

Between Ideology and Literature: Translation in the USSR during the Brezhnev Period

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Abstract

The USSR's de-Stalinization and liberalization under Khrushchev opened up the country to the West and led to a boom in the translation of foreign and especially Western literature. After the Thaw, however, Soviet society is generally seen to have moved into a period of stagnation, characterized by a cooling in its enthusiasm for America, and the West more generally. This article will examine the fate of translated literature in the less congenial environment of the Brezhnev years, looking in particular at translations in the journal *Novyi mir* 1965–1981. It will show that although there were changes in the profile of the translations published during the period, overall, translation cannot be said to have undergone stagnation. It asks how translation was used by different agents: the Party, editors, and translators. It will argue that translation continued to be seen by the Party as symbolic of the 'friendship of the peoples', but was used by editors and translators to publish artistically diverse and challenging works. It will show how various strategies were employed by the journal's editors and translators to present texts in such a way as to get them past the censor.

Keywords: Censorship, Ideology, Brezhnev stagnation, Translation in the USSR; History of Translation; Soviet Literature; *Novyi mir*

The term stagnation is widely applied to the Brezhnev era (1965–81) and especially to its second half, and is seen to have set in in political, economic and cultural spheres. It describes not only a lack of growth, interest and vigour, but also a slow reversion, after the Khrushchev Thaw, to neo-Stalinist conservatism. In particular, it is associated with increasingly anti-Western rhetoric. In spite of détente and improvement in Cold War tensions, the USSR was no longer prepared to nurture interest in and sympathy towards America and the capitalist West more generally. Rhetoric about bourgeois society failing, injustice, double standards, hypocrisy and crisis constituted a powerful message about capitalism's inherent contradictions and inevitable degeneration. In the time of Khrushchev, the USSR had opened up to the West, but, in the time of Brezhnev, it is widely considered to have closed the door again.

The more famous controversies and illiberal moments of the literary history of the Stagnation have often led to a sense that all the positive gains of the Thaw were lost. Even during the Thaw, the campaign against Pasternak in 1960 was a reminder that not all remnants of the Stalin period had been expunged; there was a marked return to these after the fall of Khrushchev. The trials of Brodskii in 1964, Siniavskii and Daniel in 1965, Ginzburg and Galanskov in 1967, and the expulsions of Brodskii in 1972 and Solzhenitsyn in 1974, as well as the furore over the publication of *Metropol'* in 1975, all point to a significant change in political climate. What is more, the leakage of writers to the west via exile and emigration across the 1970s, known as the third wave of Russian emigration, was no doubt a product of the stagnation.

The Soviet literary scene of the Brezhnev period was certainly not, however, comparable to the wasteland created by Stalinism in the 1940s. Indeed, the gradual recovery of writers anathematized during the Stalin period, which was such a significant part of the cultural Thaw under Khrushchev, continued into the Brezhnev period as well. Works by and about writers such as Osip Mandel'shtam, Marina Tsvetaeva and Mikhail Bulgakov appeared in the thick journals through the 1970s. And although the refusal to publish *Metropol'* in 1975 clearly indicated the limits of what was permissible in print, the 1970s saw a striking range of contemporary prose writers published in the USSR, even if later some went into emigration. (These included Vasilii Aksenov, Andrei Bitov, Viktor Erofeev, Fazil' Iskander, Iurii Trifonov, and Vladimir Voinovich.)

Recent work on the Brezhnev and, more generally, the late Soviet period has started to challenge this notion of stagnation. In part, this research has focused on the dissident and underground movement: work by Savitskii (2002), Lygo (2010), and

Sabbatini (2008) among others has shown that unofficial literary activity was an important sphere for cultural development during this period. But scholars have also unpicked the idea that mainstream Soviet politics and culture were afflicted with stagnation. Bacon and Sandle's *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (2002) examines Brezhnev as leader, and political culture under Brezhnev, seeing the roots of the dramatic changes of *perestroika* in the Brezhnev era. An international workshop in Amsterdam in 2012, 'Reconsidering Stagnation' covered a wide range of cultural areas: the Aesopian language of cultural products, socialist humor and jokes, the cult of the Great Patriotic War, cinema, literature, arts and theatre, Soviet science fiction, bard music, tourism, fashion, fascination with the West and foreign consumer goods, and the emergence of Soviet rock n' roll.

This article sets out to examine whether or not the publication of literary translation in the USSR, which was, after all, a notable way that a window could be held open to the West, diminished in quantity or variety or was otherwise subject to stagnation in the Brezhnev period.

Scholarship on the publication of literary translation in the post-Stalin period has tended to concentrate on the Thaw, the so-called 'decade of euphoria' that brought the USSR back into contact with the rest of the world and especially the West after the xenophobia of the late Stalin period (Friedberg, 1977). There has been little attention paid to the publication of translations in the Brezhnev period, but Sergei Zav'ialov's work on the publication of translations of poetry that was experimental and modernist in its affinities asserts that the window on the West that is associated so strongly with the Thaw did not close in the mid-1960s, and that from 1955 there was an epoch of translation that lasted largely uninterrupted for 30 years (Zav'ialov, 2008, para. 1). While Zav'ialov does not comment on the reason why literary translation was relatively immune to the increasing ideological conformity in the 1970s and early 1980s, Friedberg suggests that the practice of translating Western literature continued into the post-Khrushchev period in part because readers were keen to read it (Friedberg, 1977, p. 337). Editors had to balance ideology and censorship with pragmatic considerations of how to appeal to Soviet readers, and, since Western literature was in high demand among readers, they found various ways to accommodate it and at the same time protect themselves from possible recriminations from the ideological authorities.

The strategies that both translators and editors could employ to facilitate the publication of foreign and especially Western literature were largely determined by the

system of Soviet censorship during the period. While censorship existed throughout the Soviet period, its organization and institutions evolved over time, and in the post-Stalin period responsibility shifted somewhat from the central organs to literary professionals. Historians of censorship in the USSR note generally that censorship increased after the period of the Khrushchev Thaw, from about 1968; this apparently accelerated in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the crushing of the Prague Spring, which had seen censorship removed as part of its programme of ‘socialism with a human face’. T. M. Gorიაeva shows that there are documents produced by the Party and censorship authorities in the 1970s that refer to certain literary works of the 1960s as anti-Soviet, even though those works were passed by the censors and published at the time (Gorიაeva, 2002, pp. 349–50). This neatly encapsulates how the definition of what was acceptable for publication changed over time. Arlen Blum argues that the letters of protest against censorship written by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Lidiia Chukovskaia in the late 1960s, together with an appeal to the Supreme Soviet by a group of writers asking for a new law on the free dissemination of and access to information and for the removal of Glavlit’s (the main censorship organ of the USSR) control over literature, led the authorities to increase censorship to combat such dangerous tendencies (Blum, 2005, pp. 17–18).

The position of Glavlit in relation to Party institutions and hierarchy changed several times over the Thaw, a period that saw frequent reshuffling of institutions and their organization under Khrushchev’s energetic but sometimes chaotic leadership. In 1966, however, it was restored to its former position as formally answerable to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, but in practice usually to the ideological departments of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR (Blum, 2005, pp. 15–17). Even though this restoration would seem to point to continuity in its role and influence, in fact by the late 1960s and in the 1970s, Glavlit’s authority was significantly diminished. Already in 1965 Blum describes a degree of loosening of control over the thick literary journals and books that were issued by the major, trustworthy publishing houses; a new protocol was introduced that required manuscripts to be submitted for publication only at the final draft stage (Blum, 2005, p. 24). Herman Ermolaev gives concrete examples of Glavlit’s diminished authority in the 1970s and 1980s. The writer Vadim Kozhevnikov, chief editor of the Moscow ‘thick’ journal *Znamia* for 19 years in the late Soviet period, claimed that at no point during his tenure as editor did Glavlit hold up the publication of a manuscript. If there was a delay,

it was because his editorial board had deemed it necessary. He also gives evidence that Glavlit's opinion of a text was not seen as binding or even authoritative by some journals: in 1983 the organ passed the second volume of Boris Mozhaev's novel *Peasant Men and Peasant Women* for publication, but it was subsequently turned down by the editors of *Novyi mir*, *Nash sovremennik*, and *Druzhba narodov* (Ermolaev, 1997, p. 183).

As the above examples indicate, with the decrease in Glavlit's prestige and power there was a corresponding increase in the authority of editors and editorial boards. Goriaeva quotes the writer Anatolii Kuznetsov as explaining that writers never met censors, never came into contact with them, and that this was in part because editors had, by this time, come to understand the system so well they did not need the input of Glavlit employees to know what could and could not be permitted in print (Goriaeva, 2002, p. 345). Ermolaev and Blium concur that power moved to editorial boards, and Blium recalls Dirk Kretzschmar's observation that in effect, all published works of literature became collaborative works under this system (Blium, 2005, p. 18 n. 8).

The system of censorship was applied to literature in translation as well, so translations which necessarily involved the work of both author and translator became even more 'collaborative' when editors and censors had input into a text before it was published. Historians of censorship in the USSR have generally given little attention to the publication of translations, although Goriaeva gives examples of how the erotic scenes of John Updike's novels were censored, and the final chapters of Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* were omitted. Similarly, she records, translations of literary criticism on foreign literature were censored, so from a history of English literature a paragraph about Arthur Koestler's and George Orwell's anti-communist writings was excised (Goriaeva 2002, pp. 354–6). Ermolaev's study of censorship, which compares translated texts with their originals and analyses word choice, omissions and changes, shows that references to the West, and in particular the economic and technological superiority of the West, were censored during the late Soviet period (Ermolaev, 1997, p. 214).

Samantha Sherry has examined specifically the censorship of translations in the USSR during the Thaw period (Sherry, 2013). She shows that in the post-Stalin period translators and editors bore far more responsibility for the censorship of translated literature than they had during the Stalin period. Like original literature, translated texts

were not passed to the censorship organs until the last stage of the publishing progress; it was expected that the literary professionals involved in the processes of translation and publishing would have taken most of the necessary decisions to produce a translation suitable for publication. She argues that translators and editors were thus involved in a complex balancing act involving on the one hand adherence to the norms of Soviet publishing, and on the other faithfulness to the literary text being translated. While editors and translators understood ‘the rules of the game’ and were able to produce texts that were ideologically acceptable, they were not necessarily content with conforming to established norms. The removal of the Party from the process until its final stage led to a situation, Sherry shows, in which there was more space to negotiate the publication of interesting works that were not too distorted by censorship.

Both Zav’ialov and Sherry base their analyses on publications by *Inostrannaia literatura*. This is not surprising: this journal was dedicated to the publication of foreign literature in the USSR, and therefore the specialist journal for the area. Its history, indeed, reflects the history of the fortunes of translated literature in the USSR: its precursor publication *Internatsional’naia literatura* existed until 1943 but was closed during the xenophobic late Stalin years when contact with the West and Western culture was minimal. The launch of *Inostrannaia literatura* in 1955 was one of the key indications that the Thaw after the death of Stalin was truly underway. Even under the relatively liberal conditions of the Thaw, however, this journal was less accessible to the public than others: it was not possible just to go and read it in a library, or to subscribe to it. So while it does tell us what was translated for a specialist audience, it does not tell us so much about what was read by a broader section of the Soviet public. It is important to remember, too, that it did not have a monopoly over the publication of translated literature. Most of the ‘thick’ journals published translations alongside original Russian-language works. Because translated literature constituted only a part of these journals’ publications, it is possible to trace over time whether the space allotted to this category of texts increased or diminished.

This study examines the publication of translated literature in the journal *Novyi mir* to test the hypothesis that the publication of translated literature, like other areas of cultural activity, did not in fact undergo a period of stagnation during the late Soviet period. There are several reasons for choosing this journal: it regularly published translated works, and it also had a higher print run and was more available (though by no means fully) to the general readership than *Inostrannaia literatura*. What is more,

this journal had made a series of landmark publications during the Khrushchev Thaw under Simonov and especially Tvardovskii, and had gained a reputation as the most liberal journal. This liberalism was particularly focused on de-Stalinization, but also included a more sympathetic, conciliatory attitude towards the West. *Novyi mir* published a significant number of American writers during the Thaw, perhaps most notably J. D. Salinger (Friedberg, 1977, p. 199). Tvardovskii, who was responsible for most of these landmark publications including in 1962 Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, remained chief editor of the journal until 1970, when a Party-initiated but Writers' Union-led shake-up of the editorial board forced his hand and he retired from his position. He was replaced by Valerii Kosolapov, whose appointment was intended to return ideological conformity to the journal (Kozlov, 2013, pp. 230–31).

This position of *Novyi mir* as a liberal journal, but one not entirely devoted to translated literature, makes it an appropriate publication to use to examine how if at all the stagnation affected the publication of translated literature in the USSR. This article will consider whether the balance of political and geographical representation in translated literature changed over time, and in particular look at the balance between translations from the minority languages of the USSR, and from both pro-Soviet and more neutral writers from the West, to see whether there was a significant change in the representation of these groups. It will then consider what the publications of translated literature in *Novyi mir* during the period can tell us about the strategies that translators and editors used to negotiate the demands of ideology and censorship.

My survey of the journal *Novyi mir* from 1965 to 1981 recorded the number of separate publications of translated literature there were for each journal issue. The figures in the survey reflect the tables of contents, therefore, and not the number of pages that translation occupies: a hundred-page prose work is counted as one publication and so is a single poem. This means the survey does not show how much space in the journal, measured in number of pages, was dedicated to translations; it does, however, indicate the range of works published and whether these works were presented as the work of an individual author, or as representative of a group of authors. When a long work was serialized over several issues, each separate publication was counted. While there are undoubtedly limitations to what these statistics can show, they nonetheless give a sense of the variety of the translations published. The works were categorized according to the geographical and political position of their authors; the

categories used were adapted from those used by Sergei Zav'ialov in his survey of modernist style poetry in *Inostrannaia literatura* (Zav'ialov, 2008). From his work I have borrowed the following descriptions: 'historical figures', 'Western communists', 'left-leaning Western writers', 'writers from socialist countries', and 'writers from capitalist countries who are apolitical'; to these I have added the category 'writers from the Soviet republics'. Beyond the statistics I collected, I noted trends that emerged from the survey, and these are also brought to bear on my discussion.

The survey's results are recorded in the following table.

Table 1. Writers published in translation in *Novyi mir* 1965–81

	Historical figures	Writers from Soviet republics	Writers from socialist countries	Western communists	Western left-leaning writers	Apolitical writers from Western capitalist countries	Total
1965	2	12	3		4	5	26
1966	1	13	2		4	7	27
1967	3	20	2		1	3	29
1968		19	1			7	28
1969		16	2	1	1	3	22
1970		13	3	1	1	4	22
1971		12	2	1	1	4	20
1972	1	19	1			2	23
1973	2	11	1		4	9	26
1974	2	14	1	1	1	4	23
1975		9	4	1		1	15
1976		8	1			2	11
1977	3	4				4	11
1978	3	4				3	10
1979		9	7	1		3	20
1980	1	5		1		4	11
1981		8				4	12

Overall the number of translations published fell across the period, but this was mainly because the number of translations of writers from the republics fell. The number of writers from socialist countries also decreased somewhat; the anomalously high number in 1979 was due to the publication of works from a conference of writers from socialist countries. The numbers of Western writers – either left-leaning or otherwise – do not show any clear pattern of change. But it is notable that *Novyi mir* published more Western writers who could not be said to be political than left-leaning writers. The reason for this editorial decision was probably motivated by a combination of pragmatic and political reasons: such Western writers were popular and attracted readers, so it was pragmatic to include them to help boost the journal's popularity. However, they were also politically more liberal and progressive than pro-communist writers, and thus were a way that the journal could continue with its politically progressive position of the Thaw: Western writers had more leeway in their works than their Soviet counterpart writers, who were suffering from difficult conditions of publication in the post-Thaw period due to both harsh censorship and ideological control, and also the gerontocratic and bureaucratic literary system dogged by inertia and the paper shortage.

Of course, the appearance of a text in translation did not mean necessarily that it was a faithful reproduction of the original including all its aspects that would appear to challenge Soviet literary norms. As Friedberg showed in his study of translated literature published during the Thaw era, instances of obscene language, sexual references, and political comments that were not favourable towards the USSR were often expunged or at least softened. Sherry has shown that this was not always the hand of a Glavlit censor, but often the work of translators and editors. These literary professionals knew the rules of the game and were prepared to make some adjustments to the text if it would result in it being passed for publication (Sherry, 2013). This strategy for achieving publication will be discussed below in the context of the publications during the Brezhnev period.

Neither political nor pragmatic reasons for editorial decisions would appear to explain the reduction in representation of writers from the republics of the USSR. The number of writers from the republics published in translation appears to drop quite dramatically from 1975. In fact this is not quite the case, and to examine the change that occurs at this time, the particularities of the representation of writers from the republics need to be explained. Throughout the period, most writers from the republics are

represented overwhelmingly by poetry, in contrast with Western writers, whose works are mostly prose. Exceptions include Byelorussian writers, and in particular Vasil' Bykov, and to some extent writers from Ukraine and the Baltic States. However, writers from the Caucasus and Central Asia tend to be poets. There are probably various reasons for this. The predominance of poetry among writers from the republics may be in part due to the strong oral tradition that these new literatures, which underwent significant encouragement to develop into part of Soviet literature, were based upon.

A more cynical explanation for the decrease in attention paid to the national writers, however, might be that while it was necessary politically to include a good variety of such writers, by representing them through poetry less space had to be devoted to them. Going back to the 1930s, there is evidence of translators' scorn for the quality of much of the work they had to translate from the minority languages, and it is highly possible this attitude prevailed in the post-war period (Zemskova, in Burnett and Lygo, 2013, p. 197). The Brezhnev period saw a return to policies of Russification and the rise of Russian chauvinism once more in the USSR; this tendency to minimize attention to the national minorities and to see them in terms of their nationality rather than their individual talent, would appear to be part of a more general reluctance to see these nationalities as equal partners in the Soviet project.

From about 1975, when the figures show a decrease in the number of publications of writers from the republics, what happened is that the journal stopped publishing these writers individually, and shifted towards featuring groups of writers from a republic that appear as just one item in the contents. Earlier in the decade, poets such as Kaisyn Kuliev, a Balkar poet, and Mustai Karim, a Bashkir poet, had selections of their poetry published in the journal quite frequently, but from about the middle of the decade, the minority writers appear typically under headings such as 'Poetry from Uzbekistan' or 'New poetry from Ukraine'. There had always been such selections of poems, but these came to dominate the representation of the nationalities, with individuals, and especially individual poets, almost disappearing from the journal's pages. The feature uniting the poems in these selections was their ethnic and cultural background, and this led to a reductive view of the work of the national writers as representative of a national spirit or a national literary tradition. This use of selections of poets published together is in stark contrast to the way that Western writers were almost always represented as individuals. There were occasional exceptions to this rule, such as contemporary or historical collections of French or Italian poets, and collections of

American poems or songs united by a theme, for example their opposition to the Vietnam war.

Another difference between the representations of Western writers and those from the republics is that the latter rarely have any commentary accompanying them, whereas Western writers tend to be furnished with paratext in the form of introductions or afterwords, the emphasis of which tends to focus on the writer's individual circumstances and the evolution of his or her literary work. The contrast in this representation might suggest the assumption that literature translated from the minority languages of the USSR was, after all, Soviet, and therefore needed no introduction to a Soviet reader, but could also indicate again a hierarchical view, which sees these writers as unworthy of the individual attention that Western writers routinely receive.

Even if it was easier for editorial boards to publish progressive work from the West than from the USSR, it is possible to see in the works of Western writers published in the journal features that made them ideologically acceptable for publication in the USSR; these tend to be features of their content, rather than their form. Given the history of Soviet emphasis on content and censure of preoccupation with form, this is understandable. In general, writers whose works involved criticism of Western society, and in particular issues such as inequality, were promising candidates. The most common nationalities translated are West German and American: there are 12 American authors published in the period, and although only 4 West German, Heinrich Böll's work appears very frequently. There are issues specific to each of these that commonly seem to have qualified works for publication in translation in the USSR. West German works frequently deal with the recent Nazi past; this reminder of the Second World War fits comfortably with the Soviet commemoration of the conflict that was so prominent in the late Soviet period, providing a reassertion of the guilt of the Nazi enemy. American works quite often involved the criticism of race relations which chimed with Soviet rhetoric about the USA's hypocrisy in claiming to be the home of freedom and equality. There were writers, especially among the Americans, whose works were generally critical of the direction their Western societies were developing in, such as short stories by John Cheever, which Maurice Friedberg describes as 'about the demise of a simpler America, coupled with satirical barbs at the synthetic commercialized civilization replacing it' (Friedberg, 1977, p. 198). Stories such as Cheever's are far more than just social criticism, as will be explored below, but they gave a portrayal of American life with enough drawbacks and problems to be seen as suitable for Soviet

readers. The problems of civil rights and racism associated with the southern settings of Truman Capote's and Flannery O'Connor's works seem likely to have been helpful in securing these works' publication.

Many works of literature in translation that appeared in *Novyi mir* during the Brezhnev period touched upon themes that coincided with the Soviet line, since there were many Western writers during this period engaged in the criticism of their own systems in literature. Thus there was no shortage of works potentially qualifying for translation. These works of literature had a great deal more to interest readers than simply an echo of Soviet anti-Americanism or anti-fascism. What is particularly noticeable is that the formal qualities of the works are at the more experimental end of the spectrum when compared with Soviet prose of the time. It is not that there were not works published in the 1970s USSR that introduced less standardized, normative diction and style, but the very colloquial and informal narration, the non-standard language including obscenities (usually not printed in full in Russian), and the more experimental plot construction in a good number of works were certainly innovative in comparison with much published Soviet literature.

What is surprising is that there were also publications of works by Western writers whose main feature was their formal experimentation. Nathalie Sarraute's *Les Fruits d'or* published in Russian translation in April 1968, for example, was apparently critical enough towards the West to pass for publication, but its most distinctive feature is its experimental form. The work was published with an afterword by one of the editorial committee, Vladimir Lakshin, which guided the reader in how to approach Sarraute's 'anti-novel', which consists entirely of interior monologues. At one point, Lakshin points to how Sarraute navigates a path between the Scylla and Charybdis of two literary sins in Soviet terms, hermeticism on the one hand and dry, academic imitation of art on the other:

Nathalie Sarraute's mocking of 'hermetic' literature and 'hermetic' criticism demonstrates how keenly she feels the redundancy and meaninglessness of literature that has been formalized through and through. But at the same time it is not characteristic of her to produce lifeless, academic art that imitates classical discipline and clarity. (p. 172)

Sarraute was a progressive writer, and had Russian roots as well, but even so, the publication of her novel is an example of how strikingly progressive and experimental works could and did appear in the Soviet press during the Brezhnev period.

Lakshin's afterword to *Les Fruits d'or* is an example of the kind of paratext that Soviet editors used to present texts in translation to the Soviet readers; in *Novyi mir* they occur under Tvardovskii's editorship in particular. The paratext could take the form of an introduction or an afterword, and ranged between a few lines of text to several pages; its length appears to offer a key to understanding how difficult a text was felt to be – both for the Soviet reader and to get past the censor. Its function was to offer an interpretation for the reader; some examples include an essay on the background to modern American folksongs (December 1966); a few paragraphs on the life and thought of Rilke, carefully balancing his mysticism with his 'deeply humanitarian ideas' (December 1967); the afterword on Nathalie Sarraute's experimental novel and its approach to the question of what is art (April 1968); an introduction to Camus's position in literature asserting that his theoretical works are not as important as his literary ones, that he struggled with the problem of balancing individual morality with social responsibility, and acknowledging that he did disassociate himself from the French Communist Party (May 1969); and an introduction to Lao She as a writer who criticized Chinese nationalism but fell victim to the Cultural Revolution, and thus avoided association with either of these enemies of Soviet communism (June 1969). An introduction to François Mauriac dwells on the balance between his Catholicism and his friendship with socialists, and even goes as far as to say that the religiousness of Mauriac's characters should be seen as 'deeply unreligious' (January 1970). Similar texts can be found about writers such as Kurt Vonnegut and Heinrich Böll. In each case, they point the Soviet reader towards the 'correct' understanding of the writer and the work, and often dealing with delicate issues associated with the author.

To some extent this practice of using paratext would appear to be a strategy for dealing with censorship: by informing the reader of the correct ideological approach to a text, the editors hoped to facilitate its publication. However, it is interesting to note that the practice becomes progressively less common in *Novyi mir* under the editorship of Kosolapov, in spite of the fact that the journal continued to publish interesting and sometimes challenging literature in translation. Although in the earlier years after Tvardovskii's removal the practice continued for some works, there is a tendency for the paratext to become shorter, and to foreground not so much the artistic merits of the work as the fact that the author has already appeared in other publications in the USSR, which is to say has already been passed by a censor. Later in the 1970s, works more frequently appear with little or no paratext, for example a novella by Gabriel García

Márquez in 1974 was prefaced by no more than a few lines of biography and bibliography; a story by Muriel Spark appeared in 1977 with a sparse three-paragraph introduction; and in 1979 a novel by John Steinbeck had no introduction or afterword whatsoever.

It would appear that in fact Tvardovskii's editorial team saw the paratext not only as a way to help a text pass for publication, but also to introduce to the reader the notable, interesting features of a writer and a text; it suggests the editorial board saw readers as engaged in literary questions, as the kinds of 'critical' or 'creative' readers Nailya Safiullina identifies as emerging during the late 1930s in her study of readers' letters to the journal *International'naiia literatura*. These were readers who 'were able to assess translated literary works primarily for their aesthetic, rather than ideological, merits' (Safiullina, 2009, p. 130). Under Kosolapov's editorship, such issues are not flagged for the reader; this suggests that the journal does not encourage or particularly recognize an analytical approach to the literature it is publishing.

The difference between Tvardovskii's and Kosolapov's editorships in the approach to paratext accompanying translations suggests that its use was largely determined by editorial decisions; editors and their editorial boards were, after all, the bodies largely responsible for second-guessing and negotiating ideology and censorship in Soviet publishing in the Brezhnev period. Paratext was one way of shaping the journal's contents into a form acceptable for publication; another was the choice of texts themselves to be translated and the degree of censorship of its contents and language, an area dealt with in some detail by existing scholarship. As Samantha Sherry (2013) has discussed, Russian scholars' views of the censorship process tend to be totalizing and leave little room for the agency of translators and editors, but her own work highlights these levels of censorship as areas of negotiation:

[T]he increasing importance of editorial and self-censorship in the post-Stalin period could introduce potentially heterodox discourses and, to a limited degree, led to the destabilization of censorial and ideological norms. (p. 739)

In her study based on *Inostrannaia literatura*, Sherry describes stages in the process of censorship: first, translators made certain censorial changes to texts they wished to see in print; afterwards, editors often cut and reworded further to ensure a text complied with the required norms. The initial process of choosing texts to be translated also seems to have been negotiated to some extent. For Western literary works, it appears that translators had to have professional standing in order to access special holdings of

foreign books (Sherry, 2013, p. 737), but certain works were more accessible, for example poetry in the languages of Warsaw pact countries that was published in journals imported and sold in the USSR. This is the likely source of Polish poems that Vladimir Britanishskii (2012) describes translating for his own pleasure and not necessarily for publication. His translations sometimes did not appear in print for decades:

Polish translations were for me, for both [Natal'ia] Astaf'eva and me, a work of art, we did not translate to order, and translated only works that we identified with, and consequently some of our translations were not published immediately at all, but ten, twenty, even thirty years later. (n. p.)

Britanishskii's attitude towards translation reminds us that for many it was a labour of love, motivated by a literary sensibility that worked hard to preserve as much of the integrity of a work as possible under the conditions of Soviet publishing.

The translations published in *Novyi mir* during the Brezhnev period examined here demonstrate that the publication of literature in translation was not subject to stagnation in any straightforward or obvious way, at least in this journal. It is striking that translations of Soviet writers writing in languages other than Russian receive less attention and space in the journal than Western writers: apparently ideological principles such as the friendship of nations, the variety of Soviet literature, and equality among the peoples of the USSR were not particularly imperative in this era of Russification. It appears that the pragmatic considerations of selling journals, and the strategies of editors and translators were instrumental in making a good variety of published literature in translation available to the Soviet reading public. Literature in translation published in the late Soviet period was certainly not confined to echoes of Soviet rhetoric produced by sympathetic foreign communists. Even if authors' criticisms of their own systems were welcome in the Soviet Union, in some cases these works from the West brought a level of formal innovation and experimentation to the Soviet press unparalleled in published Soviet literature of the time.

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