose ends and discrepancies; but it does not seem capable of accommodating interpretations of Soviet society which would be much at odds with the direct and explicit theorising of *The Reality of Communism*. It would therefore be implausible to argue that his writer's 'vision' of Soviet society can be profound while his theoretical analysis of it is wrong-headed. I would prefer to say that his theoretical analysis is incomplete, and the claims he sometimes makes for it are exaggerated. In short: he is so predominantly and explicitly a propounder of ideas in his fiction that the fiction would lose most of its force if the key ideas conveyed in it were demonstrably false.

The main difficulties with Zinoviev's social analysis are, I think, four in number: the pretensions to a grand, all-encompassing theory of Soviet society, accompanied by an exaggerated reverence for 'science' ('*nauka*') in social analysis; his total neglect of what others have written; his contention that a theory of Soviet society is also valid as a theory of all communist societies, and his practice of uttering bald and apparently unqualified general propositions and stating only separately and surreptitiously the specific assumptions under which these propositions are expected to apply.

Zinoviev has put forward a general theory of communism, much as Marx put forward a general theory of capitalism. Unlike Marx, he does not claim to offer a general theory of human history. He shares Popper's scepticism in his own way. 'There is no law for the transformation of societies, just as there is no law for the transformation of flies into elephants, elephants into cows or rabbits into lions and boa-constrictors'.[26] You could say therefore that Zinoviev is a modest twentieth-century social theorist, abjuring grand theories about human society in general.

Nevertheless, a general theory of communist society is still pretty grand, as theorising goes these days. The work that comes to mind as nearest in scope, with respect to Western society, is Galbraith's *New Industrial State*, and that cuts nowhere near as deeply into human

behaviour. Marshall McLuhan's writings aim to reach at least as far as Zinoviev's, but seem eccentric by comparison. The only recent Western social thinker who has depth and scope comparable to Alexander Zinoviev is the late Paul Goodman, and he is less systematic and less funny.

It is the fate of all grand social theorists to be sniped at even by their admirers. The grand theories always seem to be simultaneously too grand and not grand enough. They try to account for a very large class of phenomena in a simple way. This means, in Whitehall language, that they fly a lot of kites. Each little specialist looks up and sees a kite flying over his neck of the woods, so naturally he throws stones at it. And it gets hit, because we specialists may be limited, but we are not stupid. At the same time, the grand theory can never quite cover everything. It simply fails to answer some questions. If the grand theory survives as a whole, it does so only by being softened like Marxism and Freudianism into a series of rhetorical questions and tautological answers. In so far as there is something solid and useful in it, that something also survives, separately from the original grand structure, as an accepted aid to understanding. Kenneth Boulding put it succinctly when he wrote, about Marshall McLuhan: 'It is perhaps typical of very creative minds that they hit very large nails not quite on the head'.

Zinoviev describes his arguments as *nauka* (science and scholarship), and it is clear that he envisages his procedures in *The Reality of Communism* as conforming to scientific method in the sense applicable to *estestvoznanie* (natural science). As I argued in my *Survey* article, his approach is quite simply that of constructing a theoretical model which abstracts from factors with which he is not concerned, in order to assess the workings of those factors with which he is concerned.

In disputing some of his conclusions, I have made two kinds of criticism. One is *a priori*: that the role of the central authorities needs to be introduced more explicitly and given more prominence if the theory as a whole is to work coherently; in other words, that the power of the primary collective under communism cannot be accounted for simply by reference to basic human drives and the internal logic of the work place collective. The overall hierarchy in which the collective is embedded gives it its special power.

The second kind of criticism is empirical. Does the theory work, i.e. does it predict successfully? Zinoviev claims for the power of his method to predict at least some broad tendencies and even important

individual events, and cites (in *MIZ*) his prediction of the invasion of Afghanistan. But then he appears also to have expected Grishin to succeed Brezhnev[27] and to have considered a direct Soviet invasion of Poland in 1981 at least possible.[28] He obviously accepts that his theory is partial: actual events will be the result of a mass of circumstances, of which the working of the Soviet system as such is only one. When it comes to forecasting particular future events, his guesses are as vulnerable as those of the rest of us. A prediction which he has made about the current Soviet leader is of a level of generality that is more appropriate to his theory, and comes close to providing a test of it. 'In a few years Gorbachev will either be thrown out of the saddle of history, like Khrushchev, and will break his neck, or he will evolve to a kind of Brezhnevism . . .'[29] I would argue that what he has provided is the best theoretical analysis that we have of the micro-level working of Soviet society, but that his theory is an account of a tendency inherent in the Soviet communist system but capable of being offset by other factors, so that it may not always provide a convincing account of communist society everywhere.

The achievement of a powerful and persuasive, if not total, account of Soviet society, based on a small number of clear general propositions, is none the less a considerable achievement.

I have argued before now that part of Zinoviev's theory of communist society, however, is a conventional liberal critique along Hayekian lines.[30] This is not obvious in Zinoviev's writings, and it may be that he has independently and unwittingly re-invented Hayek's argument that personal freedom is in the long run inseparable from the institution of private property: where the state is the sole employer, civil liberties cannot survive. Since Zinoviev never cites any other writer's ideas except (as with Orwell) to show that they are inapplicable to communist society, he conveys a strong impression that he owes no intellectual debts. Perhaps, indeed, he does not: the combination of the Soviet censorship and his own cussedly independent turn of mind may have kept him clear of Hayek, Friedman and modern liberal writings in general. Even if he had read them however, it is hard to imagine him citing them and recording his agreement. There are two modes of expression which he does not command: the eulogy and the footnote.

Implicitly, Alexander Zinoviev is claiming a patent for this theory of Soviet society, and one of the criteria of patentability is novelty. Personally, I would award the patent without hesitation, but there is nothing totally new under the sun. It would be odd if anyone,

however talented, could come up with a general theory of a particular social system, owing nothing at all, at any point, to other thinkers. This is no more likely than a new technology which owes nothing to any earlier technologies. If a totally novel theory could be devised, it would probably be totally wrong.

Zinoviev has said that he took to writing fiction when he was prevented (in Moscow) from working in science.[31] Science, as he observed, is a social, communal activity. The fact is that he prefers to be a writer. Even in a treatise like *The Reality of Communism* he eschews the references to other authors which are one of the characteristics that mark science and scholarship as social activities.

I have already raised the question whether Zinoviev's theory is, as he maintains, a theory of communist society in general, or more limited in scope. My own view is that the theory is indeed a general theory of communist society, but that past history has a greater weight in determining the characteristic social relationships of communist countries than Zinoviev allows. He is far too subtle to ignore the influence of a nation's inheritance. He notes that isolating the effects of the communist system on a country's life from the effects of geography and history is extremely difficult.[32] He therefore proposes, he says, to treat communist society in an abstract way. In other words, he is discussing the logical consequence of features of social organisation which are common to communist countries.[33]

His abstract notion of a communist society is a society in which communal life predominates in the fashion described in the theory. The consequence is that a communist country in which 'dissidents are persecuted, people are tied to their places of work and residence and there are no civil rights, is a normal communist society'; and a communist country where these characteristics are not found 'is a deviation from the norm of phenomena of this type'.[34]

Obviously some but not all of the phenomena he refers to were present in pre-revolutionary Russia. Dissidents were persecuted, though less efficiently, and most of the population (ie the peasants) were tied to specific places of work and residence. (Indeed, freedom to change one's place of work is now more widespread than it was in, say, 1900.)

The phenomena that he describes throughout *Kommunizm kak real'nost'* can, I believe, be acknowledged as characteristic of actual Soviet life. Zinoviev is always ready to admit exceptions to his generalisations: some dissidents really are talented, some Soviet citizens (painters, writers, lawyers, etc,) are not tied to a collective,

and so on. Typicality, or general recognisability, is what he aims at. For the Soviet Union, in my personal judgement, he achieves it. This is not surprising, since this theory is based on Soviet experience. And he regards Soviet society, plausibly enough, as a particularly pure example of communism, almost 'a laboratory experiment'.[35]

If his theory is a general theory of communism, however, it should also give a generally convincing and recognisable account of social relations in other communist countries. I am not myself persuaded that it does. I am on thin ice here, because my qualifications for pontificating about East European reality are even less than they are for pontificating about Soviet reality. For what it is worth, however, I observe in Poland, even under martial law, an absence of any general expectation that one is likely to be informed upon and to get into trouble: Poles exhibit, I think, a readiness to criticise the regime in a harsh and far-reaching manner even to other Poles whom they scarcely know. 'We have found', as one Pole said to me, 'That we all think alike'.

In Poland, I suggest, 'the authorities' really are perceived as a small group of people separate from the great bulk of the population. Copies of *Gulag Archipelago* and *Animal Farm* could in 1983 be displayed in a busy market because those who would make a fuss about sales of these books were identifiable (they are police, and wear uniforms), and when the police arrive at one end of the market, everyone will cooperate to spread the word instantaneously and hide any embarrassing item. Nowhere in the Russian Republic, at least, would you find such – for want of a better word – solidarity. Moscow and Leningrad are inhabited by *Homo Sovieticus*, I suggest, and Warsaw is not.

Hungary, too, is in my view not clearly recognisable in *The Reality of Communism*. There have recently been periods of time, I understand, when dissidents were not repressed at all. Published discussion is not totally free, but insults to Moscow, anti-nuclear protests, pornography and the ill-treatment of ethnic Hungarians in Romania are about the only taboo subjects. Hungarian economists cheerfully propose, in Western as well as Hungarian journals, the expansion of Hungarian private enterprise;[36] it may not be quite *comme il faut* to say that the Soviet Union is an awful place, but a Hungarian Central Committee secretary can, attributably, say that a return to the centralised economy 'is as inconceivable as going back to the Stone Age'.[37] And Zinoviev's law of distribution under communism – to each according to his official position – no longer applies in Hungary.

Those who are well-off because of their official positions have so far tolerated the emergence of a new class of *nouveaux riches*, the legalised private entrepreneurs.

Zinoviev would say, I think, that these are deviations from the communist norm. He would point to the elements of 'communism as reality' that *are* discernible even in these deviant communist countries. Perhaps he would even say that Poland and Hungary are no longer communist societies at all, but ex-communist societies held in a kind of no man's land by the threat of external force and lacking strong internal mechanisms for maintaining the status quo. But if so, how did they change? How were they dislodged from the static equilibrium characteristic of his model of communist society? I think nationalism is part of the answer and I suggest that, like Marx, Zinoviev has underrated the power of nationalism.

The examples of Hungary and Poland should not be made too much of, however. The Romanias, Albanias, North Koreas and, arguably, all the other communist countries may be close enough to Ibansk to support Zinoviev's claim to be describing 'normal communism'.

There is a more general question: how is the static equilibrium of Zinoviev's communism to be reconciled with his own call, at the end of *The Reality of Communism*, to build civilisation on the basis of communism itself? This passage is a store of paradoxes within his whole system of paradoxes. He says that there is no way back to a pre-communist system. Yet he has earlier denied that there can be historical laws governing the transformation of one kind of society into another. That should mean that there is no necessary sequence of types of social order, so that the notion of a 'pre-communist system' has no meaning. The transformation of flies into elephants and elephants into cows cannot be ruled out.

If nationalism and national traditions count for more than Zinoviev allows, part of what he identifies as communist may be Russian. There is, for example, a striking continuity between what he calls ideological thinking and traditional Russian *vran'ye*. When Chekhov wrote of 'our hypocritical, bogus, hysterical, uneducated, lazy intelligentsia',[38] he was being a shade more severe than Zinoviev, who writes: 'From the moral standpoint it [the Soviet intelligentsia] is the most cynical and infamous section of the Soviet population. . . . Intellectuals are clever enough to hide their meanness and to justify their behaviour.'[39]

Zinoviev observes that 'the very low level of life and culture of

Russia was convenient for communist experiments'.[40] In other words, he acknowledges a certain compatibility between the Russian past and the Soviet present. But it is only a small step from this to Peter Wiles's argument that only Russians could have invented the Soviet system.[41] A small step in our argument, that is, but one which drastically reduces the importance of any general theory of communist society. If you have to be a Russian, or invaded by Russians, in order to become communist, the sphere of application of Zinoviev's theory is, with a bit of luck, greatly reduced. In fact, the establishment of communist regimes in Cuba, Laos, Cambodia and China is evidence that it is not necessary to be Russian or invaded by Russians to become communist. It may, however, be necessary to be either underdeveloped or invaded by Russians.

Alternatively, then, we might interpret Zinoviev as saying that it was Russia's plain economic backwardness rather than its specifically Russian form of backwardness that made it amenable to communism. In that case, it is again a small step to Kenneth Boulding's suggestion that the bus from capitalism to communism runs only in the early stages of capitalism. If that is so, Western Europe, North America and Australia lie for ever beyond the reach of any general theory of communist society.

Considered simply as an analysis of Soviet society, however, Zinoviev's account is original and impressive.[42] If Zinoviev has so far had less influence on Western specialists' perceptions of the USSR than he should have had, the fault is not all on his side. One consideration is that of style. The unconventional manner in which he sets out his ideas may have deterred some people from paying proper attention to them; if so, the objection is trivial, and their own conventionality is to blame. What Zinoviev defines as vulgar or philistine thinking also plays a part. What he means by this is simply the selection of analyses, evidence and interpretation to produce the conclusions one would prefer to see.

The narrator in *Homo Sovieticus*, like Zinoviev himself, insists that the attractive and unattractive features of any social system are likely to be inextricably linked with one another. The vulgar, or sentimental, way of thinking would have it that if the preferred social system is more free, it must also be shown – whatever the evidence – to be simultaneously more efficient, more productive, more conducive to scientific progress, less prone to unemployment, more equitable and, in general, in every way more attractive than the rival system. In *Homo Sovieticus* the narrator complains that his analysis of Soviet

society is rejected in the USSR because it draws attention to too many weaknesses, and in the West because it draws attention to too many strengths.[43]

Zinoviev does go on rather about how other people will confuse 'is' with 'ought'. Unfortunately, he is right to do so. It is striking how often, in academic writings in the highly 'political' field of Soviet studies, the wish is father to the hypothesis, and cooks the evidence as well. Zinoviev's insistence simultaneously on the extreme strength and stability of Soviet society and its extreme unpleasantness confuses and dismays a great many of his readers. Yet, it should not have this effect. The holding of both these views together entails no logical inconsistency.

Does Zinoviev, however, simply over-state his arguments? Alain Besançon says that 'Zinoviev's propositions must be attended to in the symphonic environment in which they are presented and without which they lose some of their persuasive power.'[44] I would put it differently: Zinoviev is apt, in his writings, to choose resonance at the cost of precision. Or (to be more precise and less resonant): for the sake of resonant utterances, he chooses to make his arguments precise only in a devious, concealed way.

In *Nashei yunosti polet* (*The Flight of our Youth*) Zinoviev's characters say a number of things about the Stalin era which carry a certain intellectual excitement because they are novel. It is twice asserted, for example, that the great majority of informers' reports were truthful;[45] also that those who were arrested felt guilty.[46] Elsewhere in the book, however, these assertions are either withdrawn or qualified. The same character who says that informers were generally truthful, two pages later says that 'every conceivable denunciation was levelled at everybody'.[47] And the feeling of being at fault for being arrested is later explained as simply a sense of annoyance with oneself for not being more careful.[48] Zinoviev has a trick of arriving at a commonplace conclusion by way of an intellectual scenic route through spectacular ranges of gleaming half-truths and dramatic downright lies. The technique he uses of dialogues (or long sequences of monologues) makes this possible. It is incompatible with the orthodox exposition of ideas, in which the main propositions are directly accompanied by qualifying terms, initial assumptions and so on.

This technique gives Zinoviev's writings their assertive, 'exaggerated' character which plain and proper sovietologists find irritating. The use of different voices, however, enables Zinoviev to give passionate expression to ideas which matter too much to him to be

treated in a cool and measured way. It may also be why the best of his fiction is more persuasive than his treatise and his essays. In the words of Vladimir Kontorovich:

> the fiction has something that is missing in the tracts, but which is important for understanding the USSR. . . . Fiction gives us a different kind of knowledge, the *verstehen*, that is more immediate and in many respects deeper than the generalities of a theory.[49]

In consciously blending scholarship with literature Zinoviev is like Solzhenitsyn. Both writers now say that they vowed in early youth to devote themselves to understanding the society in which they lived. Solzhenitsyn is trying to do this by reconstructing that society's history in semi-fictional form. Zinoviev is trying to do it by formulating the social, psychological and political regularities in the working of that society, by means of semi-fictional monologues and meditations.

I cannot imagine any Western writer embarking on such an intellectually grandiose mission. Neither William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County nor Gunter Grass's reconsideration of Nazism show much ambition to combine 'science', consciously, with art. Conversely, it is hard to imagine any Western scholar being driven by such fierce passion about his subject.

As for Western sovietologists – blinkered devotees of our own trade though most of us are – it is impossible for any of us to feel so passionately about Soviet society as Solzhenitsyn, Zinoviev and a great many other intellectual *émigrés* do. Our purposes in studying the USSR are different from theirs. Few of us, I suspect, accept Zinoviev's notion that Moscow is now the prime mover in world history, the effective capital of the world. I, for one, can only see Russia as a relatively backward country on the fringe of European civilisation, much as it always has been: trying in a clumsy way to be more like the developed countries, and succeeding chiefly in harassing its own citizens. It may, if we are not very careful, come to dominate us, as the Visigoths came to dominate Rome; but I find it more natural to think of that as a failure on the part of Rome than as a success achieved by prescience and statecraft on the part of the Visigoths. Other Western specialists have other prejudices about the Soviet Union, but it cannot have, for any of us, the overwhelming importance that it does for so many *émigré* Soviet writers and scholars. We can neither love it as much nor hate it as much as they do, so it is not surprising that we often talk at cross purposes.

Notes

1. *NYP*, pp. 12–13 and 32. Here the voices of the character 'I' says roughly what Zinoviev has said elsewhere directly about himself. In 'Autobiography' *Survey*, no. 104 (Summer 1977–8), pp. 1–11, he says that from his arrest in 1939 up to the death of Stalin he regarded anti-Stalinist propaganda as his main life's work (p. 3). In some autobiographical notes which he gave to me in 1985, Zinoviev says that the central idea of his theory of communist society – that each workplace collective is a microcosm of the whole society – was formulated in 1939. This is what 'I' says about himself in *NYP* (p. 32). The most eloquent statement of Zinoviev's life's mission is the one which Georges Nivat quotes in 'Nostalgies Russes', *Magazine Litteraire*, no. 221 (July–August 1985), pp. 53–63.
2. Vladimir Kontorovich has pointed out to me that what this tells us about Western sovietologists is also important. This is quite right; it is a subject which I have mentioned in this Chapter, but which deserves more attention than I have given it.
3. *TRL*, p. 11; *KKR*, p. 7.
4. In *Magazine Litteraire*, cited in note 1.
5. *YH*, p. 757; *ZV*, p. 511.
6. In 'La Normalité du communisme selon Zinoviev', *Pouvoirs* 21 (1982), pp. 151–9.
7. 'Mediocrity for the Millions', *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 May 1980, pp. 571–2.
8. See Chapter 13 in this book.
9. Besancon, 'La normalite du communisme selon Zinoviev'.
10. 'Alexander Zinoviev; Totalitarianism from Below', *Survey*, no. 114 (Winter 1982), pp. 29–49.
11. Ronald Tiersky, *Ordinary Stalinism* (Boston/London: Allen & Unwin, 1985). This book deals with communist parties in both East and West. It analyses the practice of democratic centralism, with Zinoviev's account of the internal coherence and stability of communism as a starting-point.
12. Jon Elster, *Sour Grapes. Studies in the Subversion of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), esp. pp. 86–9 (Zinoviev's influence on Elster's analysis of the concept of social rationality, as Elster acknowledges, extends through much of this book).
13. *RF*, p. 250; *SB*, p. 202.
14. *TRC*, p. 11, *KKR*, p. 6; *GS*, p. 37; *HS*, p. 37.
15. '"1984" and 1984', in Benoit J. Suykerbuyck (ed.), *Essays from Oceania and Eurasia. George Orwell and 1984* (Antwerp: Progressef, 1984), pp. 151–8; also *KKR*, p. 51.
16. 'Soviet Society: Beyond Kafka', *Soviet Analyst*, vol. 12, no. 15 (3 August 1983), pp. 1–3.
17. *NSNRNB*, p. 23.
18. *TRC*, p. 190; *KKR*, p. 167.
19. See J. Hough, 'The Soviet System. Petrification or Pluralism?' *Problems of Communism*, March–April 1972, pp. 25–45, and 'Political Participation in the Soviet Union', *Soviet Studies*, January 1976, pp. 3–21.
20. *HS*, p. 37; *GS*, p. 37.
21. *TRC*, p. 148; *KKR*, p. 129.

22. Ronald Hingley, in *The Russian Mind* (London: The Bodley Head, 1978), provides a panoramic view of this and other traditions.
23. Introducing an interview with Zinoviev by Georges Nivat in *L'Express*, 12 April 1985.
24. I have elaborated this argument, with examples from Gorky, Sartre, Doris Lessing and Herman Hesse in 'Anti-Bourgeois Anger: Notes on Fiction as a Guide to a Political Sentiment', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 82, no. 3 (Summer 1983), pp. 235–46.
25. Petr Vail' and Aleksandr Genis, 'Vselennaya bez mozzhechka. Zinoev'ev i menippeya', *Vremya i my*, no. 39 (March 1979) pp. 147–59. This label was applied to *Yawning Heights*, but it is equally appropriate to all his other books from 1976 onwards except the volumes of collected essays and interviews, the lectures on logic published in Oxford in 1983 and the more-or-less sociological treatise, *Kommunizm kak real'nost'*. The nearest analogies to Zinoviev in British or American literature that I know of are Joseph Heller's *Something Happened* and *Good as Gold*, and they are not that close. In the former the narrator's desperate intellectual probing of his world is reminiscent of a Zinoviev narrator, and dominates the book in a not dissimilar way. In the latter, the caricature of American presidential politics is extraordinarily similar to Zinoviev's depiction in *Yawning Heights* of future Soviet leaders as a series of interchangeable sub-Brezhnevian automata.
26. *TRC*, p. 40; *KKR*, p. 30.
27. According to the *Peninsula Times Tribune* of Palo Alto, California, on 11 November 1982. (Zinoviev had been visiting the area shortly before that date.)
28. In an interview with Atticus (Stephen Pile), *Sunday Times*, 3 May 1981, he said he would volunteer to fight against the Soviet army if it went into Poland – a bold and, I am sure, heartfelt offer which I am told he also made in a broadcast to Poland at that time, and which Polish friends say they found moving. Characteristically, he added in the *Sunday Times* interview: '. . . but I recognise that Poland is just a pretext for me to solve my personal problems about courage and my inability to take risks. It is so for all dissidents. They use the regime to make statements about themselves.'
29. Alexander Zinoviev, 'The Gorbachev Phenomenon', *Soviet Analyst*, 20 November 1985, pp. 2–3.
30. 'Alexander Zinoviev', in note 10.
31. Interview with Georges Nivat in *L'Express*, 12 April 1985.
32. *TRC*, p. 42;*KKR*, p. 33.
33. *TRC*, p. 49, *KKR*, p. 39.
34. *TRC*, p. 54, *KKR*, p. 44.
35. *TRC*, p. 13, *KKR*, p. 8.
36. See the papers by Reszo Nyers, Janos Kornai and Marton Tardos in *Journal of Comparative Economics*, vol. 7, no. 3 (September 1983).
37. *Los Angeles Times*, 17 October 1983.
38. Cited by Hingley, *The Russian Mind*, p. 188.
39. 'The Intelligentsia: Communism's Voluntary Stronghold', *Soviet Analyst*, 9 November 1983, pp. 3–6.
40. *TRC*, p. 49, *KKR*, p. 40.

41. P. J. D. Wiles, 'The Social and Political Pre-Requisites of a Command Economy', *Economica*, 1962.
42. I have tried to summarise its main elements and place it in relation to other writings in the article cited in note 10.
43. *HS*, p. 179; *GS*, p. 173.
44. 'La Normalité du communisme selon Zinoviev', in note 6.
45. *NYP*, pp. 18, 67.
46. Ibid., pp. 17, 82–4.
47. Ibid., p. 69.
48. Ibid., p. 83.
49. In a letter to me of 28 November 1985.

13 Moralism versus Science

Geoffrey Hosking

Since coming to the West, Zinoviev has been prone to make some very absolutist claims about the superiority of his scientific understanding of the Soviet Union. Denouncing the studies of western sovietologists as 'the work of charlatans', he has asserted

> My theory leads me to a mathematical model of Communist society. Admittedly, it will take hundreds of specially trained researchers to substantiate it over a long period of time, and when it is completed, the gap between abstract truth and concrete application may well be a large one. Nevertheless, the laws emerging from my theory have the force of the laws of physics. They are objective universal laws.[1]

These claims seem to rest on two assertions: (a) that, unlike Western students of the Soviet Union, he has a lifetime's experience of living in the place, without which a proper understanding is impossible; (b) unlike Soviet social scientists (and actually most Western ones too) he has a proper scientific method. The trouble is, these two claims are by their nature incompatible: it is impossible to combine the stances of participant and Olympian observer. The attempt to do so gives rise to ambivalences of a kind frequently found in Zinoviev's work. He is up against the dilemma he himself eloquently evokes at the end of *NYP* (p. 160): 'What can the grain of sand, borne aloft by the Great Hurricane, say about the whole Hurricane?'

This ambivalence is not necessarily an artistic defect, but it is I think a scientific one. Its consequences are apparent in all his works, indeed underlie their whole structure. Except in *The Reality of Communism* his narrator is fragmented into several personae. These separate individuals operate on diverse and often incompatible linguistic levels. They sometimes conduct dialogues with each other, and sometimes expatiate in monologues – or even, literally, in monographs – which tend to sail past each other like ships in the night, foghorn blasting but making no real contact. It is arguable that this technique enhances the literary impact of his works, but it certainly detracts from their scientific claims.

They are also (and this includes *The Reality of Communism*)

broken down into numerous discrete and often quite brief sections, which are not necessarily logically connected one with another, indeed sometimes contradict one another. Discursive exposition is thus replaced by a kind of intellectual pointillisme, and the total argument is built up out of separate snapshots. Once again, this device can be artistically effective, but Zinoviev sometimes seems to have recourse to it in order to veil the fact that two opposed viewpoints are being put forward simultaneously without any attempt to reconcile the contradictions they entail.

A similar difficulty manifests itself in Zinoviev's attitude towards his fellow sovietologists. Just as he does not explicitly confront the tensions inside his own work, so also he refrains from any kind of dialogue with his colleagues in the field. Though he does not tell us why he does this, he strongly implies that it is because none of his predecessors' efforts are worth discussion, since they have not lived in the Soviet Union, and they do not have his scientific method. Yet in fact one of the essentials of the scientific method is debate with one's colleagues. In Zinoviev's case one would especially welcome such debate, since his views are not unique, as he implies: in important respects his ideas have been anticipated by others; and one would like to know how far Zinoviev in fact accepts their hypotheses, and how far and for what reasons he disagrees with them. This would perhaps overburden his work as literature, but would certainly enhance its scientific claims.

It is, however, possible to see that he has two particular opponents in his sights. They are (a) Soviet social scientists and historians, with their dogmatic Marxist–Leninist theoretical framework, and (b) Western theorists of the 'totalitarian' school. Both species, he seems to feel, attribute excessive importance to both ideology and leadership as determining elements within Soviet society. He also criticises Western observers for incongruously imposing Western values on Soviet society, and hence overemphasising the importance of the 'dissidents'. Yet in fact he has much in common with both schools (not to mention the dissidents), a fact which he never really acknowledges or explores. Along with Soviet scholars, he maintains that the Soviet authorities are truly 'popular', in the sense that they come from the people, are supported by them, and operate a system which conforms to their perceptions and expectations. As for our own theorists, Zinoviev has much in common with those, like Arendt, Schapiro or Friedrich and Brzezinski, who see totalitarianism as one of the modes of organisation of mass society. It is true, he would

dissent from the view of those who, like Kornhauser, emphasise the *atomisation* of totalitarian society: one of the most distinctive features of Zinoviev's picture has been his evocation of the sociability, wanted and unwanted, of the basic collective. But in precisely this respect, his thinking has been anticipated by some of the major theorists of totalitarianism, like Merle Fainsod, who already in the 1953 edition of his *How Russia is Ruled* had much to say on 'kinship groups' as affecting Soviet political and social behaviour at every level. He extended this analysis, with abundant documentation, in his 1958 sampling of the Smolensk archives. Zinoviev's view of Stalinism is, moreover, anticipated in all its essentials in T. H. Rigby's essay 'Stalinism and the Mono-organisational Society', in Robert Tucker's 1977 symposium *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation*: that is, that Stalinism constituted a kind of provisional scaffolding necessary to accustom a people used to a simpler form of loyalty to the new, more sophisticated 'mono-organisational society', which is what the Soviet Union is today.[2]

Of course, to argue that someone's thought is not entirely original is not necessarily to condemn him. But it would at least be illuminating to have Zinoviev's thoughts on his predecessors, and expressing such thoughts might have provoked him into grappling with some of his own inconsistencies. It could of course still be argued that Zinoviev has advanced a novel synthesis of familiar but hitherto scattered insights. Unfortunately, I think his own insights are themselves too scattered and often mutually contradictory for such an argument to be wholly convincing.

There is one inconsistency in Zinoviev which I believe overshadows and perhaps causes all the others. This is on the fundamental question of the locus of power. He likes to maintain that the Soviet system is one of *narodovlastie*, that is that in some sense all power ultimately emanates from the people. Yet from his own experience he knows that this is in practice not the case, or only in such a round-about and abstract sense as to be useless for the purpose of concrete social analysis, which after all is his business.

So he keeps trying to have it both ways, placing one insight in one section, and an opposite insight in the next. The inconsistency manifests itself with unusual clarity in a key section of *The Reality of Communism* (pp. 132–3), that which analyses the role of the party in primary collectives. He maintains that in any given institution the primary party organisation is dependent more on the collective within the institution than it is on superior party organs, and that the

director of the institution, not the party bureau, is the principal power within that collective. But as he then proceeds immediately to point out: 'The director of the institution is a representative above all of party authority. He is an appointee of the party apparatus, and he is selected for that purpose by the party apparatus.' Two lines later he again changes horses in midstream by talking of the 'non-party essence of political power'.

As I have said, Zinoviev's work is full of contradictions, casually juxtaposed to one another. But this one is especially important, for it bucks a key issue: where is the ultimate locus of power? Who in the last resort dominates the collectives whose functioning Zinoviev so vividly describes? For a commentator so concerned with hierarchy and system, Zinoviev has surprisingly little to say about the nomenklatura appointments mechanism, which most observers today would see as linking the power structure to those collectives. Nor has he explicitly taken issue with those scholars, notably Rigby and Voslensky, who have done most to give us a picture of the detailed working of the nomenklatura.

Perhaps after all, we should conclude that Zinoviev is not, despite his claims, really a scientist, but above all a remarkable artist and a moralist. His status as a moralist is apparent even in *The Reality of Communism*, where he is most scrupulously trying to restrain moralism in the interests of science. This book contains some of his most passionate moral statements. Insisting as a basic point of departure that the laws of communal living (*kommunal'nost'*) are 'natural' laws, he then proceeds to make a vigorous moral statement about them: 'I know of no more repellent phenomenon in human relationships than the bosom intimacy of Soviet people.' Besides, his moral judgements are evident on every page through his use of (usually negative) emotive and evaluative words such as 'dirty trick' (*pakost'*), 'baseness' (*podlost'*)', 'lies' (*lozh'*), 'bastard' (*svoloch'*), 'worthless' (*nichtozhnyi*), 'nonentity' (*nichtozhestvo*), 'sloppy work' (*khaltura*), and so on, which any reader of Zinoviev will recognise as part of the texture of his prose.

More than this, a basic argument of the book is that we ought to fight to defeat communism because the latter releases the laws of *kommunal'nost'* in all their naked horror. (He discerns some unexpected allies in this fight, including the KGB and indeed the Communist leaders themselves: but this is perhaps an example of the way in which his ambivalence about basic features of the society can lead him astray.)

Perhaps after all my strictures on Zinoviev are somewhat petty. The confusion between science and moralism is one to which the greatest minds are prone. An analogous confusion in Marx is the foundation on which the Soviet Union is built. Zinoviev's confusion reminds me, however, not of Marx, but of a much earlier political theorist, Thomas Hobbes. Just like Hobbes, Zinoviev starts out from the ambition of constructing a completely scientific view of society, taking as its first axiom the notion that social life, or *kommunal'nost'*, is a war of all against all for power, resources and survival itself, a war in which, unless some restraint operates, there can be 'no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. (Zinoviev's formulation is more succinct, but also less expressive: 'The essence of *kommunal'nost'* . . . is precisely expressed in the formula "Man is a wolf unto man" [*chelovek cheloveku volk*]'.)

The main difference is that for Hobbes the basic human unit was the individual, whereas for Zinoviev it is the primary collective. But the human behaviour posited in each case is remarkably similar. In *The Reality of Communism*, moreover, Zinoviev employs the same technique as Hobbes in Leviathan, starting from the nature and needs of his primary human unit, and working logically up from there to construct a total picture of the functioning of society. He comes to similar conclusions, too, asserting that strong authority is necessary to restrain what he calls *buistvo stikhiinykh sil prirody* (the violence of the elemental forces of nature). The attributes of civilisation, namely morality, law, religion and culture, are fragile, and can only flourish within a framework laid down by such authority.

The comparison with Hobbes implies that I would concede Zinoviev considerable stature as a social and political thinker, and this is certainly true. Even the confusion of scientific and moral thought has its predecessor in Hobbes, who claimed he was expounding God's law, while deriving that law from the purely secular characteristics of man. Such thinkers can be dangerous if we take them at their own valuation of themselves. Providing, however, we bear in mind their inner contradictions, we can draw rich insights from them. This is certainly the case with Zinoviev, who has unquestionably provoked his readers into closer attention to the 'grass roots' of totalitarian systems in the 'primary collective'. And that is to ignore his considerable stature as a literary figure, one of the most remarkable satirists of our time. That, however, is another story.

Notes

1. Interview with George Urban, *Encounter*, vol. 42, no. 4 (April 1984), pp. 13, 15.
2. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York: Norton, 1977) p. 75.

14 Stalin and Stalinism in the Works of Zinoviev

Michael Kirkwood

Zinoviev's most extensive treatment of Stalin and Stalinism is contained in his book *Nashei yunosti polet* (*NYP*), published in 1983. Clearly any discussion of Zinoviev's views will have to take it into account. Yet it would be erroneous, in my opinion, to regard it as Zinoviev's only word on the subject or to assume that Zinoviev, to the extent that he is expressing views which contradict views he has already published, is thereby dissociating himself from those earlier views. Apart from any other consideration, it is important to determine whose views are being expressed. Zinoviev has warned against confusing his views with the views of his characters on more than one occasion.[1] As is the case in many of his other works, there is a multiplicity of narrative voices in *NYP* and it is not always clear who is speaking at any one time. Technically, however, Zinoviev could dissociate himself from any utterance in the book, since he does not appear explicitly as a narrator or character. I intend therefore to begin this discussion by summarising what Zinoviev himself has said about Stalin and Stalinism in an article with that title which was published some time before publication of *NYP*.[2]

An evaluation of Stalin as an individual, states Zinoviev, is meaningless without an evaluation of the epoch linked with his name. Since Khrushchev's secret speech and Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* the view has taken hold that the Stalinist period was exclusively bad and that Stalin was the greatest monster in human history. He, Zinoviev, does not wish to defend Stalin or Stalinism, but to defend the possibility of comprehending these phenomena objectively. He also claims the moral right to do so since he himself publicly adopted a critical stance towards Stalin and Stalinism in 1939.[3] He particularly despises those inveterate Stalinists who took up the cudgels against Stalin during the Khrushchev years following the 20th Party Congress. That is a sentiment shared by characters in his fictional work. It was allegedly at this time that his own anti-Stalinism lost its point and he acquired the ability to relate to it, not with hate, but with contempt. He goes on to state one of his beliefs about the Stalin era

which can be found in one form or another in practically everything he has written about the Soviet Union, namely that Stalinism was a form of 'people's power' and that Stalin was a genuine leader of his people. A national leader is not necessarily a wise or a good man. Sometimes national leaders are scoundrels. And sometimes they deeply despise 'the people' because they know what 'the people' are like in fact and not as they are portrayed in books or doctrines. It was precisely Stalin and not Lenin who was a national leader,[4] because Lenin did not have in sufficient measure the despicable qualities attributed to Stalin to become such a leader.

Perhaps one of Zinoviev's most controversial views is the one he takes of the collectivisation of agriculture. He maintains that before collectivisation life in the country was not too bad in material terms, but the work was hard and the prospects of peasant children becoming anything more than peasants themselves were remote. Collectivisation turned the whole of society upside down and millions of people from the lowest strata of society had the opportunity to become craftsmen, engineers, teachers, doctors, officers, academics, writers, directors, etc. The question whether the same result might have been achieved without Stalinism is irrelevant. For the participants it took place in the context of Stalinism and seemed to be because of it. And Stalin was regarded as a symbol of a 'great epoch' rather than as a scoundrel.[5]

The next claim which Zinoviev makes is that the repressions were the result of the activity of the masses, and he states that it is difficult to know who played the larger part:

> And now it is difficult to establish who played the larger part – the top-echelon criminals headed by Stalin or the wide masses of the population who were allegedly deceived.[6]

What is dreadful about the period is not the fact that there were victims but that the type of person most suited to that environment, the type of person who could survive and thrive in it was the one who was prepared to sacrifice others in order to do so. Stalin epitomised that psychological revolution:

> It seems to me that Stalin was deified more for his repressions than for his undeviating policy of lowering the price of foodstuffs by a kopeck every year.[7]

Zinoviev then goes on to state that Stalin was Lenin's successor and that Stalinism was a continuation of Leninism. He does not enter

the controversy of whether Stalin faithfully continued along a Leninist path or betrayed Lenin's cause. For Zinoviev what is crucial for an evaluation of Stalin and Stalinism is the existence of two different currents in post-Revolutionary Russia, namely the historical and the sociological. Zinoviev regards historical events such as the Revolution itself, the Civil War, War Communism, all the speechifying, fighting and sloganeering as nothing more than froth on the surface, the '*pena istorii*' as he has referred to it on more than one occasion.[8] What is more important are the institutional and bureaucratic changes going on behind the scenes, the establishment of all sorts of offices and positions, the growth and diversification of the system of power, formation of the basic units of society, distribution of privileges, etc., in short the processes which turned out later to have been the formative processes of Communism. The former is associated with Lenin, the latter with Stalin:

> It is only the pre-Revolutionary period of the Party's history and the physical survival of a country about to give birth to a new society that are associated with the name of Lenin. With the name of Stalin is associated the formation of a new society and the transformation of a puny embryo into a mature giant.[9]

The history of Communism properly starts with Stalin.

Another view in this article which finds an echo in other work concerns Stalin's intellect. Many of Zinoviev's characters have alleged that Stalin was not as stupid as he has been made out to be by people like Trotsky. Here he develops the argument that Stalin's works constitute the mouse to which the mountains of Marxist texts have given birth. He rejects the idea that Stalin has vulgarised Marx since he believes that there was nothing in Marx to vulgarise in the first place. He says that he does not know whether Stalin actually wrote the works attributed to him, but as ideological texts aimed at a multi-million audience with a low level of culture they have never been surpassed or equalled by anything in Marxism. Zinoviev, it will be recalled, is a philosopher of some standing, and one assumes that he is offering a professional opinion when he says:

> If you want to grasp what is most fundamental in Marxist doctrine, read the works of Stalin.[10]

As Zinoviev expresses it, the internal organs and cells of the body of Communism developed during the Stalinist period. It was a time of growth and maturation. Khrushchev's report to the 20th Party

Congress exposed the horrors of Stalinism but marked the end of an era rather than heralded the beginning of a new one. Despite his innovations, Khrushchev could not forget the image of Stalin, and Brezhnev's soul was captured by Stalin long before he came to power. Elsewhere in Zinoviev's work the Khrushchev era is referred to as one of confusion, whereas the Brezhnev era was one in which Communism as a mature type of society began to flourish.[11] In the article under discussion Zinoviev takes a side-swipe at the official Soviet view that the norms of Party–State life were not observed by stating that when Stalin and his 'band' took over there were no norms and that they were formed in strict conformity with what Zinoviev refers to as the norms of a society in the process of formation.[12] In conclusion Zinoviev argues that there will be no return to Stalinism in its past form. For one thing, the leadership will not allow it. More strikingly, Zinoviev states that the wide masses of the population have lost that power which they had over their neighbours during the Stalin era. The era of 'people's power' is, thankfully, over, and without the activity of the masses no Stalinism is possible.[13]

The views expressed so far are Zinoviev's own. It is not clear that he has changed them radically since that article was published.[14] However, before we consider whether the views in *NYP* are different from the views stated above, it will be instructive to consider the extent to which these or similar views occur in Zinoviev's earlier work. As I hope to show, what Zinoviev has said in 'O Staline i stalinizme' chimes in with much of what his characters have said in the past.

Let us begin with Zinoviev's assertion that the personality of Stalin cannot be meaningfully considered outside the context of the Stalinist period. One might ask when the Stalinist period begins for Zinoviev. Does it begin in 1929, as some historians would argue, or in 1924 after the death of Lenin, or when Stalin was appointed General Secretary of the Central Committee? Does it end with the death of Stalin, Khrushchev's report to the 20th Party Congress, the end of the war with Germany, or the 19th Party Congress? Zinoviev, as far as I know, has not pronounced on that issue in his own name. However, his narrator in *NYP* (p. 8) states that for him the limits should be defined in such a way as to include all the basic events of the epoch and the fundamental acts of Stalin and the Stalinists. I think that Zinoviev himself would not demur.

Stalin does not appear as a character in any conventional sense in any of Zinoviev's writings. There is, however, an important treat-

ment of him in *Zheltyi dom* (*The Madhouse*). The hero of that work, a Junior Research Fellow (JRF) is practically obsessed with the personality of Stalin. At one point he is asked to edit the manuscript of a 'psychological drama' on the theme of Stalin, written in dramatic form by one of JRF's superiors, a man called Petin. JRF reads what Petin has written and tears it up as so much rubbish and sits down to write his own version. The 'Stalin' that emerges, therefore, is a 'character' invented by another character and is depicted in a series of 'dramatic sketches'. He is presented as the non-intellectual man of action who is prepared to dirty his hands in the business of making revolution. He is hard-working, resolute, patient, content to let others take the stage while he gets on with the routine business of organising the details of carrying out Bolshevik policy. He is shown working long hours and staying at his desk until well into the night. At various points he makes it clear that he is nobody's fool and that he understands what is going on better than his colleagues like Trotsky, Lenin and Bukharin. For instance, he makes it clear that although the intellectuals might think that they are merely using him as a clerk and odd-job man, the day will come when they will discover their mistake. He talks to his staff, explaining the difference between historical events and sociological processes. The Revolution may appear to be taking place on the streets, in meetings, on platforms, etc., but that is all 'froth'. The Revolution is first and foremost a new way of organising a multi-million population. People need to eat and drink, clothe themselves, move around, etc. Someone has to organise that. There is more than an echo here of the distinction between the historical and sociological processes which Zinoviev himself regards as crucial for an understanding of Stalinism. In later scenes Stalin tells Lenin that his last hour has come and that the Revolution no longer requires him. He has been indispensable but now he must die. He will be worshipped as a God. The time has come for routine work to replace the excitement of the Revolution and the overthrow of the old order. Given what was still to come in terms of collectivisation, industrialisation, the trials, purges and the war with Germany, it may be thought that this assertion of Stalin's is somewhat premature. In fact it is consistent with Zinoviev's view that Lenin and Leninism were pre-history in relation to Stalin and Stalinism.[15]

JRF's depiction of Stalin as a man of action and bureaucrat reflects a rather conventional view of the real Stalin, a view, however, which has been challenged by several writers.[16] It is, however, a view of Stalin which marries well with Zinoviev's conviction that what is

important in the emergence of Communism is the gradual and unseen gestation of its institutions. Stalin as the 'back-room man', the 'committee-man par excellence' as Deutscher calls him,[17] epitomises this strand of development which is sociological rather than historical and which, in Zinoviev's view, is more important. Other incidents in JRF's depiction of Stalin are based on similar but not identical incidents in the real Stalin's biography. For instance, he is shown working on his 'Marxism and the National Question' in Lenin's sitting-room in Switzerland, while Krupskaya is looking out of the window and telling Lenin that there will never be a revolution in Europe since the people are too well off. Stalin says something with which Lenin wishes to agree, except that he cannot remember Stalin's name. It is known that Stalin was never in Switzerland and that Lenin did have occasion to write to Grigorii Zinoviev asking to be reminded of Stalin's surname.[18] JRF's point, of course, is to demonstrate that Stalin, the great Leader and disciple of Lenin, was barely known only a few years before the Revolution. This is consistent not only with the facts of Stalin's biography but also marries well with Zinoviev's view that Stalin was not a great man but was pressed into the role he later acquired by the force of circumstance.

Another strand in *Zheltyi dom* concerns the question of Stalin's intellect and his status as a Marxist thinker. Again, opinions in the literature differ. Trotsky, for instance, had a very poor opinion of Stalin's intellectual powers and grasp of Marxist theory.[19] R. C. Tucker, on the other hand, has argued that Stalin made a not inconsiderable contribution to Marxist thought with his paper on the national question and that he showed real understanding in his re-working of Lenin's ideas in his *Foundations of Leninism*.[20] Roy Medvedyev has argued that Stalin plagiarised someone else's work and passed *Foundations* off as his own.[21] Zinoviev has expressed doubt about the authorship of Stalin's works in general, as was noted earlier, but argues that the works themselves are highly successful Marxist texts. This view is reiterated in another strand of *Zheltyi dom*.

One of JRF's functions in the institute of ideology where he works is to vet the manuscripts of various cranks who pester the authorities with complaints and crack-pot schemes to change things for the better. He is required to establish whether there is a case for the incarceration of any of them in psychiatric hospitals. One of these cranks, nicknamed 'the Scoundrel' by JRF, has brought along a manuscript entitled 'Sixty Years in the Heat of Battle'. JRF loses the

manuscript during a drinking session with one of his acquaintances, and decides to write something himself and pass it off as the genuine memoirs of the Scoundrel. What he produces in fact is a 'scenario' to account for the phenomenon of Stalin and the Stalinist era.[22]

JRF imagines that the Scoundrel was Stalin's 'intellect'. The Scoundrel met Stalin in the Smolny Institute and persuaded him to let him orchestrate the grandiose spectacle that Stalinism was to become. As he says:

> He was an actor in my spectacular show. And I must confess, he played his role magnificently.[23]

The Scoundrel wrote all of Stalin's works under the latter's close supervision, or rather the Scoundrel arranged for a group of 'untalented cretins' to do the actual writing while he acted as a go-between. He makes the important observation that without Stalin all these writings were primitive, grey, untalented, crude – Stalin's personality was necessary to render them grandiose, majestic.[24] The Scoundrel not only organised the writing of Stalin's works but wrote the scenarios for grandiose spectacles such as the Five-Year Plan, the Collectivisation and the Show Trials. He boiled Marxism down to a level which would be understood by the untalented masses (learning how to do that from studying student cribs and discovering how easy it was to render Marxist verbiage down to bare essentials,[25] but then write about it as if one were a learned expert). In this connection he discusses his early perception that Marxism has a historical and a functional aspect and describes how he worked on the latter aspect to produce an ideological guide to action, starting not from Marxist theory, but from an analysis of the requirements of the leadership.[26] He devotes quite a lot of space to the 'spectacle' theme.[27] It is not just the Show Trials, the whole Stalinist era is one gigantic show. The Scoundrel likens Soviet society during that period to an audience in the presence of a magician. They know they are being deceived but cannot see in what way, or rather they realise that deception is part of the 'spectacle'. What they object to is *seeing through* the deception – a reference to the post-Stalin phase of Communist development when the 'tricks' (*fokusy*) are performed 'badly' (*khalturno*).[28]

What JRF is trying to do is account for the rise and development of Stalin and Stalinism. His invention of Stalin's intellect is a device which allows him to speculate about the requirements of a new society trying to survive in the 'hurricane of history'. Stalin's role as a symbol, the need for an ideological guide to action, a means of bending

the population to the will of the leadership, the need to unleash the energies of the people but also keep them under control are all presented as intellectual problems which the Scoundrel diagnosed and sought to resolve. Stalin was adequate for his time. He was not a great man:

> Of course Stalin was a villain. But he strove to construct a Communist paradise on earth and to make people adequate for that.[29]

Zinoviev himself has expressed the same view in almost identical words:

> He himself was a villain and an outstanding nonetity. But he strove to build a Communist paradise on earth and to make all the people adequate for that.[30]

When JRF is not composing works about Stalin and Stalinism, he is often engaged in polemical discussions with some of his many 'egos', who have rebelled against JRF's habit of referring to them by number and who have taken on a new identity. One of them decided to be Marx, another took the name Beria, and so on. One of his egos is Stalin. There are quite a few strands in the work in which 'Stalin', 'Lenin', 'Marx', 'Beria', 'Dzerzhinsky', occasionally JRF, discuss contemporary Soviet society in relation to what it was supposed to become.[31] The various egos express the views which one might expect to be associated with their namesakes. Thus Stalin speaks in a mixture of threats and declarative utterances in which he ridicules in turn Marx's inability to foretell the future, Lenin's inability to focus on the characteristic features of the Russian context for revolution, his 'grand design' which led to Stalinism and his failure to remove Stalin while he had the chance. The debates are highly amusing, yet often thought-provoking as 'Marx', 'Lenin', 'Stalin', 'Dzerzhinsky', etc., continuously blame each other for the current state in which the Soviet Union finds itself, a state which they all equally despise.

But there is yet another 'Stalin' in JRF's head. At an early stage in the first part of *Zheltyi dom* the reader encounters 'Himself' – a mysterious mentor who appears when JRF needs advice and often when he does not. He is highly valued by JRF and when Himself at last tells JRF that he must leave him now that JRF has learned all that there is to know about the (communist?) world, JRF is considerably upset, indeed, pleads with Himself not to abandon him.[32] Himself does not appear again until near the end of the final part of the work[33] and it comes as something of a shock to the reader to discover that Himself is none other than Stalin's ghost.

He has come back partly in order to give JRF one last warning about the predicament in which he finds himself (a predicament which need not detain us here) but partly to ask him about Petin's manuscripts (JRF's 'Stalin' drama). They then begin to discuss the Stalin era and Stalin's ghost asserts that Khrushchev's secret speech was in fact written by Beria for Stalin to deliver, had he lived. It would have been entitled '*O nekotorykh golovokruzheniyakh ot uspekhov*' and he would have used it as a pretext to get rid of Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich and others, including Beria, of course. Unfortunately he died too soon. This association of Stalin's famous *Pravda* article 'Dizziness from Success' with Khrushchev's secret report to the 20th Party Congress allows the reader to infer that Zinoviev regards the two events as emergency measures in response to similar problems – namely, excessive zeal at local levels of bureaucracy in pursuing the 'general line'. There is then discussion about how Stalin will fare at the hands of writers and historians. JRF asserts that good writers will realise that they cannot do him justice and scholars will argue about whether Stalin was necessary or a coincidence. All that will be left is the judgement of history, i.e. '*zauryadnaya skuka*' ('boringly mediocre'). That is enough for Stalin's ghost and he takes his leave, not, however, before JRF acknowledges that the Revolution was necessary, that he, JRF, would have fought for the Reds against the Whites and would have been at Stalin's side. Stalin's ghost fades with the assertion that Stalin was a lion, at worst a wolf, whereas those around him were merely rats.

In sum, then it is clear that JRF's view of Stalin is largely positive. He did terrible things but so did millions of other people. He was a nonentity, but an outstanding one who became a great leader. The terrible events of the period were more the results of the 'hurricane of history' than the designs of one man. He accepts the possibility that there *were* designs, however, as is shown by his forgery of the Scoundrel's manuscripts and his attempt to account for the 'grandiose spectacle'.

It might be as well to note that JRF himself is far from being a dissident, although he is not accepted by the society in which he lives. He spends much of his time on the sort of analysis of his society which we associate with his creator. He comes to many of the same conclusions. The enigma of Stalin and his period obsesses him, since he regards the Stalin era as the birth and childhood of a society which is now mature and flourishing. There are many defects, its economy teeters constantly on the edge of collapse, there are shortages, queues, poor housing conditions and all the rest, but as a society it is

stable, here to stay and one which is accepted by the overwhelming majority of the population. These are views which one has come to associate with Zinoviev himself.

This account of the treatment of Stalin and Stalinism in *Zheltyi dom* is not complete. Other themes which Zinoviev regard as important also receive attention. These themes, however, are also treated in other works, one of which is *V preddverii raya* (L'Antichambre du Paradis). Only one of the 733 texts which comprise the work has the word 'Stalinism' in its title and the text itself is rather short.[34] The view expressed in it belongs to a character known as the Traveller, who criticises everyone who looks for an explanation of the phenomenon of Stalinism in the personality of Stalin himself and in his relations with other Party functionaries. He argues that the most important point is ignored by such people, namely that the whole epoch was a natural historical process. It was a period during which a new social system was being formed, one in which millions of Stalins of varying calibre acquired power. Stalinism was the result of the efforts of millions of people, not the invention of one man. Stalin, in fact, was created as a result of those efforts and it is nonsense to attribute genius to people like Stalin, Beria or Khrushchev. They were nonentities; and it was precisely that quality which enabled them to survive that nightmarish period of history.

There are a few other texts, however, in which issues relating directly to Stalin and the Stalinist period are raised. There are discussions of whether people during the 1930s were accomplices in a monstrous crime,[35] on whether those sent to the camps felt a sense of guilt or injustice,[36] on the role and function of the informer.[37] The view expressed is that informing was considered to be an entirely normal activity. Informers, if anything, were even respected. In a text entitled 'Kirov's murder' the Débauchee asserts that Stalin and his band have been accused of unleashing the dark forces of society, giving full play to the evil aspects of man's character. Not so, he says:

> It [the band] aroused the best forces of society and the best sides of the human character but directed them to the performance of foul deeds.[38]

It was a conspiracy of honourable human beings to commit a grandiose crime. This point of view which sees a dialectical relationship between 'good intentions' and 'evil results' is central to Zinoviev's thought, as is his view that Western moral judgements are invalid in the context of Soviet society.[39] We shall return to this question below.

A survey of earlier works of Zinoviev, including *Ziyayushchie vysoty* (*Yawning Heights*) and *Svetloe budushchee* (*Radiant Future*) reveals that all of the topics discussed so far were also treated in those works. For instance, much of the history of Ibansk chimes in with what JRF's Scoundrel has to tell us about Stalinism as the childhood of Communism. The same observation applies to the thoughts of Anton Zimin in *Svetloe budushchee*. One topic which receives slightly different treatment and which may reflect a slight indeterminacy in Zinoviev's own views is the periodisation of Soviet history.

Ibansk history, for instance, is divided into three periods, the period of Loss (*Poteryannost'*), the period of Confusion or Perplexity (*Rasteryannost'*) and the period of Blossom (*Protsvetanie*), associated respectively with the periods of Stalin/Khozyain, Khrushchev/Khryak and Brezhnev/Zaveduyushchii.[40] Anton Zimin, on the other hand, highlights the period between the 20th and 25th Party Congresses as the period of Confusion and Stabilisation (*Rasteryannost' i Stabilizatsiya*).[41] Whatever periodisation is taken, Zinoviev's view remains that people's illusions about Stalinism were destroyed. During the Stalinist period people continued to deceive themselves, rather in the manner described by the Scoundrel. After Khrushchev's secret speech the true nature of Soviet life was revealed. As Anton Zimin observes:

> During this period the idea that Stalin's regime had been imposed on the Soviet people by force from above was blown to shreds. The evident mechanisms of Soviet life operated . . . with implacable strength, and despite the wishes of the leadership, of the people, the intellectuals, . . . and so on . . . During this period all the filth of the Soviet way of life came to the surface for all to see, and asserted itself as the natural milieu and the daily bread of any normal, healthy human being.[42]

This, for Zinoviev, is what is most important. Post-Stalinist Soviet society can no longer deceive itself about its true nature. It is stable and it is maintained and reproduced by the repeated actions, behaviour and outlook of millions of people. It is now mature and balanced, and it can be assumed that it is here to stay for many centuries. The only question which is perhaps not fully resolved is the extent to which Khrushchev's reign was a transition, a lapse or an aberration. Anton Zimin does not seem to draw a distinction between the end of Khrushchev's reign and the onset of Brezhnev's. Zinoviev himself has expressed real affection for Khrushchev and

associates himself with the view of many of his compatriots that the Khrushchev years were the happiest in the whole history of the Soviet period.[43] He has also argued in his own name that the Brezhnev era was a kind of reaction to the excesses of Khrushchevism, but also a rationalisation of the power structure to harmonise with the structure of society.[44] And, of course, Soviet society is and will continue to be the product of the Stalin era.

It is important to stress this point, because we have now come to the end of our survey of Stalin and Stalinism as reflected in Zinoviev's work from the very beginning. The fact is, of course, that the bulk of Zinoviev's vast output has been concerned with the analysis and description of *contemporary* Soviet society. The extent to which virtually every aspect of that society has been lampooned, satirised, ridiculed or reviled is perhaps becoming forgotten given the growing criticism to which Zinoviev is subject these days, criticism which does not stop short of accusing him of being an apologist of Stalinism.[45] His monumental works – *Ziyayushchie vysoty, V preddverii raya, Zheltyi dom* – together with *Kommunizm kak real' nost'* and *Svetloe budushchee* testify to a prodigious talent harnessed to a valiant attempt to understand a complex phenomenon which, whatever one thinks of it, is here to stay.

Having attempted to review Zinoviev's writings on Stalin and Stalinism in the contexts in which they have occurred I will now consider *Nashei yunosti polet*, a work devoted entirely to those issues. I have chosen this approach for various reasons. Firstly, it seems to me that it should be set in the context of his work as a whole for reasons of perspective. Secondly, it has to be remembered that Zinoviev has been living in the West for some years now and admits that he is nostalgic, both for his homeland and for his youth. Thirdly, he is more reticent in his criticisms of his homeland now that he has left it. Fourthly, he was motivated to write the work not only by a sense of scientific curiosity, but partly also by a sense of outrage.

The work itself, according to Zinoviev, is a 'literary-sociological review of Stalinism'. In an interview with Georges Nivat he has stated that it is specifically not a scholarly work.[46] It is, however, Zinoviev's most extended treatment of the subject. Many of the themes have occurred in his earlier work and the tenor of *NYP* is similar to the tenor of other works as well. It will be useful, therefore, to isolate what is new and to determine the extent to which *NYP* extends or intensifies the picture of Stalin and Stalinism which has already emerged.

Let us begin by stating what is *not* new. Themes which are treated yet again in *NYP*, and in similar terms, include the following: the shattering effect of Khrushchev's secret speech on people's illusions concerning Stalinism and the 'bright future' generally (pp. 27–8); the view that Stalin was made to play a role by historical circumstances (p. 29, pp. 94–8); the theme that Stalinism was a period of 'grandiose spectacle' (pp. 37–8); the question of the authorship of Stalin's works and their ideological significance (pp. 99–101); Stalin as successor to Lenin (pp. 105–7); the theme of 'people's power' (*narodovlastie*) (pp. 72, 82), which, however, receives more extensive treatment in *NYP*; the view that romance has given way to humdrum reality (pp. 150–52); the realisation that the horrors of that time were in fact the realisation in practice of mankind's most shining ideals (p. 160). Further discussion of these, with the exception of 'people's power', is unnecessary.

Themes or topics which are developed to a greater extent in *NYP* or are treated for the first time include the following: Zinoviev's psychological portrait of a Stalinist; the question of '*narodovlastie*'; the question of establishing a moral perspective; the role and significance of the informer and the practice of informing.

The first narrator in *NYP* is a self-confessed(!) anti-Stalinist who feels called upon to defend the Stalinist period and Stalin because it is a 'great epoch' which has disappeared into the past 'condemned but not understood'. He wants to defend it from superficial and trivial condemnation. Later on he meets a Stalinist and discovers that they have much in common, including a sense of having remained constant to their convictions and having not betrayed their beliefs. Zinoviev allows the Stalinist to explain and comment on the Stalin era and on Stalin in a series of 'notes' and conversations with the Anti-Stalinist.[47] Here are some of his views: dissidents who are gaoled today are gaoled '*za delo*' (for a reason), whereas in his time he was gaoled for serving the Party faithfully and honestly (p. 106); his times (i.e. under Stalin) were the worst but also the best (p. 106); he himself ordered many arrests, often adding names off his own bat to the official list (p. 107); arrests were necessary, fear was necessary. Without fear there would have been no 'drive' (*pod' 'em*) (p. 107); he felt he was part of a great cause, loved Stalin and thought about him all the time (p. 109) and therefore was 'proud' to become an informer and inform on his girl-friend. He wrote to Stalin while working on his thesis, asking to be assigned the toughest task in the construction of Communism. His letter was chosen as a 'sign of the masses wishing to

devote themselves to . . .' and his whole collective was dispersed all over Siberia. Everyone hated him (pp. 117–18). For him the essential feature of the Stalin period was that everything was being created afresh. The whole country was a vast building site. Everything had to be done according to the principle of 'at any price', 'at all costs', 'no sacrifice is too great' (p. 119). Above all, the Stalinist feels no guilt, arguing that one cannot apply the moral views of today to the people and events of that time.[48] His views, in fact, are not dissimilar to those expressed, for example, by Kravchenko in his book *I Chose Freedom*,[49] the difference being that Kravchenko changed his views, whereas the Stalinist retains his right up to the present. The portrait is of a man who admits that he has done many deeds which are reviled today but does not admit to any feeling of shame. Kravchenko, too, has argued that people who did not have to live through that period have little right to sit in judgement over those who did.[50] The Stalinist is scathing, however, about the 'Stalinists', by which he means 'opportunists' who changed their tune as soon as it was required of them to do so. This is exactly the view of the Anti-Stalinist. Paradoxically, therefore, the Anti-Stalinist and the Stalinist join forces to try to do justice to a period in their lives which they believe is being unfairly criticised. Instead of confrontation, as one might expect, there is collaboration.

The theme of the 'power of the people' (*narodovlastie*) is a thread running through all of Zinoviev's work but it receives its most explicit, comprehensive treatment in *NYP*.[51] It is Zinoviev's contention that the structure of Soviet society nullifies any claim that there is an oligarchy sitting on the neck of a submissive population. The structure of power is so all-embracing that a large element of the population is engaged in the exercise of that power. An examination of the checks and balances, the mutual controls, the multi-form channels and links between the various collectives which make up Soviet society leads to the inescapable conclusion that power is exercised truly by the people. The fact that this power is not decision-making power is not the point. The individual as a member of a collective joins in the process of exercising power over other individuals and is in turn the object of control and restraint by that same collective. That is the situation today. But in the 1930s this system was still in its formation. Stalinism was the formation of a system of power, and without the organs of state security it would have been taken over by all sorts of 'mafia-style gangs'. The narrator in *NYP* argues that, far from being an object of hatred, the Organs were highly trusted by ordinary people. (p. 34)

Another manifestation of '*narodovlastie*' in the Stalin period was the '*vydvizhenchestvo*' – the process whereby people from the lowest strata of society were catapulted suddenly into positions of power and responsibility. Such people rarely stayed in their new position for long. Much more common was the cycle of promotion, dismissal and disappearance. However, the '*vydvizhentsy*' symbolised a miracle, strove to accomplish that miracle and did in fact accomplish it.[52] The Stalinist tries to explain the importance of the phenomenon since he thinks that it has not yet been properly understood. He argues that people thrust suddenly into positions of power, thrust, moreover, from within the ranks of their collective, experienced a tremendous sense of exhilaration. They were appointed to achieve objectives 'at whatever cost'. They did not exercise their power through the official bureaucratic system but by-passed it and exercised it directly. People regarded the official power apparatus as something inimical, as something frustrating the purposes of themselves and their 'leaders'. This was the origin of voluntarist systems of management. However, as the complexity of the new social order increased and the official system of power was extended and ramified, the two systems came into increasing conflict. When the strength of the official system finally became too much for the voluntaristic Stalinist system, Stalinism came to an end.

He explains this abrupt conclusion as follows. Firstly, the population has to be organised in order that the rulers can rule. There are two important elements in the organisation of the people. The first comprises activists of all types who are selected and given some kind of preferential treatment. They in fact are given power over the passive majority of the population since they are the people who control and supervise the whole life of the collective. In the Stalin period these activists began to operate like mafia gangs and acquired enormous power. They could topple anyone they chose, including the managers. The second element was the practice of secret denunciation. It became a democratic defence against the excesses of power exercised by 'the people', operated by the people themselves. That signalled the end of Stalinism. Zinoviev himself gives a more condensed account of this aspect of '*narodovlastie*' in *The Reality of Communism*,[53] an account which is substantially the same as the Stalinist's.

Under Stalin people acted in ways which we find difficult to understand today. People confessed to crimes that they had not committed. People informed on their next of kin, shut their eyes to evidence which flatly contradicted what they were being told to

believe, publicly uttered statements and opinions which they did not hold and knew to be lies. Various explanations have been offered, some of which are plausible, others of which ring less true in the ears of those of us who have thankfully not had to live through those times. In *NYP* Zinoviev addresses the question of moral responsibility and moral censure through the mouths of various characters – the Anti-Stalinist, the Stalinist, the Executioner (nicknamed 'the Humanist') and the Official.[54] Various moral dilemmas are presented and people (including the reader) are invited to choose a solution. In many cases any 'solution' is 'morally' justifiable from one point of view and reprehensible from another. The point is that people had to make choices. It is easy to criticise the past, they argue, but it *is* the past. What is required is criticism of the present. In general none of the characters experiences any sense of guilt for what they have done. Nor do they condemn with hindsight the collectivisation, the repressions or the purges. These were necessary events, part of the times and now part of history. In my view that is a rather cool judgement to make about a period in man's history which has scarcely been paralleled for brutality, humiliation and oppression. It is a judgement, however, to which Zinoviev is sturdily committed.

The fourth element in *NYP* which receives more extensive treatment than Zinoviev has accorded it in the past is the practice of denunciation.[55] Zinoviev's views on informing, I think, are quite clear. He himself regards it as an odious activity, although on many occasions he allows his characters to treat it as an activity which is either completely natural and self-evident, or else is an activity which is in some sense to be approved. Often he recounts incidents in which a person may inform on a friend or colleague in the sincere belief that it is for his friend's own good. How then do we infer that he himself disapproves of the practice? Firstly, it is significant that the characters for whom he has most sympathy do not inform on their colleagues. JRF and Anton Zimin are two examples. It is probably not a coincidence that neither of them is particularly anxious to make a career. The narrator's daughter in *Svetloe budushchee* commits suicide when she discovers that her father informed on Anton during the Stalin period. Secondly, there are countless episodes in which characters *do* inform on their colleagues, very often for their own selfish ends, sometimes just for fun, sometimes out of spite, malice or envy. Whatever their motives, Zinoviev usually depicts them in a negative light. Thirdly, there are humorous treatments of the subject in which he makes his negative feelings quite clear. His account of

Lieutenant Egorov's problems with his informer network and his mordant 'Hymn to Betrayal' in *NYP* are masterpieces of ridicule and contempt.

However, Zinoviev argues often and at length for the proposition that informing is endemic to Soviet society and that it is a mass phenomenon, which gives it therefore an important sociological significance. The practice of informing grew up under Stalin and developed to the point where it became counter-productive, after which the extent of it decreased and stabilised at the level of intensity which is the norm today. Under Stalin, however, it had a social significance which was very different.

Under Stalin informing was one way in which ordinary people could participate in the fight against the 'enemies of the people'. According to Zinoviev, many people genuinely regarded it as a moral duty. Many people also learned that it was a way of settling scores, gaining advantage, etc. However, in *NYP* the Official also argues that it was a democratic means of self-defence and an indispensable element in the drive for industrialisation and collectivisation. This point was noted above in our remarks on the '*vydvizhenchestvo*'. There were two types of '*donos*' (secret report) – the official type of report which one was obliged to make to the organs, and the unofficial, unsolicited, voluntary report or denunciation. According to the Official, the first type was dull routine, the second was creative. He likens the difference between the two types to the distinction between the effort people put in to working on the collective farm and the effort and enthusiasm they expend on the private plot. Everyone, apparently, was an informer, and the flood of denunciations engulfed the Organs to the point where they could not read them all, far less take action on them. But it was sufficient if they heeded 1 per cent of them. Under Stalin the practice of denunciation became a culture. Nowadays the practice has relapsed, but by no means entirely.

Nowadays the denunciation fulfils a different role. One cannot avoid them but one can attempt to neutralise them through exemplary behaviour in the collective:

> And in all circumstances the denunciation has the effect of making a person strive to correspond to the ideal of Soviet Man.[56]

The Official even argues that people are boastful of the fact that people might inform on them:

> We are proud that people might 'shop' us. We boast about it if that really happens. Anyone who doesn't have a report or denunciation made about him or who is not afraid of stool-pigeons or narks is an absolute nonentity.[57]

Nowadays, therefore, the social function of a secret denunciation is to act as a stimulus to demonstrate loyalty and commitment to the Soviet way of life. Once again the reader is presented with the view that yet another practice which most people in the West would regard as odious was somehow less odious under Stalin.

There is little more to say about *NYP*. On balance, I incline to the view that it is less outrageous than it appears at first sight. It is Zinoviev's most sustained treatment of Stalin and Stalinism, moreover a treatment which is not interwoven in the fabric of a larger work. To that extent the topic is highlighted in a way in which many other topics in Zinoviev's work are not. On the other hand, much of it is not new, as was noted above, and what is new turns out on closer inspection to be a more extensive treatment of issues which he has raised before. The image of Stalin and the account of the Stalin period are not radically different from the images and accounts which we have discovered in his earlier work. Consequently, criticism to the effect that he has 'become' an apologist for Stalin and his era is misplaced. What, perhaps, does shock the reader is the fact that not one of the characters shows any remorse or shame or regret. The reader, however, should not be surprised. In the whole Zinoviev *œuvre* not one character expresses remorse for any of his or her actions, although these actions are often commented on or criticised by others.

Our survey of Zinoviev's treatment of Stalin and Stalinism is now complete. If we attempt to list the features which seem to be constant we arrive at the following propositions:

(1) Stalin was forced into his role by circumstances and played it magnificently;
(2) He was on outstanding nonentity;
(3) He was a great Marxist;
(4) He was a great leader;
(5) Stalinism was in reality the 'hurricane of history';
(6) Stalinism was an age of 'spectacle';
(7) Stalinism was a time of opportunity and expectation, as well as a time of repressions and excesses;
(8) Stalinism was the 'childhood' of Communist society.

These propositions form the bones, as it were, or the skeleton of Zinoviev's perception of Stalin and his era. It is when he puts flesh and tissue on that skeleton that Zinoviev is at his most interesting and profound. The creature which emerges is the Soviet Union of today.

Notes

1. In *Encounter*, Feb. 1979, p. 86 and *L'Express*, 19 April 1985, p. 52.
2. See 'O Staline i stalinizme', in *MIZ*, pp. 7–14.
3. 'O Staline i stalinizme', p. 8. The narrator in *NYP* makes a similar claim (p. 12).
4. 'O Staline i stalinizme', p. 9.
5. Ibid., p. 9.
6. Ibid. The notion of the great terror as the product more of the social forces of the time than of a diabolical plan by an all-powerful leader is supported by the historical work of J. Arch Getty which is based on Soviet Press material of the period, the Smolensk archive and other Soviet sources. See J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1985).
7. Ibid., p. 10.
8. *NYP*, pp. 10, 41. See also *ZhD*, vol. II, p. 39.
9. 'O Staline i stalinizme', p. 9.
10. Ibid, p. 12.
11. See, for example, *YH*, p. 439; *ZV*, p. 300.
12. 'O Staline i stalinizme', p. 13.
13. Ibid., p. 14.
14. Zinoviev expresses similar views in an interview with George Urban in *Encounter*, April, May, 1984, and in an interview with Georges Nivat in *L'Express*, 19 April 1985.
15. *ZhD*, vol. II, pp. 264–5. The page references for the complete 'Stalin' strand are as follows: 206–7, 207, 213–215, 219–21, 227–8, 231–2, 238–40, 246–7, 256–8, 264–5, 269–70, 292–3, 297–9.
16. See L. Trotsky, *Stalin: an appraisal of the man and his influence* (New York: Harper, 1947) p. 206; R. C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary 1879–1929: a study in history and personality* (New York: Norton, 1973) pp. 210, 212.
17. I. Deutscher, *Stalin: a Political Biography* (Penguin, 1966) p. 226.
18. See, for instance, Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary 1879–1929*, p. 157.
19. Trotsky, *Stalin*, p. 118.
20. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary 1879–1929*, p. 392.
21. R. Medvedyev, *K sudu istorii*, (New York: Knopf, 1974) pp. 1027–1029.
22. The page references to all the texts in this strand of *ZhD* are the following: vol. I, 203–5, 209, 213–14, 214, 216–17, 219–20, 223–4, 226, 227–8, 232–3, 236, 238–9, 242–4, 246, 248, 250, 251–2, 255–6, 258–9, 262–3, 266–7, 276–7, 284–5, 292–3, 299–300, 315–16, 325, 326–7, 332–3, 337–8, 341–2, 346, 348–9, 356–7, 371–2, 375–6, 377–9, 383–4, 385–8, 388–9.
23. *ZhD*, p. 204.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 223–4.
26. Ibid., p. 226. See also p. 236, pp. 242–4.
27. Ibid., pp. 227–8, 232–3.
28. There are numerous statements throughout Zinoviev's work supporting his argument that Khrushchev's report to the 20th Party Congress

destroyed any illusions that people may have retained about the 'bright future'. For a recent statement of this view which Zinoviev makes in his own name, see his article 'Nikita', reproduced in *NSNRNB*, pp. 62–4.

29. *ZhD*, vol. I, pp. 298–9.
30. 'O Staline i stalinizme', p. 14.
31. Examples are to be found in *ZhD*, vol. I, pp. 89–90, 101–3, 106–7, 107–8.
32. Ibid., vol. I, pp. 298–9.
33. Ibid, vol. II, pp. 352–4. This is the most positive depiction of Stalin which I have come across in what might be termed 'non-Stalinist' literature. It contrasts almost totally with the 'Stalins' of Solzhenitsyn, Maximov, Voinovich, Suslov.
34. *VPR*, p. 249.
35. Ibid., pp. 143–4.
36. Ibid., p. 313.
37. Ibid., pp. 286–7.
38. Ibid., p. 289.
39. He has stated this view again in the interview with George Urban. See *Encounter*, April 1984, p. 23.
40. *YH*, p. 439; *ZV*, pp. 300–301.
41. *RF*, p. 46; *SB*, p. 40.
42. *RF*, p. 50; *SB*, p. 43.
43. *NSNRNB*, p. 64.
44. Ibid., p. 65.
45. See, for instance, V. Nagirny, 'Aleksandr Zinoviev kak sovetskii chelovek: kritik Stalina ili apologet stalinizma?', *Forum*, 10, 1985, pp. 115–41; Yu. Mal'tsev, 'Golovokruzheniya Aleksandra Zinovieva', *Russkaya mysl'*, no. 357, 19 July 1985.
46. In *L'Express*, 19 April 1985, p. 52. The interview is printed in French but was probably conducted in Russian. Thus my use of the word 'scholarly' may be inaccurate. I would guess, however, that Zinoviev used the word 'nauchnyi', which is close to the German 'wissenschaftlich', in which the concepts of 'scientific' and 'scholarly' are combined. Perhaps Zinoviev would prefer that I use the word 'scientific'.
47. See pp. 102–31. This section is almost exclusively devoted to the Stalinist, except for two poems (pp. 114–15, 131).
48. See pp. 119–21.
49. V. Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom* (London, 1947).
50. Ibid., p. 305.
51. See especially, pp. 31–3, 125–7.
52. This is the Stalinist's view as expressed on p. 118.
53. *TRC*, p. 169; *KKR*, p. 148.
54. This theme is explored on pp. 16–17, 17–18, 26–7, 77–9, 79–87, 113–14, 119–21, 122–4, 130–31, 131–41.
55. See especially, pp. 43–70. Pages 43–62 contain the Egorov tale, the "Gimn predatels'tvu' (Hymn to Betrayal) is on pp. 62–4 and the more theoretical 'Vvedenie v donosologiyu' (Introduction to Informerology?) is discussed on pp. 64–70.
56. *NYP*, p. 69.
57. Ibid.

15 A Bibliography of Writings By and About Alexander Zinoviev

Philip Hanson

The bibliography that follows is selective. It concentrates on books published by Zinoviev (which we believe to be comprehensively listed) and on a selective listing of writings about Zinoviev. The numerous occasional writings by Zinoviev and the interviews he has given to the Press, are not covered. Some of the former are reprinted in the collections of occasional pieces (*Bez illyuzii*, *My i zapad* and *Ni svobody ni ravenstva ni bratstva*). In Section I, the listing of the Russian titles and publication details of books by Zinoviev published initially in Russian, more or less literal English translations of the titles are given in brackets after the Russian title; the letters E, F and G after the date indicate the existence of published translations in English, French and German. Sections II and III contain details of English-language editors of Zinoviev's books, as well as references to two of his books which have been published only in German.

The listing of writings about Alexander Zinoviev (Section IV) is selective in three ways. First, it is based on items that have come to the editors' attention and not on an extensive bibliographic search. (Alexander Zinoviev kindly gave us access to his archive of reviews and writings about his work, but this in turn is based on what has been sent him by his publisher and by the authors of the writings.) Second, it excluded most items that were written as reviews of particular Zinoviev works. Third, it is, in order to suit the purpose of this book, oriented towards English-language material.

It is important to note that the interview listed in Section V has been repudiated by Zinoviev on the grounds that he was not given the opportunity to vet the edited transcript. (The interview was conducted in English.) It is included here for the record because it attracted a good deal of attention amongst both Russia-watchers and Soviet *émigré* intellectuals. (On the whole, the effect was to damage Zinoviev's reputation.)

Among the items not covered in this bibliography are the journal

articles and chapters in symposia which Zinoviev published in the USSR while working as an academic logician. Gabriel Superfin of Radio Liberty has identified 28 of these, published in 1957–67 inclusive.

I RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE EDITIONS OF BOOKS BY ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV

Studies in Logic, Published in the USSR

Filosofskie problemy mnogoznachnoi logiki (Philosophical Problems of Many-Valued Logic) (Moscow: Nauka, 1960 (E)).
Osnovy logicheskoi teorii nauchnykh znanii (Foundations of the Logical Theory of Scientific Knowledge) (Moscow: Nauka, 1967 (G, E)).
Ocherk mnogoznachnoi logiki (A Study in Many-Valued Logic) (Moscow: Nauka, 1968 (G)).
Kompleksnaya logika (Complex Logic) (Moscow: Nauka, 1970).
Logika Nauki, (The Logic of Science) (Moscow: Mysl', 1971).
Logicheskaya fizika (Logical Physics) (with H. Wessel) (Moscow: Nauka, 1972 (E)).

Books Published in Russian but only in the West (all published in Lausanne by Editions l'Age d'Homme)

Fiction
Ziyayushchie vysoti (Yawning Heights), 1976 (E, G, F . . .).
Svetloe budushchee (The Radiant Future), 1978 (F, E . . .).
Zapiski nochnogo storozha (Notes of a Nightwatchman), 1979.
V Preddverii raya (On the Threshold of Paradise), 1979.
Zheltyi dom (The Madhouse), 1980 (F, E).
Gomo sovetikus (Homo Sovieticus), 1982 (E, F, G).
Idi no Golgofu (Go to Golgotha), 1985 (F).

Social Analysis
Bez illyuzii (Without Illusions), 1981.
My i zapad (We and the West), 1981.
Kommunizm kak real'nost' (Communism as Reality), 1981 (F, E, G).
Nashei yunosti polet (The Flight of Our Youth), 1983 (F).
Ni svobody, ni ravenstva, ni bratstva (Neither Liberty nor Equality nor Fraternity), 1983.

Poetry
Moi dom-moya chuzhbina (My home is my Exile), 1982
Evangelie dlya Ivana (The Gospel for Ivan), 1984 (Bilingual edition in Russian and French, translator Vladimir Berelowitch).

II BOOKS BY ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV NOT PUBLISHED IN A RUSSIAN LANGUAGE EDITION

Philosophy

Logische Sprachregeln (Berlin:, 1975). (So far available only in German.)
Non-standard Logic and its Applications (Oxford: W. A. Meeuws, 1983).

Philosophy-cum-Social Analysis

Die Diktatur der Logik (Munich/Zurich: Piper Verlag, 1985). (So far available only in German.)

III ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDITIONS OF BOOKS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN RUSSIAN BY ALEXANDER ZINOVIEV

Studies in Logic

Philosophical Problems of Many-Valued Logic, editor and translator, G King and D D Comey (Dordrecht (Holland): Reidel, 1963).
Foundations of the Logical Theory of Scientific Knowledge: Complex Logic, (with an appendix by G. A. Smirnov and others) (Dordrecht (Holland): Reidel, 1973).
Logical Physics, translator, O. A. Germogenova, editor, Robert S. Cohen, (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1983).

Fiction
Yawning Heights (Oxford: Bodley Head, 1979). (Translator, Gordon Clough.)
The Radiant Future (Oxford: Bodley Head, 1981). (Translator, Gordon Clough.)

Homo Sovieticus (London: Gollancz, 1985). (Translator, Charles Janson.)
The Madhouse (London: Gollancz, 1986). (Translator, Michael Kirkwood). An abridged version of the original.

Social Analysis

The Reality of Communism (London: Gollancz, 1984). (Translator, Charles Janson.)

IV SOME WRITINGS ABOUT ZINOVIEV'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IDEAS AND LITERARY STYLE (a small selection from a very large total)

Alain de Benoist, 'L'Enigme Sovietique dans le Miroir de l'Occident', *Nouvelle Ecole*, no 38 (Summer 1982), pp 109–130
A. Besançon, 'La Normalité du communisme selon Zinoviev', *Pouvoirs* no. 21 (1982), pp. 151–9
J. Elster, 'Negation Active et Negation Passive: Essai de Sociologie Ivanienne', *Archives Europeennes de Sociologie*, XXI (1980).
Zinoviev is also extensively discussed in Elster's *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
Philip Hanson, 'Alexander Zinoviev: Totalitarianism from Below', *Survey*, no. 114 (Winter 1982), pp. 29–49.
Michael Heller, 'Toska po zone', *Obozrenie*, no. 2 (December 1982).
Michael Heller, 'The Soviet Swift', *Survey*, no. 3 (104) (Summer 1977–1978), pp. 11–20.
Erhard M. Hutter, 'Homo Sovieticus. Das Phänomen Alexander Sinowjew', *Integral*, 1983.
Felix Philipp Ingold, 'Der Sowjetkommunismus – Fiktion oder Realitat? Hinweis auf Alexander Sinowjew', *Merkur*, vol. 36, no. 4 (406) (1982), pp. 413–17.
Charles Janson, 'A Hero of our Time', *Soviet Analyst*, II, no. 9 (5 May 1980).
Charles Janson, 'Zinoviev on Paradoxes of Stalinism', *Soviet Analyst*, 12, no. 19 (28 September 1983).
J. M. Kirkwood, 'Elements of Structure in Zinoviev's *Zheltyi dom*', *Essays in Poetics*, vol. 7, no. 2 (1982), pp. 86–118.
J. M. Kirkwood, 'Osnovy zinov'evizma', *Journal of Russian Studies*, no. 46 (1983), pp. 39–48.

T. Mianowicz, 'Zhivopis' Aleksandra Zinov'eva', *Kontinent*, 1984, no. 42, pp. 281–7

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