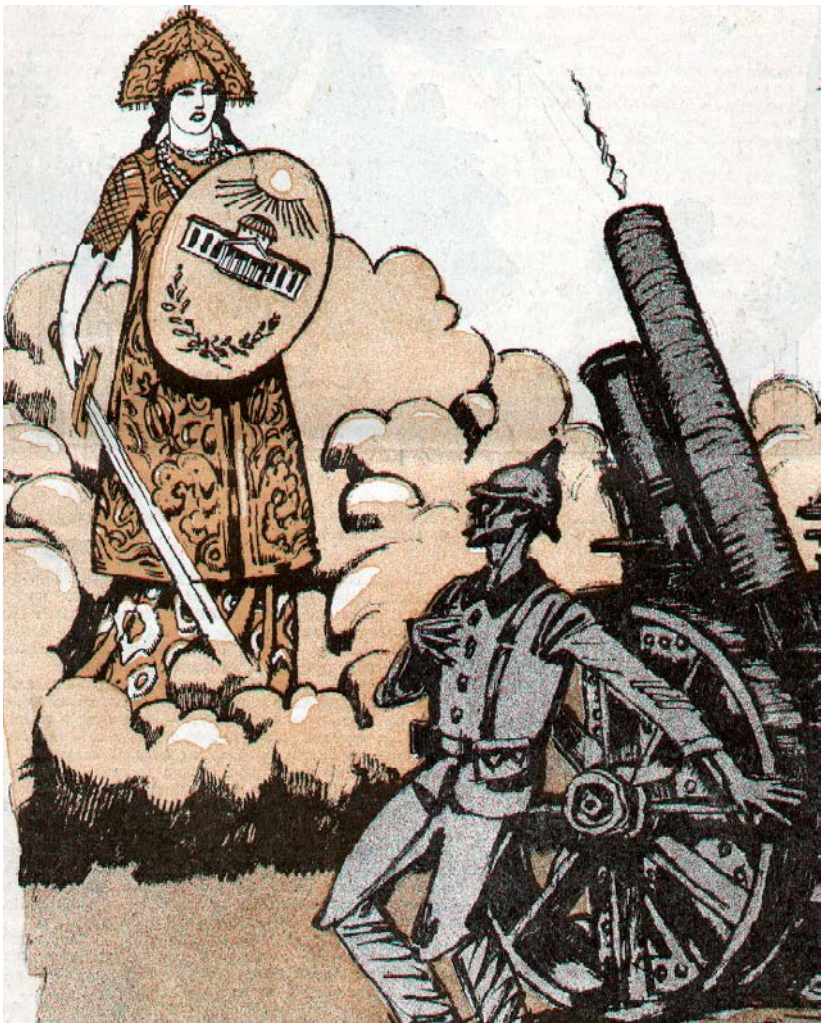
SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET POLITICS AND SOCIETY
Edited by Dr. Andreas Umland

Олег Рябов

«Россия-Матушка»

Национализм, гендер и война в России XX века

С предисловием Елены Гощило



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Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society (SPPS) Vol. 60

ISSN 1614-3515

Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society (SPPS)

ISSN 1614-3515

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ibidem-Verlag
Stuttgart

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.d-nb.de abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

Cover picture: Проснувшаяся, Н.Р. (Н. Радлов) (1889–1942), 1915. Source: Новый сатирикон. 1915. № 24. С. 1. Public property

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ISBN-13: 978-3-8382-5487-6

Памяти моего отца

ОГЛАВЛЕНИЕ

Предисловие

The Eternal Return

Polyvalent Maternal Discourse and National Identity

Helena Goscilo

> The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness.
> *Honoré de Balzac*

Feminism, Gender, and Russia

With the revival and vigorous growth of feminist consciousness in the West during the late 1960s, the unremitting efforts of politically *engagé* academics to theorize womanhood, contest formerly unassailable 'patriarchal' assumptions and institutions, and recuperate a large corpus of women's literature gradually resulted—somewhat paradoxically, if predictably—in the institutionalization of gender/women's studies itself.[1] For better and worse, that development eventually reconfigured the entire framework of academic and, to a lesser degree, public cultural debate. By the 1980s such concepts as sexual politics, the socio-political construction of gender, phallocentric colonialization, and the self-empowerment of the male gaze informed critical/theoretical discourse no longer as novelties, but as common places. In fact, their entrenchment warranted the refinement and revision that they subsequently underwent.[2] Consequently, educated readers versed in feminist issues, regard-

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1 In 1990 a British male scholar waspishly referred to women's studies as a "politico-commercial enterprise on a serious scale" driven by authors with "a niche to consolidate." Liam Hudson, "The Same But Different," *Times Literary Supplement* (1-9 June 1990), 588.

2 Symptomatic of this trend was the awareness of a proliferation of feminisms (the title of an anthology of feminist essays, edited by Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndt in 1991), which found expression in the meta-critical sections of many feminist articles, in summaries of the movement's watershed publications and major

less of their stance on questions deemed salient to the gender enterprise, experienced the shock of time warp when confronted with late-Soviet discussions of gender-related phenomena. As if catapulted back several decades, they had to adjust to what appeared a willed anachronistic shift in perspective.

The twenty-two years since perestroika, however, have witnessed changes of varying magnitude and significance, largely springing from Russia's extensive contacts with the West: the establishment of gender centers in Moscow (1990) and St. Petersburg (October 1992); the tentative, intermittent incorporation of courses in gender analysis into university curricula; the appearance of Russian websites carrying information about activities and publications addressing gender; awards for the best scholarship in gender studies (for instance, the prize for the best article in Russian, administered through the European Humanities University International Center for Gender Studies, under the leadership of Elena Gapova);[3] the debut of several journals and a steady trickle of international as well as national and local conferences in Russia devoted exclusively to gender.[4] Such innovations seem cause for jubi-

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points of contention, such volumes as Janet Todd's *Feminist Literary History* (New York: Routledge, 1988), and correctives to Laura Mulvey's original article on the male gaze in film by various critics and Mulvey herself. For a list of such publications, see Helena Goscilo, "Introduction," *Skirted Issues: The Discreteness and Indiscretions of Russian Women's Prose* [*Russian Studies in Literature*] (Spring 1992): 14-15, ft. 2. Critics of early feminism and women's studies faulted them for not taking age, race, and class into account.

3 "Gendernye shtudii." For a survey of the strides made in gender studies within educational institutions in Central and Eastern Europe from the 1980s to the present day, see Susan Zimmermann, "The Institutionalization of Women and Gender Studies in Higher Education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Union: Asymmetric Politics and the Regional-Transnational Configuration," available at http://www.duke.edu/womstud/TranslationGS.doc, accessed 1 May 2007. The internal discord and reconfiguration of the unusually energetic Department of Gender Studies at Central European University in Budapest (see http://www.iiav.nl/ezines/web/IFRWH/1998-2002/historians/newsletter%2031%20hungary.htm) and the closure of the Center of Gender Studies in Minsk in 2004, followed by its transfer to Vilnius, eloquently attest to the vulnerability of these institutions. As Zimmerman, a faculty member specializing in gender studies at Central European University, justly notes, the viability of various gender initiatives, many of them fully or partially underwritten by Western resources, depends significantly on the given country's commitment to westernization (32-33).

4 An indefatigable organizer of such events in Moscow is the journalist Nadezhda Azhgikhina, who regularly includes panels on gender at journalists' conferences and, in her capacity as Secretary of the Russian Union of Journalists, repeatedly invites writers and critics who address gender in their work to give presentations on

lation, at least among liberals and radicals. Yet the overwhelming majority of Russian academics remain skeptical about the intellectual validity of gender studies, many equating gender exclusively with womanhood,[5] while Russians ignorant of the scholarly and political agendas and achievements of Western feminism automatically dismiss it as mere political correctness, the "perverse" sanctuary of lesbians, and the last resort of bitter "ugly women." Agencies and websites advertising Russian brides typically contrast them to their "aggressive" Western counterparts, promoting the Russian woman's fabled non-assertive, conciliatory "nature," readiness to please "her man," cooking and nurturing skills, and immunity to the dangerous "infection" of feminism. Indeed, the mainstreaming of soft pornography in glossy magazines and newspapers, and the obsession with young female bodies in contemporary Russian life[6] index the society's preference for the traditional, asymmetrical polarization of essentialized gender identities.

Life as Discursive Strategy

There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

In this context, the work of Oleg Riabov constitutes a remarkable anomaly. A professor of philosophy at the State University of Ivanovo (historically characterized as a "woman's town"), Riabov occupies a unique niche in Russian academia as the *male* author of three impressive monographs on gender in Russian culture—*Zhenshchina i zhenstvennost' v filosofii Serebriannogo veka* (Ivanovo: Ivanovo State University, 1997), *Russkaia filosofiia*

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the Union's premises in the city center, e.g., Anna-Nataliia Malakhovskaia and Svetlana Aleksievich.

5 During the 1970s and 1980s, gender studies in the West tended to be collapsed into women's studies, owing chiefly to feminist politics and the archeological imperative—namely, "unearthing" the works and biographies of women marginalized or ignored by history. Scholarship on masculinities gained momentum only in the 1990s, often imbricated in questions raised by gay and queer studies. Perhaps this multi-stage development in the West could account, if only in part, for the automatic assumption in Russia that gender, not unlike menstruation, is an exclusively female (and lamentable) "extra" or given. Men do not "need" gender, for they are *an Sich*—humanity.

6 The fixation on nubile flesh, of course, also flourishes in the West, and perhaps above all in Hollywood.

zhenstvennosti (XI-XX veka) (Ivanovo: "Iunona," 1999) and "*Matushka-Rus'"* (Moscow: Ladomir, 2001)—as well as related articles in both Russian and English. All of Riabov's scholarship, conducted in a rigorously historical and deconstructionist mode, benefits from his thorough knowledge of Russian literature and culture; his command of Western theory, critical thought, and philosophy; his grasp on the full range of texts in feminism and gender theory; and his ability to buttress arguments and claims with copious documentation, both verbal and visual.

The title of his current volume, *"Rossiia-Matushka": Natsionalizm, gender i voina v Rossii XX veka*, which takes up where "*Matushka-Rus"* left off, transparently condenses the major argument that has consistently driven his scholarship over the years, whatever its shifting emphases: namely, that the discourses of gender, nationalism, and war invariably operate in a symbiotic relationship, shaping and reinforcing one another. The primary sources he adduces to illustrate that thesis are formidable, spanning multiple cultural categories, from sundry literary genres and philosophy to songs, graphics, and film—not only Russian, but also European and American. In that sense the book's title does not do full justice to Riabov's purview, which in its comparative sections vividly demonstrates both the universal and the nation-specific tendencies in the triadic discursive strategies he analyzes.

In his three logically sequenced chapters of unequal length, Riabov observes hallowed philosophical traditions by starting with definitions of his key terms and the concepts underpinning them—gender, nationalism, identity, and discourse—so as to clarify his methodology. Discursive practices, he maintains, construct not only gender, nationalism, and identity, but also "truths" in a hierarchical system that techniques of naturalization attempt to present as inherent or unimpeachable. Tracing the etiology and permutations of Rossiia Matushka/Mother Russia, Riabov contends that typically the symbolism of this primordial feminine image acquires maximal emotional power during times of war; that its rhetorical invocation capacitates the legitimation of the political system and rouses nationalistic passions; and that its affect helps to naturalize the value-steeped dualistic classification of "*Svoi/Chuzhie*" ("Us or Our Own/Them or Theirs") in international relations. Since binarisms are the *bête noire* of any deconstructionist project (and according to Iurii Lot-

man's classic article, a cornerstone of early Russian culture),[7] Riabov dismantles them with the aid of copious Western theorists, from the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, with his emphasis on the role of practice, embodiment, and exercise of power in social dynamics, to the literary theorist Edward Said—specifically, his critique of the paradigms undergirding *Orientalism* (1978), the concept and title of his most famous book, which, though controversial, exerted an incalculable impact on post-colonial studies.[8]

Arguing for a referential, context-dependent, and heterogeneous understanding of gender, and particularly its implication in power relations, Riabov defines masculinity as a field of competing discourses, and contends that gendered discourse serves as a marker enabling the process of inclusion and exclusion (*Svoi/Chuzhie*) in the formation of collective identity. That gender-based differentiation establishes social and political boundaries, creating an invariably feminized alterity essential to the consolidation of a national identity that, ultimately, necessitates the presence of an Enemy.

Riabov's extended commentary on the rhetoric of nation and nationalism links both with familial and religious discourse—the former conveniently grounded in the Russian language itself (*rod* [gender; family; origin], *rodstvo* [kinship; relatives], *rodina* [homeland, motherland— frequently linked with *mat'*]).[9] Russian rulers' clever exploitation of familial discourse, which generated the labels of father tsar (*tsar'-batiushka*) during the imperial period and, later, Stalin as the Father of All Peoples, created the illusion of the entire population as one large, happy family (Stalin's *bol'shaia sem'ia*) thriving under the wise leadership of the infallible Patriarch. If the family trope denotes unifying bonds and continuity, then religion provides an excellent analogy with

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7 Ju. M. Lotman and B.A. Uspenskii, "The Role of Dual Models in the Dynamics of Russian Culture (Up to the End of the Eighteenth Century," in Ju. M. Lotman and B. A. Uspenskii, *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*, ed. Ann Shukman (Ann Arbor: *Michigan Slavic Contributions*, 1984, No. 11): 3-35. The Russian original first appeared in *Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii*, XXVIII (Tartu, 1977).

8 Though lambasted by Orientalists such as Bernard Lewis and Albert Houran, *Orientalism* served as a major inspiration and orientation point for countless studies of East/West relations, and Western perceptions of and attitudes toward the East.

9 See also Valentina Zaitseva, "National, Cultural, and Gender Identity in the Russian Language," *Gender and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Russian Culture*, eds. Helena Goscilo and Andrea Lanoux (DeKalb: Northern Illinois UP, 2006): 30-54.

nationalism, inasmuch as the two share the promise of immortality and an orientation toward the past and future.

The discourse of nationalism, Riabov contends, values traits that modernity correlates with masculinity: autonomy, rationalism, aggressiveness, and decisiveness—including the readiness to shed blood. Elsewhere he adds the qualities of will, self-control, progress, and power—certainly attributes that the majority of Western cultures identify with masculinity, whose representatives are joined in a male brotherhood (*bratstvo*) along the horizontal axis. As the prime category in the binary of posited gender identity, this plexus of characteristics predicates femininity as the antithesis: passivity, purity, modesty, faithfulness, emotionalism, domesticity, etc. Adherence to these supposedly feminine features constitutes women's 'national duty' and ensures the purity of the nation. And the logic of national supremacy requires that other nations never match one's own in preserving the sanctity of these complementary gendered identities and functions. In fact, discursive images of Others traditionally impugn the latter's masculinity, or during wartime evoke evolutionary regression by constructing the Enemy as "primitives" and sexual predators, violating the sanctity of the beloved homeland, troped as chaste womanhood.[10] Indeed, posters from the two World Wars frequently depict the atavistic Enemy readying to rape the woman/nation, thereby threatening Our fighting man's efficacy as defender and protector.[11] To offer their blessings to men departing for war and thereby legitimate the 'cause' is only one among multiple roles Our women (by contrast to Others') play in the rhetoric of war; they also appear as suffering victims, faithful spouses and comrades, incarnations of compassion and cozy domesticity, and the long-awaited "norm" that rewards repatriated soldiers. In short, the discourse of war consolidates already

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10 For women's tropological function in the collective narratives of nationhood, see Helena Goscilo, "Negotiating Gendered Rhetoric: Between Scylla and Charybdis," *Representing Gender in Cultures*, eds. Elżbieta H. Oleksy and Joanna Rydzewska (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004): 19-39. A wide-ranging, excellently researched examination of the topic is Marina Warner's *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (New York: Vintage, 1996).

11 Viktor Deni's *Ubei fashista-izuvera* (1942) represents a compelling instance of such an image. For a large selection of female iconography in World War II posters, see *Plakaty voiny i pobedy 1941-1945*, eds. P.A. Snopkov, A.E. Snopkov, and A.F. Shkliaruk (Moskva: "Kontakt-Kul'tura", 2005).

existent gender distinctions, hyperbolizing them to boost morale through an affirmation of familiar values and legacies.

East and West, with Home as Best

The lucrative business of mystery.
Edmund Burke, *A Vindication of Natural Society*

With his terminology, theoretical framework, and major ideas elucidated in his introductory chapter, Riabov turns to a specific manifestation of gendering the Other: namely, Western culture's reliance on Mother Russia as a symbol of Russianness in the context of post-colonialism. He locates this self-aggrandizing phenomenon within the larger dualistic schema mapped out in Stuart Hall's influential "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power" (1996),[12] which famously claims that within Western representations of the East, "the very language we use to describe the so-called facts interferes in [… the] process of finally deciding what is true and what is false" (203). Hall's thesis that the ability of any discourse to reproduce political values and to position one advantageously vis-à-vis any other entity extends Said's critique of Western discursive practices regarding the East, which arrogate primacy to the West, endowing it with the purportedly characteristic features of masculinity—rationalism, strength, individualism, (self-)control, etc. This dichotomous constellation conveniently envisions Russia (the East/"the rest") as feminine, hence a stronghold of irrationalism, archaism, mystery, unpredictability, 'softness,' passivity, and eroticism—all neatly encapsulated in the West's concept of "the Russian soul."

Throughout the volume, Riabov scrupulously documents the intersection of this subordinating move by the West with the image of Russia produced by its own poets, prosaists, and philosophers who feminized Russia either explicitly or indirectly through gender-specific traits. Calling this process "auto-feminization," Riabov perceptively notes the commonalities between "Russophobia" (the West's imposed image) and "Russophilia" (Russia's self-conception). While Orthodox (and unorthodox) religious beliefs inclined

[12] Published in Stuart Hall, D. Held, et al., eds. *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996).

prominent Russian proponents of messianism to frame national identity in a trans-rational, mystic, and often hermetic belief in the nation's unique destiny within world culture, from an Enlightenment-based Western viewpoint, the structure and tone in which that belief expressed itself align it with the irrationalism and passivity of "the rest." Fedor Tiutchev's poem "Umom Rossiiu ne poniat'," the Symbolists' cult of Sophia as Eternal Wisdom, and Soviet Village Prose writers' personification of traditional Russia as the maternal body (e.g., Valentin Rasputin's "Proshchanie s Materoi")[13] lend themselves to a reading that collapses Russia into the unfathomable "dark continent" of specifically female sexuality as posited by Sigmund Freud. Winston Churchill's over-quoted summation of Russia during World War II as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" merely culminated the West's centuries-long representation of Russia as an 'exotic' realm of semi-Asiatic barbarians on the outskirts of modern Europe—the periphery, as Riabov observes, in terms of the West as Center.

Though here Riabov draws chiefly on philosophy and sundry writings, perhaps no other genre in contemporary culture validates his argument more forcefully and consistently than cinema from the 1920s to the present day. Memorable examples of a feminized Russia range from adaptations of Lev Tolstoi's *Anna Karenina* (1877) to recent Hollywood blockbusters, which dwell on Russians' immoderate impulsiveness, extravagant appetites, and propensity for extremes. Though Tolstoi's novel hardly depicts Russians' collective capacity for orgiastic celebrations and untrammeled excess, both Edmund Goulding's silent adaptation, *Love* (1927), and Clarence Brown's *Anna Karenina* (1935) establish "Russianness" by arbitrarily adding scenes of a wild snowstorm, balalaika-strumming gypsies colluding in sexual license, and drunken officers in the imperial army crawling under a table as part of a competitive game after they consume a veritable mountain of caviar. Anatole Litvak's *Journey* (1959), released at a time when friction between the two superpowers had eased, has an enamored Soviet major (Yul Brynner) during

13 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's "Matrenin dvor" likewise collapses sacrosanct national values such as self-abnegation and proclivity to self-sacrifice into femininity. The film director Andrei Tarkovskii similarly viewed "subordination and self-denial out of love" as the quintessence of womanhood (quoted in Nikolai Boldyrev, *zhertvoprinoshenie Andreia Tarkovskogo* [Moscow: Vagrius, 2004] 58-59).

the Hungarian Revolt launch into a dashing Russian dance and crunch between his teeth the glass that he has just emptied of vodka. Kindred screen images persist during perestroika and even after the official end of the Cold War: the American protagonist in Walter Hill's comedy *Red Heat* (1988) patronizingly advises his Soviet counterpart, "You [Russians] should stick to the things you're good at. You know, knee-dancing and training those cute little bears for the circus"; Wolfgang Peterson's *Air Force One* (1997) pointedly contrasts the level-headed competence of American government personnel to the fanaticism of Russian terrorists who hijack the American president's plane, threatening to kill a hostage every half-hour until an imprisoned tyrant is released; and Michael Bay's *Armageddon* (1998) spotlights Americans' patriotism, discipline, and stoicism as they save the world from extinction, while the Russian ally (who oversees a space station) is an unkempt, volatile astronaut who solves technical problems in space "the Russian way," as he phrases it—by pounding on invaluable spaceship equipment with a metal bar.

Such mainstream cinematic offerings imply that the West—the self-proclaimed citadel of logical, powerful masculinity—needs to control volatile, ineffectual Russia, thereby justifying America's paternalistic interference in Russia's 'chaotic' internal affairs. Roger Spottiswoode elevates that allegedly benign supervision to unprecedented heights in *Spinning Boris* (2003), which not only unfolds an absurdly incompetent Russia in comprehensive disarray but also credits American consultants and their marketing technologies with the outcome of Russia's 1996 presidential election. As the enlightened authority, the West teaches 'savages' the 'correct' way to conduct political campaigns.

Building Nation and Consolidating Gender Difference through War

My argument is that War makes rattling good history;
but Peace is poor reading.
Thomas Hardy, *The Dynasts*

Riabov's last and longest chapter focuses on major phases in the twentieth century's resort—particularly though not solely during wartime—to the gendered national discourse that feminizes Russia in a spirit of dismissal or

relegation to inferior status. The many passages tracing autofeminization by philosophers and poets during the Silver Age who repeatedly contrasted Russia's "femininity" (*zhenstvennost'*) to Western masculinity lay the groundwork for the chapter's analysis of discursive strategies during the 1905 and 1917 Revolutions, as well as the two World Wars and the Cold War (1946-91). If the anarchic, elemental nature of revolution automatically equated it with femininity for such Silver Age philosophers as Vasilii Rozanov and Nikolai Berdiaev, the rhetoric of World War I transformed the framework of gendered national identity into a normative issue. Propaganda in Russian posters, literature, and films touted the strength and moral superiority of Russia's self-proclaimed femininity to the *deviant,* hypertrophied masculinity of the German aggressors, which instanced pathology and augured ineluctable defeat. Positing a continuity between contemporary Russian soldiers and the mythological Russian epic heroes of old (*bogatyri*) who defended the empire's borders and Christianity from enemy invasions out of love for Mother Russia, Russian iconography of World War I ascribed exclusively destructive and materialistic motivations to the German army.[14] At the same time, Poland (with the Time of Troubles and subsequent violent conflicts such as the Polish-Soviet war of 1920-21 forgotten) became one of Ours—admittedly of a secondary category, but still part of a Slavic whole that the renegade Bulgarians betrayed, at their own peril.

Both obliterating and resuscitating history, Russian World War II publications and especially visuals appealed to the populace's selective memory through the precedents of historical personages and victories, highlighting male heroes renowned for their glorious defeats of sundry antagonists/Others. Not only posters carrying their inspirational images, but also films exalting the exemplary exploits of Peter the Great, Aleksandr Nevskii, Aleksandr Suvorov, Minin and Pozharskii, and Bogdan Khmel'nitskii hyperbolized their achievements as saviors and representatives of an unconquerable

[14] On the calculated reprisal of the medieval image as canonized by Vasnetsov in the late nineteenth century and during the last few years, see Helena Goscilo, "Viktor Vasnetsov's Bogatyrs: Mythic Heroes and Sacrosanct Borders Go to Market." *Picturing Russia: Essays on Visual Culture*. Eds. Valerie A. Kivelson and Joan Neuberger. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007.

Russian nation.[15] The discourse of these harrowing years modified gendered associations. It continued to sanctify Russia as the primordial Mother, but now cast her patriotic defenders as intrepid *sons*, while subjecting external and internal Others to a denigrating feminization.[16]

"Za Rodinu, za Stalina!", the rallying call that attained the status of a mantra throughout the war, tapped the mythological traditions of hierogamy,[17] bolstered by the religious connotations of the rhetoric of salvation. The safety and purity of Mother Russia, threatened with symbolic and literal violation by the Enemy—caricatured as animals, lowly insects, and rapists—was at stake, as was the nation's future, imaged by graphic artists as a child held in its mother's arms. Maternity's physical and figural primacy may be deduced from the 1936 law prohibiting abortions and the famous recruitment poster by Iraklii Toidze, *Rodina-mat' zovet!* (1941), as well as posters depicting mothers' pleas, blessings, and gratitude to their brave, responsive 'sons.' In their rhetorical devices, graphics observed gender distinctions, favoring synecdoche for male images and symbolism for their female counterparts: posters frequently project a single soldier, courageous, determined, and tireless, as a representative of the entire Soviet/Russian army whose sole, overriding task is to conquer the Enemy. Women, however, fulfill multiple symbolic roles: the nation, the land, vulnerable victimhood, the home, and the guarantee of continuity, of future generations.[18] And, as Riabov points out, in a sense, women are the reward for male valor and victory. Subsuming all these immemorial aspects of femininity, Rodina-mat' proved a highly effective recruitment tool,

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15 See Vladimir Petrov's two-part *Petr Pervyi* (1937, 1938), based on Aleksei Tolstoi's novel with the same title (1929), Sergei Eizenshtein's *Aleksandr Nevskii* (1938), Vsevolod Pudovkin's *Minin i Pozharskii* (1939) and *Aleksandr Suvorov* (1940), and Igor' Savchenko's *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* (1941).

16 For a caricature of Hitler as a "baba" (old/peasant woman) draped in a traditional woman's headscarf, see the illustration accompanying Zaitseva's article in *Gender and National Identity*, op.cit. 35.

17 On hierogamy, whereby the Sky-God "marries" Mother Earth so as to generate cosmic creativity, see Mircia Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1959): 144-47.

18 For an analysis of how the entrenched cultural tradition of gendered allegory, "whereby women invariably *represent* instead of being *represented* in a context established by, and showcasing, masculinist priorities" erases empirical individuals through trope, thereby facilitating women's exclusion as agents in the social and political spheres, see Goscilo, "Negotiating Gendered Rhetoric: Between Scylla and Charybdis," op. cit., especially 24-36.

mobilizing and uniting the multi-ethnic Soviet population in its sustained patriotic ("Mother-loving") struggle to repel the Enemy.

The militaristic masculine ideal of inflexibility, stamina, and daring epitomized by the Wise Leader as Man of Steel during Stalinism privileged the male professions of pilots, Stakhanovite miners and metro-builders, leaving women to breed and run the household. Stalin's death (1953) and the ensuring Thaw 'softened' that gender-polarized system of values, sidelining gender distinctions as it rehabilitated sincerity and restored the legitimacy of emotions. Nikolai Ostrovskii's officially promoted *Kak zakalialas' stal'* (1932-34), which extols a heroic Spartan ethic that acknowledges nothing beyond revolutionary dedication, yielded to Boris Pasternak's *Doktor Zhivago* (pd. 1957), whose lyrical poet-hero disavows combat and military zeal while embracing Jesus Christ and Hamlet as archetypes of self-sacrifice.[19] Films by Grigorii Kozintsev featuring Don Quixote and Hamlet,[20] orphaned children bonding with traumatized but tender surrogate fathers in Marlen Khutsiev's *Dva Fedora* (1958) and Sergei Bondarchuk's *Sud'ba cheloveka* (1959), Mikhail Kalatozov's sympathetic portrayal of a woman who, contrary to the imperative of Konstantin Simonov's celebrated wartime poem, "Zhdi menia!", does not 'wait for her man fighting at the front,' yet finds redemption (*Letiat zhuravli* 1957) revalidated compassion, imagination, personal relationships, and a "gentler, kinder" approach to life.[21] That these ostensibly feminine qualities, anathematized by the previous era, surfaced and enjoyed approbation during the Thaw clearly signaled the increased tolerance of an ethos not exclusively defined by aggressive masculinity.[22]

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19 Iurii Zhivago's passivity, which troubled many critics, allies him with femininity and the early Russian saints Boris and Gleb.

20 *Don Kikhot* (1957) and *Gamlet* (1964).

21 On the new values of the Thaw, see Alexander Prokhorov, *Unasledovannyi diskurs: Paradigmy stalinskoi kul'tury v literature i kinematografe ottepeli*. Seriia "Sovremennaia zapadnaia rusistika" (Sankt-Peterburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2007). For a survey of Thaw film, see Josephine Woll, *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000).

22 Kalatozov's compassionate focus on the unfaithful and tormented Veronika in *Letiat zhuravli* could hardly differ more in topic and tone from his eloquently titled films under Stalin: *Muzhestvo* (1939), *Nepobedimye* (1942), and *Valerii Chkalov* (1941), the daredevil pilot championed by Stalin who in 1937 set a world record by flying nonstop from Moscow to Vancouver, Canada.

Whatever the vagaries of internal gender discourse, throughout the Cold War, Riabov maintains, the image of the capitalist West (the Other), and especially America, constantly played a key role in Soviet identity (Us), and vice versa. While Soviet propaganda represented its major Other as simultaneously reactionary and imperialistic, exploitative, racist, and materialistic, the U.S. countered with charges of abusive repressiveness, persistent violation of human rights, and insatiable hunger for world power. Gender discourse on both sides invoked, once again, behavioral norms. Whereas American rhetoric emphasized Russians' asexuality, Soviets decried the depravity of American life, personified as the whore of Babylon and antithetical to the wholesomeness of Soviet society. Sexual profligacy, spy seducers, loveless marriages contracted for monetary gain, and insufficiently masculine men predominated in portrayals of Americans in Soviet films, such as Grigorii Aleksandrov's *Vstrecha na El'be* (1949) and *Tsirk* (1936). Not only cinema but also caricatures and other genres showcased the superiority of Soviet masculinity, manifested in such diverse spheres as physique, sports, space exploration, military power, friendship/camaraderie, and treatment of women.

Perestroika destabilized such binaries to an extent, even as it intensified the gendering of political and cultural discourse wielded by both superpowers. Sex and sexual discourse infiltrated virtually all cultural, social, and political categories, and, once post-Soviet Russia officially opted for a market economy, sexual(ized) images virtually ruled visual genres, from advertisements to art, film, and illustrations of books and journals. Beauty contests and pornography made their debut, and authors who cautiously had adhered to Victorian standards of propriety suddenly began writing frankly about the body and its myriad intimate activities. Popular music explored the possibilities of sexual innuendo (Liube) and obscenities (Leningrad), and even produced a *faux*-lesbian duo, Tatu. Politicians, and above all Vladimir Zhirinovskii, the spotlight-seeking head of the misleadingly named Liberal Democratic Party, sexualized political discourse, memorably referring to former Soviet leaders as onanists and impotents and penning *Azbuka seksa* (1999), which, *inter alia*, proposed launching licensed prostitutes into space to alleviate Russian cosmonauts' stress. In this comprehensive sexualization, women's bodies became marketable commodities, quickly co-opted and packaged by sex-traffickers and websites peddling compliant, nurturing young

Russian women in marriage to (usually older) Western buyers seeking relief from feminists and proponents of gender parity. In short, *Svoi* welcomed the importation of *Chuzhie* values and cultural practices with arms outstretched.

While perestroika and the early phase of post-Soviet reforms gave Western masculinity a boost, they manifestly emasculated Russian men. Unease at the abrupt and categorical abnegation of formerly sacrosanct priorities and allegiances eventually expressed itself in the pervasive image of Russia as a whore, succumbing to the lure of Western lucre and unable to depend on the hapless brotherhood of Russian males for salvation or sustenance. Petr Todorovskii's ideologically freighted *Interdevochka* (1990), based on Vladimir Kunin's novella by the same title (1989), was only the first Russian film in a series to warn that betrayal of the Mother/land inexorably leads to its loss and a punitive, violent death.[23] While many segments of Russian society hailed the sudden extensive interaction with the former Enemy, others viewed the rapprochement as a castrating ideological defeat. Rampant inflation, a steep decline in industrial production, capital flight, several financial crashes and scams, the government's default on its debts (1998), and Boris Yeltsin's widely reported erratic behavior led to further deterioration in Russia's relations with the U.S. The latter appeared little more than a predator, the former—a vulnerable victim of misplaced trust. In gendered terms, Russia's role paralleled that of the innocent woman, "seduced and abandoned."

During the tumultuous 1990s the fundamental revolution in professions within a society undergoing ever-expanding change and adjustment necessitated an accelerated reconceptualization of successful masculinity, one, moreover, based on Western models and their hierarchies.[24] In the reshuffled social and economic status of viable professions, specialists in business and law proved in high demand and commanded high salaries and considerable power. Oligarchs such as Boris Berezovsky corroborated the long-standing

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23 For elaborations on this theme, see Villen Novak's *Dikaia liubov'* (1993), Dmitrii Astrakhan's *Ty y menia odna* (1993), and Karen Shakhnazarov's *Amerikanskaia doch'* (1995). In all, the choice of a love partner tropes the decision whether "to remain true" to one's Motherland or bind one's fate to a foreigner and abandon Mother Russia.

24 Among the welter of monographs on the 1990s in Russia, perhaps the most bracingly clear-sighted and informed is Alena Ledeneva, *How Russia Really Works: The Informal Practices that Shaped Post-Soviet Politics and Business* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2006).

Western truism that money carries political influence and emanates an aura of masculine potency. Though a minuscule minority of Russian men, subsequently labeled oligarchs, accumulated staggering fortunes during the 1990s, direct or mediated dependence on models borrowed from the 'triumphant' capitalist West, which had bested its socialist Eastern counterpart, damaged Russia's self-esteem. The abortive war in Chechnya (1994-96), as Riabov points out, reinforced the widespread impression of the nation's impotence. As so-called market experts dispensed 'sage advice' to Russians endeavoring to learn business practices, articles in glossy magazines, drawing on Western sources, attempted to initiate Russian males into the secrets of appropriate conduct by "real men" and "gentlemen."[25] On the one hand, this reduction of Russian males to America's pupils promoted a feminized national identity. Yet, on the other hand, the business ethic adopted by Russian businessmen[26] and the efficient, cold-blooded elimination of critics and competitors, combined with the lucrative objectification of women's bodies, accorded with paradigms of Western masculinity. The brutal drive to succeed at any cost and the criminalization of the political and business spheres, tirelessly discussed by the media, doubtless account for Riabov's statement, "v tselom postkommunisticheskii diskurs mozhno rassmatrivat' kak otritsanie femininnykh tsennostei (ili, tochnee, tekh, kotorye markirovalis' kak ne-muzhskie)." I would argue that the decade of the 90s constituted a struggle to forge a new, empowered masculinity and its appropriate discourse.

If the early 1990s witnessed Russia's self-flagellation and ambivalent reliance on American financial aid and training, as the decade drew to a close, disillusionment with the intentions and efficacy of the Western 'ally' gradually soured Russians' view of the U.S. Like a betrayed lover, Russia found comfort in a discourse of proud rejection. The Russian émigré writer

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25 During the 1990s, glossy magazines functioned as "how to" manuals or intensive courses in the acquisition of style and behavioral credentials suited to men's new positions as bankers, businessmen, accountants, independent consultants, and so forth. On the pedagogical nature of these publications, see Helena Goscilo, "Style and S(t)imulation: Popular Magazines, or The Aestheticization of Postsoviet Russia," *Russian Culture of the 1990s.* Special issue of *Studies in 20th Century Literature* 24: 1 (Winter 2000): 15-50.

26 On the role of the New Russians as a decisive force in Russia's transformation, see the cluster of articles, "The New Russians," ed. Helena Goscilo, *The Russian Review* 62/1 (January 2003): 1-90, especially Alexei Yurchak, "Russian Neoliberal: The Entrepreneurial Ethic and the Spirit of 'True Careerism'": 72-90.

Petr Vail' neatly encapsulated the shifts in Russia's attitude to the Enemy as a movement "ot kazennogo lozunga 'My luchshe vsekh' sovetskoi epokhi k unichizhitel'nomu 'My khuzhe vsekh' vremen perestroiki i vozrozhdeniiu tezisa 'I vse-taki my luchshe vsekh' postperestroichnogo perioda, osobenno s poiavleniem svoikh effektnykh bogachei."[27] Amidst the financial and political turmoil of the 1990s, a discourse of self-affirmation increasingly contrasted an affluent but superficial, pragmatic West and a spiritually profound, cultured Russia. That refurbished binary of *Chuzhie/Svoi* found its most jingoistic expression in Nikita Mikhalkov's *Sibirskii tsiriul'nik* (1998), which, tellingly, had its media-hyped premiere in the Kremlin. In many ways Mikhalkov's expensive fantasy of a noble (indeed, ideal) imperial Russia capable of imposing its mark on a crass America prepared the way for the new millennium, with its nostalgia for empire under Vladimir Putin.

Putin's presidency introduced not only relative stability but also a concerted national remasculinization that Riabov perceptively analogizes with the Reagan years in America as analyzed in Susan Jeffords' incisive *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era.* [28] Frosty-eyed, self-controlled, and laconic, Putin has generated an entire cultural industry of Putiniana—biographies, portraits, songs, watches, calendar and T-shirts with his image, fan clubs, labels of products ranging from a tomato to a café, nationalist organizations, and articles verging on hagiography that spotlight his prowess as a sportsman, his steadfastness and reliability, and his determination to recapture Russia's former glory. Touted as an exemplar of masculinity, just a few months after assuming the country's leadership (2000), on International Women's Day (8 March) Putin reaffirmed sacrosanct hierogamous traditions by lending his imprimatur to the nation's feminine-maternal image, astutely linking "Rodina, vera, mat'." True to his customary rhetorical strategies, Putin honors the present by intimating its continuity with an instantly identifiable and emotionally freighted past.

Dismissing feminism and postmodernism as symptoms of the West's emasculation and enervation, contemporary Russian discourse claims a true

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27 Petr Vail', "Postsovetskoe iskusstvo v poiskakh novoi ideologii," *Iskusstvo kino* 2 (1996), 159. [Symposium organized by Daniil Dondurei]

28 Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2000).

and tested masculinity. Yet various studies cited by Riabov indicate that a segment of the population continues to attribute compassion and emotionalism to Russia, and individualism, rationality, and independence to the West, while simultaneously viewing Russia as more "manly." Some view the symbol of Mother Russia as outworn, archaic, and retrograde or incapable of encouraging responsible behavior and a critical relationship to official power. Though the image and discourse of Mother Russia may be contested from various competing perspectives, the majority of Russians insist that everyone has only one biological mother and one Motherland—Rodina-mat'. And the extraordinary approval rating enjoyed by Putin testifies to the nation's perception of him as 'Her [sic] champion and protector.'

To convey the intellectual richness of Riabov's monograph requires more extensive comments than the generic conventions of an introduction permit. Erudite, admirably balanced and lucid, devoid of both partisanship and essentialism, and teeming with *aperçus*, Riabov's examination of Mother Russia in the gendered discourse of nation casts light on multiple aspects of Russia's cultural history spanning more than a century. Though deceptively modest in length, *"Rossiia-Matushka"* engages a wealth of diverse Russian and Western critics/theorists and addresses a host of issues that no contemporary scholar can afford to ignore. In short, it is a major work.

Мы широки, широки,
как вся наша матушка Россия, мы
всё вместим и со всем уживемся!
Ф. Достоевский[1]

Введение

«Россия-Матушка» – один из наиболее известных символов русскости в России и за рубежом. Материнский образ России является очевидной иллюстрацией переплетения гендерного и национального дискурсов. Тема России-Матушки неотделима и от военной темы: наиболее востребованным этот символ становится именно во время войн.[2] По каким причинам и в каких формах осуществляется это взаимовлияние «России-Матушки», с одной стороны, и национального, гендерного и военного дискурсов в России, с другой?

Интерес к данным вопросам представляется тем более актуальным, что «Россия-Матушка» приобрела широкую популярность в массовой культуре, став частью повседневности и превратившись, если пользоваться понятием М. Биллига, в факт «обыкновенного национализма». Этим термином называют романы, публицистические произведения, рок-композиции, сорта водки. «Россия-Матушка» смотрит на нас с плакатов и открыток, монет и почтовых марок; этот образ увековечен в монументах. Он широко используется и в дискурсе современных СМИ при объяснении самых разнообразных событий, будь то рост цен на энергоносители, «цветные революции» на постсоветском пространстве или тенденции мировой моды. «Россия-Матушка» является фактором политического дискурса, включаясь в предвыборные агитационные материалы или выступления политиков. Нередко этот образ становится центральным в историософских концепциях или националистических памфлетах. Нако-

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1 Достоевский Ф. Братья Карамазовы // Собр. соч.: В 15 т. Т. 10. Л., 1991. С. 212.

2 Например, образ Родины-Матери сегодня, как показывают социологические исследования, ассоциируется, в первую очередь, с Великой Отечественной войной (Воронцова Е.О., Рябов О.В. Представления ивановцев о Родине и Отечестве // Границы: Альманах Центра национальных и этнических исследований ИвГУ. Вып. 1: Этническая ситуация в Ивановской области. Иваново, 2007).

нец, «Россия-Матушка» – это факт академического дискурса; показательно, что крупнейшие исследователи теоретических проблем и нации, и гендера используют данный термин.[3]

Проблема получила различные виды интерпретаций – от метафизических спекуляций до академических штудий. Ею интересовались многие российские авторы (достаточно вспомнить имена Н. Бердяева, Г. Федотова, Г. Гачева). Заметим, что анализ мифа зачастую сопровождался его переконфигурацией, что, в свою очередь, составляет часть дискурса о России-Матушке. Большой интерес этот символ вызывает в западной науке; особое внимание «России-Матушке», ее связи со спецификой гендерного порядка в стране уделяют феминистские исследователи. Важным этапом в изучении проблемы стала монография Дж. Хаббс «Мать Россия. Мифологизация женственности в русской культуре» (1988).[4] Эта книга вызвала немало споров и в то же время дала значительный импульс анализу проблемы, библиография которой насчитывает сейчас десятки работ специалистов по различным дисциплинам (в том числе по истории, философии, лингвистике, литературоведению, культурологии, искусствоведению и др.). [5]

Вместе с тем многие аспекты проблемы далеки от решения, и к ее новой интерпретации исследователи будут возвращаться еще не раз, что обусловлено потребностью обобщения появляющихся исследований на эту тему, возможностью привлечения оригинальных методологических парадигм, необходимостью учета новых эмпирических данных. Попытку подобного исследования представляет собой и настоящая книга. Ее целью является анализ причин, форм и социальных функций разви-

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3 Напр.: Anderson B. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London, 1983. P. 172; Yuval-Davis N. Nationalism, Feminism, and Gender Relations // G. Eley, R.G. Suny (Eds.) Becoming National: A Reader. New York, 1996. P. 128; Smith A.D. The «Golden Age» and National Renewal // G. Hosking, G. Schöpflin (Eds.) Myths and Nationhood. New York, 1997. P. 46; Connell R.W. Gender. Cambridge, 2002. P. 64.

4 Hubbs J. Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture. Bloomington, 1988.

5 Основные положения критики работы Дж. Хаббс систематизированы в книге Эдмондсон Л. Гендер, миф и нация в Европе: Образ матушки России в европейском контексте // Пол. Гендер. Культура: Немецкие и русские исследования / Под ред. Э. Шоре, К. Хайдер. Вып 3. М., 2003. С. 141–143. Обзор публикаций по проблеме см.: Там же. С. 140–142.