

*Iskusstvo videt'
prekrasnoe.*

**The Literary Aesthetics
of Aleksandr Voronskij
1921-1928**

by
Robert Vaagan

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Foreword to the revised edition

This is a revised edition of my doctoral dissertation defended for the degree of *doctor philosophiae* on 19 June 1999 at The Faculty of Arts, University of Oslo. In the revised edition misprints and errors have been corrected and some minor revisions have been made although the bulk of the text remains intact.

I am greatly indebted to all three members of the esteemed adjudication committee, Professor Robert A. Maguire, Columbia University (first opponent), Professor Erik H. Egeberg, University of Tromsø (second opponent) and Professor Lillian Helle, University of Bergen (committee organizer). Their comments and criticism has led me to reconsider several points and in some cases also revise the text. I am also indebted to Tat'jana I. Isaeva for her helpful suggestions in the biographical parts, and to Professor Alexander Kan, Uppsala University, for his several suggested improvements concerning factual information.

Robert Vaagan
Oslo, February 2000

Preface

During most of the NEP years 1921-28 Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij (1884-1937) was a prominent and controversial Soviet Marxist editor, literary critic and organizer. From 1921 he edited the first and leading Soviet "thick" (*tolstyy*) journal *Krasnaja nov'* (*KN*), until he was forced to leave in April 1927. In 1937 he became a victim of Stalin's purges. Rehabilitated in the post-Stalin era, he is today held in high esteem by several Russian literary historians and scholars. Neživoj, author of the single largest Soviet study of Voronskij, affirmed that not a single work by Soviet scholars on the literature of the 1920s could omit Voronskij.¹ Yet Western academic opinion remains more divided, as the work of the two foremost Voronskij scholars in the West show. Maguire credited him with developing *KN* into the leading literary journal of the 1920s in Soviet Russia, but faulted Voronskij's "theory of artistic cognition".² Choate, who viewed Voronskij as the most important Marxist literary critic of the 1920s, has recently backed his claim by publishing the first anthology of Voronskij's work in English.³

While most Russian and Western scholars have concentrated on Voronskij the editor, literary critic, literary theorist and partly also the writer of reminiscences, I have chosen to focus on Voronskij as a literary aesthetician.⁴ The picture I shall convey is that of an idealistic, sincere, restless and uncompromising person dedicated to improving Soviet literature. His life and aesthetics interacted and his mounting political problems as a Trotskyite influenced the course and outcome of his odyssey in aesthetics. This odyssey came to an end in 1928 when he identified beauty with truth and furthermore made truth contingent on personal freedom.

Compared to some of the leading intellectual Bolsheviks, like Trockij and Bucharin, who had both lived and travelled abroad, who knew several languages and who played key roles in his career, Voronskij lacked international experience. Trained to become a priest like his father and maternal grandfather, his point of departure in aesthetics was Plechanov. Had he been more aware of the long tradition of Western and Eastern aesthetic thought⁵ his literary aesthetics might well have developed differently.

What justifies a 460-page doctoral thesis on Voronskij? While the full reply to this is the whole dissertation, I can suggest three clues. First, his career and work illustrate many intriguing aspects of "what went wrong" in Soviet Russia in the 1920s. This was to be the last decade of limited pluralism under NEP before the long

¹ Neživoj 1988:8.

² Maguire 1987.

³ Choate 1987:3; 1998. The excellent anthology of Voronskij's writings 1911-1936 by Choate (1998) in which he has translated and edited 26 of Voronskij's articles, was published in September 1998 when the present dissertation was practically completed. My selection of 30 of Voronskij's articles in parts 4-5 has therefore not been influenced by his choice of articles, and all translations in this dissertation are mine. I have included a few biographical points from his introduction, and also a few points from his brief commentaries to some of the translated articles.

⁴ Cf. 1.2.4 and 2.0-2.1 for a definition of "aesthetics" and "aesthetician".

⁵ Cf. e.g. Cooper 1997.

night of Stalinism and the excesses of socialist realism set in. Secondly, and this is the main theme of the whole dissertation, his literary aesthetics in my view epitomize the tension, some would even claim bipolarity, between the utilitarian and the artistic elements that typify Russian post-Petrine secular aesthetic thought, particularly Soviet Marxist aesthetics. Thirdly, his life is a tragic testimony to the bankruptcy of Bolshevism and Stalinism, and many would also include Marxism itself.

The dissertation addresses primarily the period 1921-28. In part 1 some general features affecting literary life in Soviet Russia in the 1920s are outlined. Here the objectives of the dissertation are also specified, together with the sources and framework of analysis. Part 2 traces some major determinants in the history of aesthetics in Russia in order to better understand the tension in Voronskij's thinking on aesthetics. Part 3 deals with the life, career and autobiography of Voronskij. In part 4 a selection of 20 of his general articles on literature is analyzed. Part 5 analyzes a selection of 10 of his literary portraits which are seen as empirical case studies in his literary aesthetics. The main conclusions are offered in part 6, while part 7 contains a number of appendices integral to the text. Part 8 contains the bibliography and part 9 gives a brief list of major names and terms used in the dissertation.

Iskusstvo videt' prekrasnoe (The art of seeing the beautiful), which is the first part of the title, is a paraphrase of Voronskij's book *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) - his last major statement on literary aesthetics published during his own lifetime.

Acknowledgements

A number of persons and institutions have been of considerable assistance over the last years. My supervisor Professor Geir Kjetsaa, University of Oslo, has throughout been encouraging. The Norwegian Research Council financed an early trip to Helsinki and St. Petersburg in September-October 1996. The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters financed my participation in the XIV Congress of Nordic Slavists in Helsinki in August 1997 as well as a visit to Moscow in October 1997. I am very grateful to Professors Stein Bråten, Hans Skei and Eva Skovlund, all from the University of Oslo, for detailed commentaries to selected parts of the thesis.

On the Russian side I am grateful to The State Committee of Higher Education of The Russian Federation (Gosudarstvennyj Komitet Rossijskoj Federacii po vyššemu obrazivaniju) for a scholarship which facilitated my visits to Russia in September-October 1996 and October 1997. I would like to thank Dr. Lidija Spiridonova, Deputy Director, Institute of World Literature, A.M.Gor'kij Archives, (Institut Mirovoj Literatury imeni A.M.Gor'kogo) and Director Natalija B. Volkova, The Russian State Literature and Art Archives (Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Archiv Literatury i Iskusstva), for their support. Professor E.A.Dinerštejn and Dr. Aleksandr Ju. Galuškin, both Moscow, have offered valuable comments relating to part 3. Professor Aleksander Kan, Uppsala University, Sweden, has helped me locate material in Russian archives. Cand.philol. Raisa Cirkova has assisted me on several points in the various texts I have read.

I am particularly indebted to Tat'jana I.Isaeva, Voronskij's granddaughter, for her *gostepriimstvo* during my visits to Moscow, for her generosity in giving me several out-of-print editions of Voronskij's books, and for having made available the family archive to me. I am grateful to Mrs. Eila Tervakko, The Slavonic Library of Helsinki University who on many occasions has helped me locate material that was

difficult to find elsewhere. Mrs. Mieke Ijzermans, The International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, has also been helpful. The staff of the University Library in Oslo, especially Academic Librarian Hjørdis Lynum, have proven most supportive. I owe much to Chief Librarian Nancy Frank, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Oslo, who has proofread the text including the bibliography, and thereby greatly improved the manuscript. I alone, of course, am responsible for any omissions and mistakes.

A special thanks to my wife Saphinaz for her tireless encouragement, and to my daughters Sarah and Nadia for their spirited support. The dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my parents.

References, quotations, transcription and calendar dates

References have throughout been placed in the footnotes. All quotations from Russian are given in transcribed Russian. To make the thesis accessible also to non-Slavists I have added my own English translation of Russian quotations in the footnotes, well aware that this procedure has required space. For reasons of ramifications several long documents in the appendices (part 7) are given only in their English translation.

The system of transcription is specified in *Scando-Slavica*, Volume 26, 1980. This is synonymous with the "scholarly" or "scientific" system ("system III") in J. Thomas Shaw, *The Transliteration of Modern Russian for English-Language Publications*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison 1967, with one exception: Where Shaw employs È and è as substitutes for the Russian (Greek) Э and э, I have preferred the *Scando-Slavica* transcription of Ê and ê. Commonly used Russian terms in English like "Bolshevik", "Menshevik" and "Trotskyite" have been retained in their simplified English spelling. The spelling of Polish names (Porebina) and Finnish names (Nurmijärvi) have been retained.

The Julian (Old Style) calendar was adhered to in Russia until February 1918 when it was replaced by the Gregorian (New Style) calendar which it ran thirteen days behind. The Julian calendar which is still used within the Russian Orthodox Church, is quoted for domestic events antedating February 1918. Thus the Bolsheviks seized power on 25 October 1917 (Old Style) which corresponds to 7 November 1917 (New Style). Similarly A.K.Voronskij was born on 27 August (8 September) 1884.

Robert Vaagan,
Oslo, October 1998

Major abbreviations, acronyms and terms utilized ¹

- Agitpropotdel = Otdel agitacii i propagandy (Agitation and Propaganda Section)
Bol'shevik = majoritarian, i.e. from 1903 Lenin's faction in the RSDRP
CKK = Central'naja Kontrol'naja Komissija (Central Control Commission)
CK RKP(b)/VKP(b) = Central'nyj komitet RKP(b)/VKP(b) (The Central Committee of the RKP(b)/VKP(b))
Čeka= Črezvyčajnaja komissija po bor'be s kontrrevoljuciej i sabotazem (Extraordinary Commission for Battling the Counter-revolution and Sabotage)
Duma = State Parliament of Tsarist (and post-Soviet) Russia
Glavlit = Glavnoe upravlenie po ochrane gosudarstvennyh tajn v pečati (Main Leadership for the Guarding of State Secrets in the Press)
Glavpolitprosvet = Glavnyj politiko-prosvetitel'nyj komitet (Main Political and Enlightenment Committee)
Gosizdat = Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo (State Publishing House)
GPU = Glavnoe političeskoe upravlenie (Main Political Leadership)
Gubispolkom = Gubernskij ispolnitel'nyj komitet (Provincial Executive Committee)
IMLI = Institut Mirovoj Literatury imeni A.M.Gor'kogo (Institute of World Literature, Gor'kij Archives)
KN = Krasnaja nov' (Red Virgin Soil)
KPSS = Kommunističeskaja partija sovetskogo sojuza (Communist Party of the Soviet Union)
LEF = Levyj front iskusstva (Left Front of Art)
Men'shevik = minoritarian, i.e. from 1903 Martov's faction in the RSDRP
MAPP= Moskovskaja asociacija proletarskich pisatelej (Moscow Association of Proletarian Writers)
Narkompros = Narodnyj komissariat prosvješčenija (National Commissariat of Enlightenment)
NEP = Novaja Ekonomičeskaja Politika (New Economic Policy)
NKVD= Narodnyj komissariat vnutrennyh del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs)
Orgburo = Organizacionnoe buro (Organizational Bureau)
Rabfak = Rabočij fakul'tet (Workers' Faculty)
RAPP = Rossijskaja asociacija proletarskich pisatelej (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers)
RGALI = Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Archiv Literatury i Iskusstva (Russian State Literature and Art Archives)
RGB = Rossijskaja Gosudarstvennaja Biblioteka (Russian State Library)
RK = Rabočij Kraj (Workers' Region)
RKP(b) = Rossijskaja kommunističeskaja partija (bol'shevikov) (Russian Communist Party (majoritarians))

¹ For further reading and fuller details cf. e.g. Kovalenko 1995, Freeze 1997:XIV-XVI, Figs 1997:XXI-XXII or McCauley 1998.

RSDRP = Rossijskaja social-demokratičeskaja rabočaja partija (Russian Social Democratic Labour Party)
RSFSR = Rossijskaja Sovetskaja Federativnaja Socialističeskaja Respublika (Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic)
SD = Social Democrat
SR = Socialist Revolutionary
SSSR = Sojuz Sovetskich Socialističeskich Respublik (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)
VAPP = Vserossijskaja asociacija proletarskich pisatelej (All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers)
VKP(b) = Vserossijskaja kommunističeskaja partija (bol'shevikov) (All-Russian Communist Party (majoritarians))
VSP = Vserossijskij sojuz pisatelej (All-Russian Union of Writers)

As also explained in appendix 7.6, it should be noted initially that references to the Voronskij family archive relate to film reel and item numbers. Thus "Cf. 7.6, fr6-i84" means "Confer 7.6, film reel no.6, item no.84".

Finally, book titles, titles of journals and loan words (e.g. *belles-lettres*) as well as Russian terms (e.g. *voronščina*, *oblomovščina*) but not names of institutions, organizations or groups, are italicized. Thus *Pereval* refers to the almanac while *Pereval* refers to the literary group.



Commemorative plaque, Tambov religious seminary. Courtesy of Voronskij's granddaughter Tat'jana I. Isaeva. ¹

[...]. Iskusstvo otkryvaet nam mir po-novomu, prekrasnij ne potomu, što ego takim sozdal chudožnik, nadeliv svoimi čuvstvami, a potomu, što on prekrasen sam po sebe, nezavisimo ot nas i splošč' i rjadom nesmotrja na naši vpečatlenija.[...]. ²

¹ The professional revolutionary, writer and critic Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij studied in this building from 1900 to 1905.

² A.K. Voronskij, from the article "Iskusstvo videt' mir", *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a:87), cf. 4.2.20 ([...]. Art reveals to us the world anew, beautiful as such, not because the artist has made it so by endowing it with his sentiments, but because it is beautiful in its own right, independent of us and often irrespective of our impressions.[...]).

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1.0 some major features of Soviet Russia ¹ in the 1920s are outlined, with an emphasis on the literary scene and Aleksandr K.Voronskij. In 1.1 the specific objectives of the dissertation are presented. Finally, a brief survey is given in 1.2 of the dissertation's main sources, as well as a clarification of the theoretical and analytical framework employed.

1.0 Soviet Russia in the 1920s

Despite turmoil, including Russia's involvement in two wars, during the reign of Nicholas II (1894-1917),² cultural and intellectual life blossomed under Russian modernism (c.1895-1925).³ It expressed itself both in poetry and prose, drama, music, ballet, painting and in the cinema. This "second golden age"⁴ was disrupted by the Bolshevik ⁵ seizure of power in October 1917, the Civil War and the allied interventions 1918-20, and "war communism" 1918-1921.⁶ Red Army conscriptions and Bolshevik grain requisitions 1918-21 unleashed widespread anti-Bolshevik peasant riots and strikes, culminating in the Kronstadt rebellion in March 1921. At this time Soviet power had ceased in much of the countryside. Drought and confiscations of vital grain stocks unleashed the famine crisis of 1921-22. One quarter of the peasantry in Soviet Russia was starving by the spring of 1921, and

¹ To forestall possible confusion, it should be noted that in "Soviet Russia" I include a) Russia from October 1917 - July 1918, b) the RSFSR from July 1918 - December 1922, and c) the SSSR, from 1922/24 - December 1991. The SSSR was created on 30 December 1922, and its constitution was ratified in January 1924 (Egge 1993:130-133; Orlovsky 1997:247ff.; Husband 1997:263ff.).

² After the failed revolution in 1905, events were dominated by the conflict between Nicholas II's vision of a God-ordained autocracy and the political parties and groupings striving for either a Western-type of monarchic constitutionalism through the four Dumas 1906-1917 or, like the Bolsheviks, a revolution. The two wars were the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 and the First World War 1914-18, cf. Figs 1997:168-170; 253-303. In his highly acclaimed recent study of the Russian Revolution Figs draws a critical portrait of the last tsar and his reign. Paškov 1997:505-536 is also critical in his brief survey of Nicholas II. For a more positive appraisal of Nicholas II, cf. Lieven 1993.

³ Lampert 1991:134-150; Hyde 1991:259-273; Bristol 1992:387ff; Zelnick 1997:226-230.

⁴ Zelnick 1997:226.

⁵ For an account of the historic split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in 1903 within the RSDRP, cf. e.g. Schapiro 1978:127-130; Bagger, Nørretranders 1992:239ff. and Figs 1997:152.

⁶ Carr 1958 (I):46ff; Salisbury 1979:186-205; 242-259; Orlovsky 1997:231ff.; Figs 1997:612ff.

reports of cannibalism increased through 1921. Lenin was at this time more afraid of peasant riots than of the Whites.⁷ The 10th RKP(b)⁸ Party Congress in March 1921 was forced to introduce the controversial policy of NEP which lasted until the implementation of the first Five Year Plan in April 1929.⁹ The economic recovery which NEP had induced by 1926 was helped that year by record harvests and grain procurement. By 1928 estimated GNP figures per capita had again reached pre-war 1913 levels.¹⁰ Yet by 1927-28 NEP was disintegrating under the influence of the power struggle between Stalin and the "United Opposition" of Trockij, Kamenev and Zinov'ev. The central challenge to the party leadership as the 1920s unfolded was the speed and means of industrialization. The carefully circumscribed restoration of small-scale private enterprise under NEP had an invigorating effect also in the visual and non-visual arts after years of war and deprivation.¹¹

In the visual arts the Bolsheviks favoured crude agitational poster art, yet some gifted artists did emerge in fields like film, painting, sculpture and architecture. In the non-visual arts there was considerable activity and experimentation in literature,¹² while music, in particular, suffered under emigration. *Belles-lettres* were also gradually attuned to accomodate rising literacy figures resulting from mass literacy campaigns: While 35% of the population was literate in 1907, the literacy rate rose to 43% in 1917 and reached 51% by 1926.¹³

The RKP(b) underwent rapid centralization in the wake of the October 1917 Revolution. From 1919 the CK partially delegated to a five-man Politburo much of its authority to deal with urgent political matters, and to a five-man Orgburo,

⁷ Figes 1997:758ff.

⁸ Since I shall refer mostly to the RKP(b), VKP(b) or simply "the party", it should be noted that the RSDRP in March 1918 became the RKP(b). In December 1925 the name was altered to VKP(b). In October 1952 the name was altered into KPSS (Schapiro 1970:29; 645-646; Prochorov 1973 (XII) cols.1619-1620; Egge 1993:117, cf. also pp. 51-63 and p.150ff.; Zelnick 1997:200ff.).

⁹ Nove 1980:20; Rosenberg 1991a.

¹⁰ McCauley 1998:323.

¹¹ Acton 1995:198ff.

¹² Husband 1997:288-290.

¹³ Figes 1997:790.

entrusted with party appointments and organizational questions. The 1920s came to be marked by a power struggle within the party from which Stalin emerged triumphant. The RKP(b) was left in a quandary by modernism and also had so many pressing matters on its agenda that it only gradually formulated a policy in the arts and in *belles-lettres*. Its hesitancy was compounded by differing views inside the party with regard to the contents, speed and implementation of overall party policy, not least the vital question of industrializing a backward peasant society. Having made use of "bourgeois" expertise during the civil war and having accepted NEP, the RKP(b) also accepted competition in the arts and in *belles-lettres* among several contending groups, all claiming pre-eminence. Moreover, as would become apparent, the leading Bolsheviks were split culturally. One segment had spent the war years in Russia (e.g. Stalin, Molotov), had non-intelligentsia backgrounds, little knowledge of Europe, its culture and languages. The other component had spent the war years in exile (e.g. Trockij, Bucharin, Kollontaj), was committed to international socialism, was intellectual, knew Europe and spoke several languages.¹⁴

Eminent Russian modernist writers like the veterans Zamjatin and Belyj, and also many "post-October" writers like Pil'njak, Zoščenko and Babel', were left in a predicament by the chaos, famine and suffering following the Bolshevik takeover. As I shall revert to in part 5, it was not coincidental that some envisaged the October Revolution as a return to the Stone Age (Zamjatin), as blinding snowstorms (Pil'njak) or ascribed to the revolution a religious-symbolist meaning (Belyj). In effect, Russian modernism virtually dried up round 1925. Writers who remained in the "transitional society" without actively and wholeheartedly supporting the Bolsheviks were branded "fellow travellers" (*popučki*) by Trockij in his *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923). Many of these belonged to the pre-revolutionary intellectuals.¹⁵ Their *raison d'etre* was defended by the liberal Marxist editor Voronskij who despite his lack of international experience identified with the intellectual and internationalist segment of the Bolsheviks. The fellow travellers were expected by the party leadership to assimilate the party's cause, which explains why they were defended by the People's Commissar

¹⁴ Figes 1997:291-303.

¹⁵ Cf. Clark 1991:222 for a distinction between "intellectuals" and "intelligentsia" at this time.

for Education, A.Lunačarskij, even as late as in January 1929.¹⁶ Some underwent the mandatory metamorphosis, like A.Tolstoj who, having left Soviet Russia in 1919 only to return in 1923, went on to become a highly praised writer of historical novels. Others, like Zamjatin, remained intransigent, while e.g. Belyj attempted to adapt, as I shall discuss in part 5.

In 1920 writers from Kuznica convened an All-Russian Congress of Proletarian Writers that led to the establishment of VAPP. As the 1920s unfolded many new proletarian writers emerged, often from the provinces and with only rudimentary education. Having witnessed the conflict between Lenin and Bogdanov over the failed attempt of Proletkul't 1917-20 to construct a powerful literary organization extraneous to the party,¹⁷ VAPP worked from within the party to become the party's executive literary branch.¹⁸ The "proletarian culture debate" during the 1920s pitted Trockij with Voronskij against the most vocal exponents of a special proletarian culture and literature.¹⁹ Nonetheless, until 1928 the party resisted attempts to confer pre-eminence on any single literary group.²⁰ The party's liberal policy in *belles-lettres* was largely contingent on NEP. By the time NEP was being dismantled in 1927-28, party policy in *belles-lettres* was increasingly being dictated by VAPP and its successor from April 1928: RAPP.

During the 1920s Soviet Russia gradually entered a protracted period of isolation and conscious separateness towards the West,²¹ thereby in a sense reinforcing Russia's historical ambiguity towards Europe.²² Not coincidentally the capital had been moved to Moscow at the end of March 1918. Fridtjof Nansen served as The League of Nations' High Commissioner for War Refugees, starting in the

¹⁶ Carr 1971 (II):407,418; Belaja 1989:101ff.

¹⁷ Cf. Eimermacher 1972:74ff. for many key documents (in German translation) of Lenin's confrontation with Proletkul't.

¹⁸ Carr 1958:48-49; Orlovsky 1997:260-261.

¹⁹ Choate 1987:57ff.

²⁰ Carr 1971 (II):406-417.

²¹ Møller 1992:57ff.

²² Bodin 1993.

spring of 1920, and from the summer of 1921 as High Commissioner for the International Red Cross' aid support to the many millions of famine victims in the Volga area and in the Ukraine. His naive resolve to alleviate the suffering had to contend with the mutual distrust and calculation between the Bolshevik regime, on the one hand, and Russian emigré circles and Western governments on the other hand.²³

The fact that the Bolsheviks retained power on a national scale, despite the existence in the autumn of 1918 of no less than 18 different "governments" within the borders of what had been tsarist Russia,²⁴ not only demonstrated White political and military ineptitude,²⁵ but must have increased the Bolsheviks' feeling of carrying out a unique historic mission. The Bolsheviks typified what Figes sees as a central theme in Russian history from the 1800s: "the strange fanaticism of the radical Russian intelligentsia".²⁶ The "god building" (*bogostroitel'stvo*) of Gor'kij, Lunačarskij and Bogdanov 1908-10 suggested a desire to infuse socialism with religion, and later the ritual building during NEP revealed the religious pretensions of Bolshevism.²⁷ In part 2 I suggest that the Bolsheviks - and this has a bearing on Voronskij's literary aesthetics - can be interpreted as secular, millenarian, utopian heirs to Russian, or rather Muscovite, messianism which arose in the early 1500s with the theory of "Moscow as the Third and Last Rome".²⁸

Marxism stated that a proletarian revolution in a predominantly agrarian society was premature.²⁹ Yet Lenin envisaged a shortcut to communism for backward peasant Russia under the guidance of a vanguard, urban and elitist Bolshevik party. His most lasting legacy thus became the creation of a strong and centralized elitist party

²³ Sørensen 1993:98ff.; Huntford 1998:483ff.; Pipes 1998:83-84,133-134.

²⁴ Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:35; Orlovsky 1997:254.

²⁵ Figes 1997:650ff.

²⁶ *ibid.*p.XVIII.

²⁷ Stites 1991:295.

²⁸ Ware 1964:112ff.; Bodin 1993:123ff.; Kollmann 1997:51. Kalpani (1997:60,110) argues e.g. that Russian messianism was a central motive in both the tsarist and Bolshevik policy of colonization and domination of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

²⁹ Thomson 1970:12-13; Figes 1997:139ff.

structure.³⁰ Insofar as the Bolsheviks retained power in Soviet Russia, his ideological adaptations of Marxism were in a sense justified. According to Marx, the state would evaporate with the introduction of communism. Having seized power, the Bolsheviks claimed that during an unspecified transitional period the proletariat must quench all attempts at counter-revolution. This gave rise to the "dictatorship of the proletariat", reinforced by the "Red terror" in the wake of the 17 July 1918 murder of tsar Nicholas II and his family, and the failed attempt to assassinate Lenin in August 1918.³¹ After Lenin's death in January 1924, ideology was again attuned to reality. Many Bolsheviks, among them Trockij and Voronskij, were expecting revolutions in Germany and England in the wake of The Third Comintern set up in March 1919 in Moscow.³² Their non-occurrence, the failed efforts to export communism to e.g. Poland and Asia in 1920-21,³³ and the constrictions that Soviet Russia was being met with internationally, all served to promote "socialism in one country". This thesis had first been conceptualized by Lenin, prior to the Brest-Litovsk peace in 1918, and was developed by Stalin and Bucharin from 1924 in opposition to Trockij's formula of "permanent revolution", which Voronskij subscribed to.³⁴ Rather than evaporate, the state coalesced with the RKP(b) and became extensively bureaucratized. By 1921 there were twice as many bureaucrats as workers in Soviet Russia.³⁵

All Soviet citizens, including intellectuals, artists and writers who wished to stay in the "transitional society", gradually had to adapt to the changes wrought by the victorious Bolsheviks. The futurists, later LEF and Novyj LEF, led by Majakovskij offered their services to the Bolsheviks after October 1917 and propagated agitational art and literature, as e.g. Majakovskij's poem "Prikaz No.2 armii iskusstv" (1918)

³⁰ Schapiro 1978 passim; Egge 1993:67-68; 98-99; Figes 1997:197-198, 520-536, 627ff.

³¹ Hughes, Welfare 1991:53; Pipies 1998:56.

³² Serge 1976(I):113ff.; Schapiro 1978:198ff.; Figes 1997:550.

³³ Abraham 1997:7; Figes 1997:701-704.

³⁴ Cf. Carr 1958-64; Kubálková, Cruickshank 1980:124-126; Husband 1997:268,277. Voronskij's Trotskyism is addressed in part 3. Suffice it here to note that whereas Akimov 1979:272-273 downgraded Voronskij's Trotskyism and e.g. denied that Voronskij adhered to the thesis of "permanent revolution", Choate 1987:27-37 and 71-106 argued that Voronskij was a Trotskyite from 1923 onwards, which was confirmed in Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:271,290.

³⁵ Egge 1993:125-127; Skirbekk, Gilje (II) 1996:253-257; Figes 1997:536ff., 687-688.

demonstrated. Counter-revolutionary elements were resolutely stamped out from December 1917 by the Čeka, renamed GPU from February 1922 and OGPU from November 1923.³⁶ The execution in August 1921 of the Acmeist poet Gumilev³⁷ and the mass deportation of intellectuals in August-September 1922 was a continuation of Lenin's objective from the civil war period 1918-20 to "cleanse Russia".³⁸ One aspect of this were the extensive confiscations and destruction of private and Church property 1918-20.³⁹ Many Mensheviks were encouraged when the Bolsheviks at the 10th RKP(b) Party Congress in March 1921 felt obliged to supplant "war communism" with NEP. After Lenin's death NEP came to be identified particularly with Bucharin.⁴⁰ The strong Menshevik orientation among printers made it all the more important for Gosizdat, established in May 1919, to control the crop of small private and co-operative printing houses made possible by NEP.⁴¹ In many cases these small printing houses also started publishing their own journals, which often proved short-lived, e.g. *Russkij sovremennik* (1924) where Zamjatin played a central role.⁴² During the years 1918-21 the number of private and co-operative printing houses had dwindled drastically. By 1921, the 3487 private and co-operative printing houses which had existed in 1918 in the RFSSR, and which stood behind

³⁶ Leggett 1981:289; McCauley 1998:258. Figs 1997:642-649 asserts that conditions were much worse in Čeka prisons than in Tsarist prisons.

³⁷ Terras 1991:436.

³⁸ Volkogonov 1994a (I):351, (II):178-182. Cf. also 1.2.1b. Volkogonov's main argument - that Lenin initiated the methods of terror that Stalin later perfected and has been made responsible for - has been confirmed by Western research, cf. Figs 1997:630ff.; Pipes 1998:168-169,174.

³⁹ E.g. Ware (1964:157ff.) stressed the systematic and uninterrupted Bolshevik suppression of the Russian Orthodox Church from October 1917 onwards. Husband (1997:285-287), however, argues that compared to the harsh measures of 1918-20 the NEP period 1921-28 was a period when the persecution of religion was relaxed. He sees evidence of this in that the Union of Militant Atheists was not founded until 1925, and began in earnest only in 1928. Figs (1997:528,745ff.) argues that the Bolshevik "war of words", 1918-21, against religion brought about the closure of churches and the shooting of priests from 1921 onwards. In March 1922 when worshippers in the textile town of Shuya - 200 miles north-east of Moscow - resisted Bolshevik looting of the local church, Lenin personally issued a secret order for the extermination of the clergy, resulting in the brutal killing of 8000 people in 1922 alone, cf. Pipes 1998:150-155.

⁴⁰ Cohen 1973; Wiczynski 1977 (V):238.

⁴¹ Vvedenskaja 1957:5; Koenker 1991:36

⁴² Surkov 1967:289; Maguire 1987:372-375.

58% of all published titles, had shrunk to 205 printing houses, which only printed 5% of all published titles.⁴³ During the first half of 1922 their number had nevertheless grown to 220 in Moscow alone and 99 in Petrograd. Among the Moscow printing houses only 27 were considered as solid, e.g. M. and S.Sabašnikov, the brothers A. and I. Granat, I. I. Knebel', and the printing house Mir.⁴⁴ These each printed annually some 6-10 manuscripts. In November 1921 Voronskij wrote that literature was starting to rise from the dead after the ravages of the civil war. He stated that in Moscow there were around 200 private printing houses of which only approximately 70 were operative.⁴⁵ These were not necessarily preferred by the many contending literary groups: LEF, which harboured political ambitions, was e.g. printed by Gosizdat.⁴⁶ The private and co-operative printing houses, including the co-operative printing house Krug where Voronskij served as chairman 1922-27, remained in terms of volume modest compared to the state and party printing houses,⁴⁷ which bore the brunt of the increase from 1922 in published books, journals and newspapers.⁴⁸

In his first appearance in *Pravda* in late 1921⁴⁹ Voronskij wrote of the readers' "spiritual famine" and advocated the party to substitute quality fiction, including his new journal *Krasnaja nov'*, for the endless resolutions and protocols that passed unread. Prose replaced poetry as the dominant literary genre in the 1920s, and particularly the short form (letters, diaries, sketches, anecdotes, short stories) flourished. This was partly caused by the widespread paper shortages. In addition there was a prevailing sentiment that the speed, transience and turbulence of events precluded the epic novel, but favoured the literary journals which experienced a renaissance. Literature catering to the needs of the educated elite transpired, and import quotas were imposed on translated literature which largely disappeared, as did

⁴³ Kim 1985 (II):116.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* p.117.

⁴⁵ Voronskij 1923:5.

⁴⁶ Carr 1959 (II):76.

⁴⁷ Kim 1985 (II):114.

⁴⁸ Vvedenskaja 1957:4-7; 37,123.

⁴⁹ *Pravda* 11 September 1921#202:1, "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni", cf. 4.2.1 and 7.2.

trivial literature. Utopian literature like science fiction, and to some extent also travel tales, was popular although potentially expressive of escapism, as Voronskij's literary portrait from 1926 of A. Tolstoj illustrated.⁵⁰ Whereas newspapers carried few, if any, cartoons,⁵¹ humour had not expired. Several satirical journals emerged, like *Krokodil* (from 1922), *Lapot'* (1924-33), *Krasnyj perec* (1922-26).⁵² In art and literature an acrimonious debate unfolded among the many contending literary groups, typically pitting the adherents of proletarian culture and literature, who advocated a narrow utilitarian concept of literature, against the fellow travellers, who in contrast evoked both classical and modernist literary ideals. In the second half of the 1920s the proletarians in and around VAPP/RAPP rallied behind the concept of "social command" (*social'nyj zakaz*) in the arts and in *belles-lettres*. The demand that literature should comply entirely with party dictate was questioned especially by the Pereval writers to whom Voronskij was a mentor. They defended the concept of the artist's inner world, and the values of sincerity and humanism.⁵³ All in all the 1920s, especially the first half until 1925, became the most complex and richest period in Soviet literary history before stagnation set in from the late 1920s with Stalinization, culminating with the advent of social realism from the early 1930s.

On the eve of launching NEP in 1921 the RKP(b) leadership was split on several issues. This was borne out by the ban on organized intra-party factions passed by the 10th Party Congress in March 1921. As would become evident later, this ominous decision only assisted Stalin's rise to power.⁵⁴ The Bolshevik censorship was active from the beginning: all other newspapers than Bolshevik newspapers were proscribed shortly after the October Revolution. From 1922 Glavlit institutionalized censorship of the press, including *belles-lettres*.⁵⁵ Not all Bolsheviks approved. In 1923 Voronskij complained that political censors often interfered in purely artistic

⁵⁰ Voronskij 1928b:128-145. The portrait first appeared in *KN* 1926#9(44):194-208, cf. 5.3.2 and 7.3.

⁵¹ Møller 1992:60.

⁵² Surkov 1967 (IV):287-289.

⁵³ Belaja 1989:69ff.; 319ff.

⁵⁴ Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:55; Husband 1997:265; Figes 1997:758.

⁵⁵ Kasack 1992:1444-1445.

considerations. The censors should realize, he stated, that one cannot demand communist ideology from non-party "transitional" writers; hence censorship should only consider whether a literary work was openly counter-revolutionary or not.⁵⁶

Carr has argued that until April 1928 the party's attitude to the many contending literary groups remained typified by what I shall term "neutral vigilance": all groups were expected to defend and reflect the October Revolution in their own way, but no single literary group, not even the proletarian writers, was conceded hegemony.⁵⁷ The first issue of *KN* appeared in June 1921. It was soon followed by *Pečat' i revoljucija*, edited by Polonskij and with Lunačarskij on the board. Both of these early "thick" (tolstye) journals were widely seen to operate under party tutelage. From 1922 when the publication of books, journals and newspapers multiplied, other "thick" journals emerged, such as the proletarian journals *Molodaja gvardija* (1922-), *Na postu* (1923-), and *Oktjabr'* (1924-). Critics from these 3 journals and representatives of VAPP were to become the major opponents of Voronskij and *KN*, with claims - not unfounded - that he and *KN* favoured fellow travellers at the expense of proletarian writers. Lenin and Trockij, who both had reservations to the idea of hypercultivating a proletarian culture and literature, agreed that *belles-lettres* in Soviet Russia under NEP must be based on an eclectic attitude to the former bourgeois literature. They also concurred in the view that the party should assume the role of the gardener, not the drill sergeant, in the field of arts and literature. Some also claim this vision of the gardener's role explains the name *Krasnaja nov'* = Red virgin soil.⁵⁸ This vision shaped RKP(b) policy of "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres* during the first half of the 1920s.

In his capacity as the new Secretary General of the RKP(b) from April 1922 Stalin gradually extended and solidified his control over the party. Numbering only 23,000 in January 1917, party membership soared to 750,000 in 1921, contracted to less than 500,000 in 1924 due to purges, and expanded to 1,5 million at the end of the

⁵⁶ Voronskij 1924b:111. The article was first published in *KN* 1923#7(17):257-276, "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii", cf. 4.2.7 and 7.2-7.4.

⁵⁷ Carr 1971 (II):406-417.

⁵⁸ Choate 1987:47.

decade. Most new party members were young, urban males with scant education.⁵⁹ With the erosion of NEP 1927-1928, VKP(b) policy became more interventionist and ideologically uniform, also in the field of culture and *belles-lettres*, as is borne out in the articles of Lunačarskij, the People's Commissar for Education 1917-29.⁶⁰

In March 1921 the veteran 37-year old Bolshevik A.K. Voronskij was appointed by Lenin as editor of the first Soviet "thick" journal *KN*. It may have influenced Lenin's decision that Voronskij at the 6th Bolshevik Party Conference in January 1912 in Prague had convinced a sceptical Lenin to launch *Pravda*.⁶¹ Voronskij's 6-year editorship of *KN* 1921-27 fell entirely within the NEP-period. Though Voronskij - as we shall see in part 4 - criticized NEP and "Nepmen" (private traders), the type of journal that *KN* became under Voronskij, controversial and biased in favour of the fellow travellers, to some extent depended on the liberalism of NEP to thrive. In anticipation of the first 5-year central plan 1929-1932, with its emphasis on state industrialization and collectivization of agriculture,⁶² NEP waned and with it the precondition for pluralism in the arts and literature.

From Lenin's point of view the drastic situation facing his regime in 1921 meant that a "thick" Soviet journal with a wide coverage of economics, politics, science and art could serve to strengthen the tarnished legitimacy of the RKP(b) at home and abroad. As shown by Maguire *KN*, by becoming the first Soviet "thick" journal, continued a long pre-Soviet tradition dating back to the Russian encyclopedic journals of the 18th and 19th centuries.⁶³ These in turn had been modelled on English and French encyclopedic journals. Lenin's quarrel with Bogdanov, when Proletkul't

⁵⁹ Husband 1997:271.

⁶⁰ An impression of Lunačarskij's ideological open-mindedness under NEP and his ideological contraction after 1928 is gained by comparing e.g. his two articles "Osnovy chudožestvennogo obrazovanija" (1926) (Lunačarskij 1967, (II):438ff.) and "Chudožestvennaja literatura - političeskoe oružie" (1931) (Lunačarskij 1967(VIII):302ff.). See also Belaja 1979 with 7 articles by Lunačarskij from the period 1919-32 (pp. 63-95) which confirm this development. Cf. also Gorpenko 1980.

⁶¹ Zinov'ev 1989:188; Ovsjannikov 1990:67 and 1992:102-103. The Bolsheviks thereby "borrowed" the name of a rival Menshevik newspaper originally started by Trockij in 1908 in Lvov, cf. Schapiro 1978:117,132.

⁶² Nove 1980:19; Siegelbaum 1997:291ff.

⁶³ Maguire 1987:36ff.

in late 1920 was subjected to Lunačarskij's Narkompros, left little doubt that Lenin's views from "Partijnaja organizacija i partijnaja literatura" (1905) ⁶⁴ had been vindicated: *belles-lettres* should not play any role independent of the party. ⁶⁵ To Voronskij, who ignored Lenin's article, *KN* became primarily a vehicle for realizing his literary aesthetical vision of improved "Soviet literature", a concept he as the first introduced in *Pravda* in June 1922. ⁶⁶

As we may conclude from appendix 7.2, during the years 1921-28 Voronskij published 151 articles of varying length and scope in different journals and newspapers, most of them devoted to literary issues. Of these 71 were first published in the bimonthly *KN* during his 6-year editorship, 20 in *KN*'s biweekly popular and satirical version *Prožektor* (1923-35), and another 10 in the daily *Pravda*, cf. 7.2. Moreover, Voronskij singled out his most important articles for republication in the 10 books of collected articles which he printed 1923-29, cf. 7.4.

Maguire has argued that from 1923 *KN* ceased to be an "encyclopedic" journal because from that point Voronskij narrowed *KN*'s focus and propagated his own particular literary views. ⁶⁷ The upshot is that Voronskij in the article "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'", ⁶⁸ published what Maguire describes as a "theory of cognition" concerning art. I shall comment in part 4 why I do not see this as a "theory". In a sequel article "Na perevale", ⁶⁹ Voronskij elaborated his views by introducing what Maguire sees as a "program" for the creation of a new type of literature. While not disputing this interpretation, I shall argue that the new Soviet literature Voronskij promulgated in *KN* from 1921 onwards more or less consistently expressed his literary aesthetics. Defining this concept in part 2, I shall argue that in my view Voronskij throughout the 1920s and particularly after 1925 sought to identify the requirements, genesis and composition of improved, ultimately beautiful,

⁶⁴ Lenin 1960 (XII):99-105.

⁶⁵ Carr 1958 (I):50-51; Figes 1997:742-743.

⁶⁶ *Pravda* 28 June 1922#141:2, "Iz sovremennykh literaturnykh nastroenij", cf. 4.2.3 and 7.2.

⁶⁷ Maguire 1987:186.

⁶⁸ *KN* 1923#5(15):347-384, cf. 4.2.4 and 7.2-7.4.

⁶⁹ *KN* 1923#6(16):312-322, cf.4.2.5 and 7.2-7.4.

Soviet literature. To be sure, as Maguire argues, there were inconsistencies and shortcomings in Voronskij's views on art as cognition. He may also have demonstrated craftiness and been chronically dissatisfied.⁷⁰ Yet given the context he was working in what strikes me is rather the idealism, scope and persistence of his undertaking. Having identified in 1923 art as a way of cognizing reality Voronskij in my interpretation ended his odyssey in aesthetics 5 years later by - in a state of despair and disillusionment - equating beauty with truth in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928). After his expulsion from the VKP(b) in February 1928 he dedicated himself to reminiscences.

His literary aesthetics were derived primarily from Belinskij and Plechanov, but also from Russian classics, notably Gogol' and Lev Tolstoj. In addition he was inspired by Trockij's *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923). Yet as I have noted he was largely unaware of the long tradition of Western and Eastern aesthetic thought which might otherwise have influenced his thinking.⁷¹ Marxist aesthetics at this point was rudimentary, which helps explain the taciturn position of the RKP(b) in questions of art and literature. Voronskij sought to fill a void and define and expand the precincts of Marxist aesthetics, which he believed would engender better Soviet literature.

The literary aesthetics he formulated had two aspects: on the one hand he extolled the Marxist view of the socio-political purpose and utility of art and literature as a feature of the "superstructure", stressing the Plechanovite call to locate art's "social equivalent"; on the other hand he recognized and advocated the artistic standards of beauty and excellence in Russian and European classical literature. This predicament proved decisive in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. Insofar as he initially did subscribe to what Maguire has termed the Marxist "grand esthetic",⁷² he came to believe that great literature is contingent on individual artistic and psychological

⁷⁰ Maguire 1987:213 described as "crafty" Voronskij's use of a proxy in "Frejdizm i iskusstvo". He also found Voronskij's theory of cognition "banal and perfunctory" (p.223), and noted its inconsistencies and contradictions (p.257; 273-274), and viewed Voronskij as "chronically dissatisfied" (p.357).

⁷¹ Cf. Cooper 1997.

⁷² Maguire 1987:302.

elements, much more than class considerations, party membership and "social command". Having several times criticized censorship, he even noted in "O chudožestvennoj pravde"⁷³ that a precondition for artistic truth was personal freedom, which was hardly what one would expect from a Marxist.

As I hope to show in part 2, Voronskij's predicament had its antecedents. In Russia it dates back to the secularization measures introduced by Peter the Great. In pre-Petrine Russia, art and literature were aesthetically defined primarily in terms of religion. In the West, the predicament between art's and literature's socio-political utility versus the appreciation of their beauty *per se* can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle.⁷⁴ This predicament, which both Marxism and Voronskij failed to resolve, is inherent in the selection of his articles and portraits to be discussed in parts 4-5.

In Voronskij's literary aesthetics in the second half of the 1920s the artist's ability to successfully transform reality into art became increasingly dependent on the artist's inner psychological traits such as intuition and the subconscious.⁷⁵ Though Voronskij continued to stress the need to find an object of art's "social equivalent", to borrow Plechanov's term, and although he believed he was improving Marxist aesthetics, his quest for the genesis of true art in the realm of individual psychological character traits opened him to proletarian attacks of neglecting external socio-political factors such as class considerations. In a sense his efforts gave meaning to the dichotomy "general-particular" advanced by Maguire to explain Soviet Russian literature of the 1920s.⁷⁶ To his proletarian critics who defended the VAPP/RAPP concept of "social command" in *belles-lettres* his heresy involved a pernicious bourgeois-individualistic and metaphysical conceptualization of the writer as a kind of theurg, a view that typified romanticism and symbolism.⁷⁷ I agree with Maguire

⁷³ Published under the pseudonym "Anisimov" in *Sibirskie ogni* 1928#1:176-198, and then included in Voronskij 1928a:1-45, cf. 4.2.18, 7.2 and 7.4.

⁷⁴ Cooper 1997:11-44.

⁷⁵ Maguire 1987:206 rightly objects to Voronskij's lack of distinction between "unconscious" (*nesoznatel'nyj*) and "subconscious" (*podsoznatel'nyj*).

⁷⁶ Maguire 1972:98ff.

⁷⁷ Nilsson 1973:38-39; Helle 1992:24.

that, in retrospect, perhaps the most lasting critique against Voronskij was that he neglected Lenin's primary motivation in starting *KN* in 1921: to win over fellow travellers to the party's cause.⁷⁸

Voronskij's views became increasingly controversial from 1923, and he and *KN* came under fierce attack from proletarian critics in VAPP, *Oktjabr'*, *Molodaja gvardija*, and in particular *Na postu*, with occasional snipes from other literary groups like the futurists. He was alternately portrayed as a Trotskyite, a disciple of Bergsonian mysticism, a convert to Freud and a counter-revolutionary.⁷⁹ The legitimacy conferred on him by Lenin in 1921 had started to wane by Lenin's death in January 1924. Yet his assiduous defence of the fellow travellers had the support of Trockij, Bucharin, Frunze and, though more reservedly, also Lunačarskij.

Voronskij's literary adherents within and outside the RKP(b) formed the group Pereval (Mountain pass) in 1923/1924. Here I only want to note that much Pereval writing centred thematically on the countryside and peasantry where the Bolsheviks faced the greatest opposition during the 1920s. Urbanization had in fact declined: the urban rate in 1913 was 18% of a population of 166 million, compared with 18% in 1926 of a population of 148,5 million.⁸⁰ Figes states that since the Bolsheviks proved unable to govern the countryside by peaceable means they resorted to terror, ending up in collectivization.⁸¹ For this reason alone the examination of Pereval writers in part 5, as well as the fellow traveller Sejfullina, who specialized on the Siberian countryside, is interesting. The criticism in their manifesto in *KN* in early 1927 of VAPP⁸² was elaborated in Voronskij's article "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej"⁸³ and in his polemic retort "Ob užasnoj krokodile, o federacii pisatelej i fal'sivych frazach".⁸⁴ He also argued his case in a letter to Ordžonikidze, chairman

⁷⁸ Maguire 1987:234.

⁷⁹ Akimov 1979:316ff.; Maguire 1987:148ff.; Choate 1987:107ff.; Belaja 1987:5ff.

⁸⁰ McCauley 1998:321.

⁸¹ Rosenberg 1991a:5; Figes 1997:791.

⁸² *KN* 1927#2(49):233-236, cf. 7.14.

⁸³ *KN* 1927#4(51):214-221, cf. 4.2.15 and 7.3-7.4.

⁸⁴ *KN* 1927#6(53):238-249, cf. 7.3-7.4.

of the CKK 1926-30. The conflict led to Voronskij's departure from *KN* in April 1927.

During the years 1921-28 we see a marked development in Voronskij's writings. In late 1921 in his first article in *Pravda* referred to earlier he argued for a heightened understanding by the party of, and improved conditions for, *belles-lettres*. A new enthusiasm was evident in the later *Pravda* article from mid-1922 also cited earlier. Here he asserted that Soviet Russia was on the threshold of a flowering in the arts. His optimism was also evident in the two previously quoted articles from 1923: "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'" and "Na perevale". But only 2-3 years later, e.g. in an article from 1926 ominously titled "O tom, čego u nas net",⁸⁵ he admitted that "Nam grozit v literature chalturnaja pošljatina".⁸⁶ By 1926 the improvements in the economy and literacy rates apparently had not impressed him. Later in the article "Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna"⁸⁷ we are confronted by a bitter and resigned tone. Like the protagonist D-503 and the female leader of the revolt I-313 in Zamjatin's dystopian novel *My* (1921), Voronskij now felt that he was being asphyxiated and he wanted to break the "Glass Wall", cf. 5.6.1. In his late articles from 1928, when he had left *KN*, he was clearly despondent and depressed. In 1928 in "Ob industrializacii i ob iskusstve"⁸⁸ he had no answer to why Soviet advances in industry were not matched by a literary blossoming.

On the contrary, he now argued that Soviet literature was permeated by a modern version of *oblomovščina* - lethargy, laziness and indifference, and he deplored the materialism, alienation and bureaucratization of Soviet *belles-lettres*, arguing that the only remedy was the instillment of American efficiency.⁸⁹ His pessimism and contrition in many ways reached a nadir in one of his last major articles devoted to literary aesthetics "O chudožestvennoj pravde" referred to earlier.

⁸⁵ *KN* 1925#16(35):254-265, cf. 4.2.13 and 7.3-7.4.

⁸⁶ "In literature we are threatened by hack work meanness" .

⁸⁷ *KN* 1926#5(49):195-203, cf.7.2-7.4.

⁸⁸ Voronskij 1928a:162-169, cf. 4.2.19 and 7.4.

⁸⁹ Soviet awareness of American efficiency had surfaced e.g. when an American labour delegation visited Moscow in September 1927 and had held talks with Stalin, cf. Volkogonov 1998:100-101.

Taking issue with Gor'kij's view of the world as chaotic and hostile, he proceeded to reflect on the concept of truth in literature.⁹⁰ Echoing Dostoevskij's views from *Dnevnik pisatelej* 55 years earlier on the Russian propensity for lying,⁹¹ Voronskij found himself surrounded by lies in Soviet literature. In this state of mind his odyssey in aesthetics had led him to identify beauty with truth.

It would seem that the pivotal change in Voronskij's outlook took place around 1925, which is one reason I have selected no fewer than 5 of his articles from 1925 in part 4, and one portrait (Hamsun) from 1925 in part 5 for closer analysis. At this time he was temporarily demoted from main editor of *KN* to member of an editorial board and was even temporarily forced out of *KN* in early 1925. With the support of Frunze, Bucharin and also the exiled Gor'kij, he was reinstated in March 1925, though only as one of an editorial board of three. A decisive factor in 1925 was the unexpected death in October of Frunze, Trockij's successor in January 1925 as Commissar of War, and also Voronskij's major political benefactor. At this point Voronskij obviously felt many things were going wrong in Soviet Russia. Part of this was due to the biased, untrue and exaggerated view of Bolsheviks which he deplored in mid-1925.⁹² This distorted picture was in turn due to a lack of knowledge about the Bolshevik pre-revolutionary past, which he felt should be corrected through more historical and biographical writing. In mid-1926 when the economy and literacy figures had improved and Stalin had clearly defeated Trockij-Kamenev-Zinov'ev, Voronskij therefore started writing his autobiography, an unusual genre among Marxists, cf. 3.4.

Maguire argues that Voronskij revised his "theory of cognition" so that in his later articles from 1928 he saw little difference between the functions of art and religion: only through art could the lost paradise be attained.⁹³ To be sure, his writings testify to his profound and sincere concern not only with art and literature

⁹⁰ Cf. Vaagan 1998a.

⁹¹ In the article "Nečto o vran'e" (otryvki) in *Dnevnik pisatelej* (1887:84-87) Dostoevskij had diagnosed what he viewed as the typically Russian propensity for lying.

⁹² *Naši dni* 1925#5:297-304, cf. 4.2.10 and 7.2, 7.4.

⁹³ Maguire 1987:224.

but with fundamental existential issues in general. Few have commented on Voronskij's religiosity. Masing-Delic has commented briefly on the Christian element in his autobiography.⁹⁴ Belaja has noted briefly that the humanism, sincerity and yearning for artistic freedom typifying the Pereval critics, including Voronskij, derived from their childhood Christian ethics, but without elaborating.⁹⁵ Voronskij definitely did undergo a personal crisis and metamorphosis in the years 1921-27/28. His little-studied autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vody* (1927-29), to be discussed in part 3, has many Biblical references and connotations. His articles on literary aesthetics discussed in part 4 also contain some references to Christianity, but these are far less pronounced than in the autobiography. This is not to say that Voronskij was a disenchanted Marxist-turned-Christian. As I point out, he was silent on the plight of the Russian Orthodox Church. Yet I shall argue that his "return to childhood" theme

in his late articles is linked to his native Christianity. In my view his autobiography can be read as an attempt to reconcile certain Marxist and Christian values. His articles on literary aesthetics and his literary portraits, however, do not go so far; they largely reflect, especially from 1925 onwards, disillusionment with post-revolutionary literature. Here the occasional Biblical references are perhaps not more than what could be expected from an ex-seminarist.

Is it not understandable that particularly in his autobiography he should resort to the Biblical imagery of his childhood rather than to the Marxist terminology of his adulthood to give vent to some of his despair? In the early 1930s, discredited politically though re-admitted to the VKP(b) in April 1930, Voronskij sought to express his literary aesthetics in prose fiction, much of it memoirs, e.g. *Glaz Uragana* (1931a), *Rasskazy* (1932), *Bursa* (1933a), *Željabov* (1934a) and *Gogol'* (1934b). Although this period of Voronskij's career is beyond the focus of this dissertation, I agree with Akimov (1989), Belaja (1987,1989) and Choate (1998) that this phase of his life contains considerable unexplored material.

In the first half of the 1930s Voronskij worked inconspicuously as senior editor

⁹⁴ Masing-Delic 1976:54,57.

⁹⁵ Belaja 1989:395.

of classical Russian literature at Gosizdat. He was again excluded from the VKP(b) in March 1935, in the wake of the Kirov murder the preceding year, and he became one of the many victims of the Great Purges 1936-38.⁹⁶ He was arrested in January 1937 and shot 13 August 1937, a date only confirmed in 1989, cf. 7.15. Clark makes the point that *KN* was the only thick journal created during NEP under party or Komsomol patronage that did not survive the entire Soviet period, and links this to Voronskij's Trotskyism.⁹⁷ While this is true of e.g. *Molodaja gvardija*, *Oktjabr'*, *Novyj mir* and *Zvezda*, the picture is more complex. Thus *Pečat' and revoljucija* was suspended in 1930.⁹⁸ A better point to make is that all of the literary ventures Voronskij involved himself in were curtailed. The "heretic" printing house Krug was merged with *Federacija* in 1929,⁹⁹ the Pereval group and *Pereval* almanac did not survive 1932. *Prožektor* ceased publication in 1935, and *KN* itself in 1942. These 4 ventures are the ones specified in Voronskij's "confession" from 20 July 1937 concerning Trotskyism, cf. 3.3. As for *Naši dni*, I have no information of a sequel to issue 1925#1(5) mentioned in 3.2.2. It may therefore have been suspended after this issue.¹⁰⁰

Voronskij was rehabilitated from 1957 onwards, cf. part 3 and 7.1. As I shall note in 1.2. although several Russian scholars currently rate him as a major Marxist literary theorist of the 1920s, in the West academic opinion as to his significance has been divided, both in general surveys and in individual studies. There is therefore a need for further research.

The epigraph introducing this dissertation expresses Voronskij's conception of art as a cognitive medium to grasp the independent beauty of the world. In practical terms Voronskij's literary aesthetic quest for beauty which led him to the concept

⁹⁶ Hughes, *Welfare* 1991:96ff.; Siegelbaum 1997:311ff.

⁹⁷ Clark 1991:217.

⁹⁸ Surkov 1967(IV):288.

⁹⁹ Voronskij referred to the "heretical" Krug in his defence speech of 18 April 1927, cf. 3.2.10. His last book published by Krug was *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a), cf. part 9.

¹⁰⁰ There are no entries for *Naši dni* in the 10-volume *Literaturnaja Ėnciklopedija* (Friče and Lunačarskij 1929-39), the 9-volume *Kratkaja Literaturnaja Ėnciklopedija* (Surkov 1962-78), or in the 30-volume *Bol'saja Sovetskaja Ėnciklopedija* (Prochorov 1970-78).

of truth also became a political defence of individual artistic creativity and freedom, and therefore also a denial of, and a confrontation with, the politically and artistically stultifying forces of Stalinism, proletarian utilitarianism and collectivism.

The proletarian writers had seemingly won their crusade against Voronskij and his followers when VAPP from April 1928 was succeeded by RAPP, who proceeded to appropriate Voronskij's and *KN*'s aesthetical views of art as cognition of life, "immediate" impressions as art's main product, "living man" as a model hero and an emphasis on the classics.¹⁰¹ Much of this was assimilated by socialist realism. While the young leaders of VAPP/RAPP - none of whom had worker backgrounds - perhaps did represent what Clark phrases as an inevitable "generational changeover",¹⁰² it was hardly a changeover for the better. Stalinization in a sense commenced with the 15th Party Congress in December 1927 when Stalin was secretly considering the draft of the first 5-year plan 1929-32.¹⁰³ Industrialization was to be combined with collectivization of agriculture. In reality this was an assault on the recalcitrant peasantry the Bolsheviks had been unable to master, despite an innovative NEP militia.¹⁰⁴ RAPP's victory proved to be pyrrhic since it became only "a proletarian episode in Russian literature".¹⁰⁵ RAPP was itself dissolved in April 1932 when the monolithic Soviet Writers' Union was established.¹⁰⁶ Writers were hence to be "engineers of the soul", as Stalin stated in 1932. Voronskij significantly declined an invitation to participate at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in August 1934 when socialist realism was canonized as the only official Soviet aesthetics.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ E.J.Brown 1953; Maguire 1987:438; Neživoj 1988:361-362.

¹⁰² Clark 1991:224.

¹⁰³ Husband 1997:270; Siegelbaum 1997:291ff.

¹⁰⁴ Weissman 1991:174ff.; Siegelbaum 1997:297; Figes 1997:791.

¹⁰⁵ Brown 1953; Belaja 1989:261ff.

¹⁰⁶ Eimermacher 1972:433-434.

¹⁰⁷ Choate 1998:361.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF DISSERTATION

Under the weight of Stalinism and the excesses of socialist realism the diversity of *belles-lettres* during the NEP period is today easily forgotten. In the post-Soviet period there is an increasing awareness among Russian scholars, as shown in 1.2, of Voronskij's importance to the literary debate of the 1920s. Academic opinion in the West remains more divided. Both in Russia and in the West there is considerable scope for more research on Voronskij, both with regard to his pre-revolutionary career, his work at *Rabočij Kraj* 1918-20 in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, his work 1921-27 at *Krasnaja nov'* to which this dissertation is mostly limited, and also his career and writings from 1928 onwards.

In view of the lack of an authoritative biography of Voronskij, a general objective is to provide a more complete factual picture of Voronskij's life and work than has been done so far. This is done primarily in part 3 and in the appendices. Thus, in 7.1 a short biography, which is the most detailed of its kind in the Voronskij literature, has been compiled. Further, appendices 7.2 - 7.15 document central features of his career and life, including inventories of relevant Russian archives. A basic premise is the relevance of biographical and autobiographical information in literary analysis, a point discussed in 1.2.3 and 3.4. Beyond this the dissertation seeks specifically to analyze Voronskij's literary aesthetics which are seen to be strongly influenced by the course of his life and career. First, in part 2 the history of aesthetics in Russia is outlined as a background both to part 3 and parts 4-5. Secondly, in part 4 a selection of 20 of Voronskij's general articles on literature 1921-28 is discussed. Thirdly, the application of his literary aesthetics is assessed in part 5 based on a selection of 10 of his literary portraits 1922-29. Finally, concluding part 5, I appraise the level of consistency between his views in part 4 and 5.

The time perspective I employ in part 2 is much longer than that of Maguire and Choate. Maguire added greatly to our understanding of the Bolshevik patronage of *KN* by drawing parallels to *KN's* antecedents in the "thick" journals of the 1800s.

¹ Choate who was critical to the monolithic perception of Marxism in the US, quite justifiably stressed early Russian intra-Marxist distinctions to understand Voronskij

¹ Maguire 1987:36ff.

better, not least Trockij's ideas of the permanent revolution from 1905-1909 and their bearing on the proletarian culture debate of the 1920s.² I believe there is all reason to go even further back. As Bodin has argued in viewing the modern Russian "identity triangle" as a result of interactions among the Byzantine, Asian and European components in Russian history, the Bolsheviks despite their importation of a foreign European ideology evinced many "traditional" Russian character traits.³ Works like Blok's "Skify" (1918), Pil'njak's *Golyj god* (1921), Ognev's *Evracija* (1922)⁴ or Voronskij's reference to the Bolsheviks as "varjagi" in 4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna" (1925) are pointless if the framework of analysis is restricted to the last and present centuries. It is therefore my belief that viewing Marxist aesthetics as an evolutionary stage in the history of Russian aesthetics adds further to our understanding of the life, writings and significance of the Marxist Voronskij.

1.1.1 Towards a theory of literary aesthetics?

20 of Voronskij's general articles on literature 1921-28 are analyzed in part 4. Selected for their overall representativity, about 1/3 were not included in posthumous Soviet anthologies of Voronskij's work.⁵ Therefore my selection offers a broad, and I believe more accurate, picture of the content and development of Voronskij's literary aesthetics 1921-28 than is given in the mentioned anthologies. In his recent admirable anthology of Voronskij's writings 1911-1936, Choate has translated and briefly commented on 26 of Voronskij's articles.⁶ Of these 9 are included among the 20 I have selected in part 4. Though a considerable degree of concurrence on what constitutes Voronskij's major statements is unavoidable, I am convinced that readers of this dissertation and Choate's anthology will find significant differences in choice, approach and interpretation.

² Choate 1987:7,12ff.

³ Bodin 1993:53,109.

⁴ Cf. 5.5.1.

⁵ Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a 1987b.

⁶ Choate 1998.

The 20 articles will be discussed with reference to 8 ideological and artistic criteria which, in my reading, together constitute Voronskij's definition of literary aesthetics as it developed 1921-28. As conceded by the foremost Marxist critic Georg Lukács (1885-1971) in the title of his *Probleme der Ästhetik* (1969) which he wrote partly in the 1930s and 1940s while residing in the SSSR, Marxist aesthetics is a complex issue in which ideology and artistry in practice, though not in theory, are often in conflict with one another.⁷ My focus on Voronskij's literary aesthetics, as distinct from the broader and less precise term "literary criticism", is a new, and I believe rewarding, approach to evaluating the content and direction of his work, cf. 1.2.3 - 1.2.4. Part 4 will conclude by assessing whether Voronskij's literary aesthetics qualify as a theory of literature.

1.1.2 Applied literary aesthetics: the portraits

A selection of 10 of Voronskij's literary portraits covering each of the years 1922-29 is discussed in part 5. None of these are included in Choate's recent anthology where the only portrait among the 26 articles is one on Esenin.⁸ The portraits are interpreted as case studies in his literary aesthetics, i.e. practical applications of his views presented in part 4. The portraits are where he exemplifies his propositions through his criticism of, and commentaries to, a wide range of contemporary writers, mostly male Soviet writers. The portraits remain a neglected area in the Voronskij research, especially in the West. This is all the more surprising since they have been hailed by Soviet sources as his major achievement.⁹ In his doctoral thesis Choate, having briefly discussed the portraits of Pil'njak, Vs.Ivanov and Zamjatin, selected (without explaining why) the portraits of Babel', Majakovskij, Esenin and Hamsun for commentary and added 14 writers in a footnote.¹⁰ He e.g. did not clarify that Voronskij composed 24 individual literary portraits plus several

⁷ Lukács 1969; Arvon 1973; Sheppard 1988; Eagleton, Milne 1996.

⁸ Choate 1998. However, Hamsun has previously been discussed by Choate 1987:267-275, and also Zamjatin (ibid. pp. 96-107). Choate also includes Voronskij's two-page obituary on Larissa Rejsner which I do not consider a portrait, cf. part 5.

⁹ Surkov 1962 (I):1045-1046; Cf. also Neživoj 1988:10.

¹⁰ Choate 1987:231ff.

double portraits and group portraits.

I shall in particular look into which combination of the 8 ideological and artistical criteria referred to above come into play in the five broad categories of writers Voronskij identified: 1) Fellow traveller writers; 2) Proletarian writers; 3) Pereval writers; 4) "Pre-October" writers and finally 5) Foreign writers.¹¹ Voronskij composed both individual portraits, which tend to be detailed reviews of several works by the writer in question, and more general group portraits. I shall concentrate mostly on the first category but also refer to the group portraits. The individual portraits involve at least 24 writers and cover the time span 1921-1929. These include only 2 non-Soviet writers (Hamsun and Proust) and 1 female writer (Sejfullina). I have selected for analysis what I shall argue is a representative selection of 10 of his 24 individual portraits: The fellow traveller writers Sejfullina and A.Tolstoj, the proletarian writers Libedinskij and Fadeev, the Pereval writers Ognev and Klyčkov,¹² the pre-October writers Zamjatin and Belyj, and finally the foreign writers Hamsun and Proust. All writers except Proust were alive when Voronskij published the portraits, which *inter alia* illustrates his concern with contemporariness.

Since several scholars have found inconsistencies in Voronskij's work,¹³ I shall conclude part 5 by assessing the level of consistency between his views in part 4 and in part 5 and by testing my findings through statistical cluster analysis. By analyzing Voronskij's literary aesthetics based on a) previous Russian thinking on aesthetics, b) his life and career (part 3 and appendices 7.1-7.15), c) a selection of 20 of his most important theoretical and general articles on *belles-lettres* 1921-28 (part 4), d) a selection of 10 of his literary portraits 1922-29 (part 5), e) an appraisal of the consistency between his views in parts 4 and 5, I hope to make a new contribution to available research on Voronskij. An alternative approach would of course have been to do an in-depth study of only a few articles and/or portraits. While this must be the subject of another inquiry, I believe that the results of the present thesis lend

¹¹ Voronskij 1928b:6; cf. also part 5.

¹² Cf. part 5 for a discussion of Klyčkov's status in relation to Pereval.

¹³ Maguire (1987:223,257) criticized several inconsistencies in Voronskij's "theory of cognition" and Belaja (1987:299) found inconsistencies in his notion of "snjatje pokrovov" (uncovering the veils).

themselves fully also to such an approach.

1.2 SOURCES AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

The dissertation will make use of published sources, such as Voronskij's writings and correspondence, as well as *KN* 1921-27 and other published and unpublished sources, all specified in the appendices (part 7) and in the bibliography (part 8). In addition to having consulted several Russian and Western archives, institutions and libraries, I have interviewed his remaining family on several occasions. I have furthermore been granted access to the Voronskij family archive from which several previously unpublished documents are presented. In addition to these original sources, a number of secondary sources, mostly Russian and Western studies from the last 30 years, have been consulted and are also listed in the bibliography.

1.2.1 Soviet and Russian sources

a) Archives, institutions and libraries:

Visiting The Russian State Literature and Art Archives (Gossudarstvennij Archiv Literatury i Iskusstva), in September 1996 and again in October 1997, I made a survey of the available material on Voronskij and *Krasnaja nov'*, cf. 7.9 - 7.10. Furthermore, Director Natalija B. Volkova kindly put me in contact with Voronskij's family. In October 1997 at The Institute of World Literature, A.M. Gorkij Archives (Institut Mirovoj Literatury imeni A.M.Gor'kogo), I located material relating to Voronskij and *Krasnaja nov'*, especially his editorial correspondence, cf. 7.7 - 7.8. Here I read through the minutes of his largely unpublished defence speech of 18 April 1927, cf. 3.2.10,¹ and his unpublished correspondence with Sejfullina, cf. 5.3.1. The Russian State Library (Rossijskaja Gosudarstvennaja Biblioteka) has a few of Voronskij's letters, cf. 7.5, and one of 5 extant copies of Voronskij's *Gogol'* (1934b).²

As for other archives, The Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (Rossijskij Centr Chranenija i Izučenija Dokumentov Novejšej Istorii) has some material on Voronskij's party activities of which excerpts

¹ A few excerpts were included in Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:273.

² Voronskaja 1997:104.

have recently been published by Dikušina, Isaeva.³

In Moscow in September 1996 and October 1997, I interviewed Voronskij's only remaining granddaughter Tat'jana I. Isaeva. She not only very generously gave me out-of-print editions of several of Voronskij's books but also granted me access to the family archive, cf. 7.6. As the result of the efforts of Galina Voronskaja from 1954 onwards to have her father rehabilitated, the family archive is the most comprehensive repository of Voronskij material available. The daughter of Galina Voronskaja, i.e. Voronskij's granddaughter Tat'jana I. Isaeva, has had everything microfilmed and donated to The International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam, cf. 1.2.2a. In the absence of an official inventory, which is being made by the IISH, I have prepared a preliminary inventory in 7.6. The family archive contains published material, but also unpublished and unresearched material with considerable research potential beyond the present inquiry. Here we can find e.g. some of Voronskij's manuscripts, handwritten letters and statements as well as several rare pictures of himself, his wife, daughter and mother.⁴ In 3.2.9 and 3.3 I shall present excerpts from two previously unpublished documents which raise some ethical dilemmas: Voronskij's two handwritten and signed "confessions", one relating to Pereval dated February 1937, and another concerning his alleged Trotskyist activities dated 27 July 1937. The last document must be among the last he wrote before his execution 13 August 1937.

As far as can be ascertained most of the editorial archives of *Krasnaja nov'* 1921-27 have been destroyed, and much of Voronskij's correspondence is missing. Also missing is the follow-up to his autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* (1927-29). The latter only covers the period 1905-15. The follow-up, which existed in manuscript form and was confiscated on Voronskij's arrest in 1937, dealt with the vital period from 1917 onwards.⁵ While these lacunae impair the quality of this dissertation, one can only hope that more documentation relevant to the life and work of Voronskij will be made available for research.

³ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995.

⁴ Choate 1998 contains several of these pictures.

⁵ *ibid.* p.100.

b) Individual studies and analyses

An early and extensive official review of Voronskij's work, predictably negative, appeared in 1929 in the 10-volume *Literaturnaja enciklopedija* published by the Izdatel'stvo Kommunističeskoj Akademii:

[...]. Voronskij očēn' rezko izmenil svoi pervonačal'no marksistskie postroenija. Uže v položenii ob intuicii v "teorii snjatija pokrovov" ležala vozmožnost' otchoda ot marksizma, stavšaja real'nost'ju v teorii ob "iskusstve videt' mir" [...]. Otsjuda vytekajut vyvody, prjamo vraždebnye učeniju marksizma [...]. Teorija perevoploščēnija est' ne čto inoe, kak otkaz ot klassovoj suščnosti [...].⁶

For more than 20 years after his exclusion from the VKP(b) in 1935 and his execution 13 August 1937, Voronskij, if mentioned at all, was castigated as a Trotskyite. *Bol'shevistskaja pečat'. Sbornik materialov*, which was published by Politizdat pri CK VKP(b), Moscow 1940, omits him as well as the Bolshevik paper *Jasnaja zarja* in Odessa in which he wrote in 1911. The first official signs of his rehabilitation after his posthumous reinstatement in the KPSS in June 1957⁷ were Venkster, Žatkin (1959), Dement'ev (1963) and Smirnov (1964). In the 4-volume 1967-68 edition of *Istorija Russkoj Sovetskoj Literatura 1917-65*, he and *KN* are occasionally mentioned.⁸ In the 9-volume 1962-78 edition of *Kratkaja literaturnaja enciklopedija* Voronskij and his major works are listed, as well as his rehabilitation and posthumous reinstatement in the KPSS, though this is overshadowed by his alleged political mistakes, his idealism and belief in Bergson, and the aggregated detrimental effect he is seen to have had, especially on some Pereval writers and critics. His literary portraits are here as noted earlier seen as his major literary contribution.⁹ In the 30-volume 1971-78 edition of the *Bol'sžaja sovetskaja*

⁶ Friče 1929 (II):313-318 ([...].Voronskij sharply changed his initial Marxist views. Already in the proposition of intuition in the "theory of removing the covers" there was a possibility of departure from Marxism, and this became a reality in the theory of "the art of viewing the world" [...]. From this follow conclusions which are squarely detrimental to the teaching of Marxism [...]. The theory of overflowing is nothing else than a rejection of class nature [...]).

⁷ Voronskaja 1997:113.

⁸ Dement'ev 1967-68. Vol. I (1967) covers the years 1917-29, and deals with Voronskij and *KN* in the part dealing with *Chronika literaturnoj žizni* (pp. 685-832).

⁹ Surkov 1962 (I):1045-46.

enciklopedija he and his work are very briefly listed in a more balanced way than in the cited *Istorija Russkoj Sovetskoj Literature 1917-65*.¹⁰ Among the articles by 42 individual authors reprinted in *Iz istorii sovetskoj estetičeskoj mysli 1917-32*, Voronskij ranks 3rd - only surpassed by Lenin (12) and Lunačarskij (10) and equal to Gor'kij (3) - in terms of the number of articles reprinted.¹¹

Voronskij became the subject of studies by Efremov (1967), Akimov (1979), Dinerštejn (1983) and Neživoj (1983,1988), and aspects of his work were dealt with in articles by Leleko (1979), Kuprijanovskij (1982), Vozdviženskij (1984), Koz'min (1985), Belaja (1986) and Akimov (1989,1990). Some, as Efremov, were critical of features of Voronskij's work but still acknowledged the farsightedness of his ideas:

[...] kritik byl črezvyčajno protivorečen. Meždu ego teoriej i praktikoj byla propast'. Byli oščibki, byli promachi, a poroju daže očen' sereznyje. No oni vznikali na osnove tvorčeskich poiskov vernych putej našej literatury [...].¹²

All credited Voronskij for being a key figure in Soviet literature of the 1920s and for being ahead of his time. Neživoj found that one of the least studied aspects was the relationship between his aesthetical ideals and those of various writers.¹³ In Russia from 1991 onwards studies by Akimov (1992,1995), Ovsjannikov (1990,1992) and articles by Galuškin (1992), Dikušina, Isaeva (1995) and Voronskaja (1995,1997) as well as unpublished articles by Černobaev (1992a, 1992b, 1992c) explore further aspects of his life and work. Chentalinski (1993) has accessed the KGB's interrogation protocols relating to, among others, Voronskij. His daughter has also

¹⁰ Prochorov 1971-78. Cf. 1971 (V) cols. 1092-93.

¹¹ Gorpenko 1980. Voronskij's 3 articles are "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'", "Ob iskusstve pisatelja", and "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" (cf. pp.289-312).

¹² Efremov 1967:110 ([...] the critic was exceptionally contradictory. There was an abyss between his theories and practice. There were mistakes, blunders, and occasionally even very serious ones. But they developed on the basis of creative searches for the true trajectories of our literature [...]).

¹³ Neživoj 1988:8. The unpublished doctoral dissertation by Neživoj (1988) is the single most voluminous Soviet study of Voronskij's work. Comprising 362 pages plus a 60-page bibliography with 863 references, the dissertation is divided into 3 parts: I) Ideal - proobraz dejstviteľnosti, II) Proletarskaja i neproletarskaja literatura, and III) Chudožestvennyj mir pisatelja. While e.g. offering some interesting observations on Voronskij's aesthetics, cf. 2.0, the dissertation in my view is somewhat marred by political clichés, e.g. "Ego idealom byl Lenin" (p.354) and also by a lack of biographical information.

published an article of reminiscences abroad.¹⁴ In his brief biography Ovsjannikov i.a. states that:

[...]. Literaturnaja dejatel'nost' Aleksandra Voronskogo ešče ždet svoego issledovatelja, svoego letopisca, hotja za poslednye gody pojavilos' nemalo glubokich rabot, ob'ektivno, bez vremennyh i kul'tovskih nasloenij, raskryvšyč ego rol' v istorii ruskoj sovetskoj literatury. A ona značitel'na i ešče do konca ne osoznana, ne osmyslena [...].¹⁵

Of great interest is Voronskij's correspondence. Dinerštejn (1983) offers a selection of 83 letters from Voronskij's correspondence with various writers.¹⁶ His correspondence with Gor'kij, consisting of 59 letters in all, was published in 1965.¹⁷ In the most comprehensive Soviet or Russian edition of Voronskij's work to date, which was the result of a conference in 1984 to mark the centennial of his birth, there are obvious lacunae, e.g. Voronskij's autobiography as well as several important articles.¹⁸ This was sought redressed in an edition of selected prose, including his autobiography.¹⁹ The volume Voronskij 1987a fails to assess his overall importance in Soviet literature. The introductory essay avoids the issue by asserting that such considerations are not necessary since, it is claimed, this is dealt with in other studies. This failure is understandable since such an estimate presupposes a reconsideration of Soviet literature of the 1920s, and in 1987 this was still premature, despite *glasnost'*.

The iconoclastic biography of Lenin by Volkogonov includes Voronskij as a source.²⁰ Yet it does little to change what we already know about Voronskij, who remains a peripheral figure to Lenin. It could be argued, though, that the ruthlessness

¹⁴ Voronskaja 1992.

¹⁵ Ovsjannikov 1992:190-191 ([...]). The literary activity of Aleksandr Voronskij is still awaiting to be researched, to be chronicled, although over the last years quite a few interesting works have emerged, objective, not coloured by time and cult, that have disclosed his role in the history of Russian Soviet literature. It is a significant role, and still not ultimately fathomed, not analysed [...]).

¹⁶ Dinerštejn 1983:531-617.

¹⁷ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. X, book 2, 1965:7-79. Cf. also Vaagan 1998a.

¹⁸ Voronskij 1987a.

¹⁹ Voronskij 1987b.

²⁰ Volkogonov 1994a (I):43.

in Lenin which concerns Volkogonov serves to justify Voronskij's independence as editor of *KN*, cf. 3.2. Volkogonov's biography of Trockij with its unprecedented access to classified material ²¹ confirms that Voronskij from at least 1924 was a confidant of Trockij, and it even suggests that Voronskij's problems at *KN* from late 1924 and early 1925 (cf. 3.2.2-3.2.5) came as a result of his close relationship to Trockij and the latter's fading star from October 1923. ²²

My conclusion as far as Soviet and Russian sources are concerned is threefold: first, there is today a consensus that Voronskij played a leading literary role in the 1920s; secondly, there is considerable scope for new research not least in view of the available family archive and other newly-opened archives; thirdly, his literary aesthetics is according to Neživoj a particularly inviting area of research.

1.2.2 Western sources ²³

a) Archives, institutions and libraries

As mentioned above The Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, has through its Moscow branch, with the gracious assistance of Voronskij's granddaughter Tat'jana I. Isaeva, acquired 7 reels of 16mm films in black and white with material from the Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6. I have identified for the purposes of this dissertation more than 100 items such as letters, manuscripts, photographs, newspaper clippings and books. Some of the material is previously unpublished. With the consent of Tat'jana I. Isaeva, I have made use of some of this material in the dissertation. Cf. also 1.2.2.1a.

²¹ The co-operation initiated in 1992 between The State Archival Service of the Russian Federation (Rosarchiv) and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and Chadwyk-Healey to microfilm the records and opisi (finding aids) of the Communist Party of the former Soviet Union, as well as other selected holdings of Rosarchiv, and make the material available to research, may well have a bearing also on questions discussed in the present study. Cf. <http://hoover.stanford.edu/WWW/welcome.html>.

²² Volkogonov 1994b (I):17-18. Cf. also pp. 370-371.

²³ To the despair of some, "Western" is often equated with "Anglo-American". While many of my Western references are in fact by Anglo-Americans in English, the observant reader will also find in the bibliography many Norwegian, Scandinavian and even some French and German references, several in their original languages. I therefore feel justified in maintaining the epithet "Western".

b) Individual studies and analyses

Voronskij and *Krasnaja nov'* are generally considered too insignificant to warrant mention in general scientific reviews of Russian history, which remain focussed on politics and economics.²⁴ Yet studies which also take art and literature into detailed account are affirmative with regard to Voronskij and his importance to Soviet literature. Thus Carr, in his monumental 14-volume treatise on the October Revolution and Soviet Russia of the 1920s, several times confirms the significance of *KN* and Voronskij in *belles-lettres*.²⁵ If we narrow the search to literary historians we can conclude that these mostly agree on Voronskij's importance in Soviet Russian *belles-lettres* of the 1920s, though there are occasional dissenters: McLean in an early article saw Voronskij as "one of the most sincere and original thinkers in Soviet criticism",²⁶ and Glinka in his study of Pereval paid tribute to Voronskij.²⁷ However Struve dismissed Voronskij in a footnote:

[...]. In my opinion there is little justification for describing Voronsky as one of the most original Soviet critics. Voronsky's chief qualities were his honesty, courage and comparative broad-mindedness. There was nothing original or particularly sensitive in his approach to literature. Some of his essential ideas were derived from Plechanov. [...]²⁸

Struve's trivialization of Voronskij was refuted by Stacy, who in marked contrast identified Voronskij as:

[...] one of the leading Marxist critics of the 1920s [...] a "moderate", favoring a certain amount of tolerance in literature and opposing the concept of a narrowly defined proletarian art [...] Voronskij supported a "humanistic" interpretation of Marx. More specifically, he wanted the writer to treat objectively - to describe, for instance, the vices of the Communists along with his virtues, and the virtues of the class enemy together with his vices. In short he was more interested in literature than in ideology, and this was eventually his undoing [...] Voronskij was one of the most sensitive of the Russian Marxist critics [...] extremely broad-minded, and he was attracted by a great variety of

²⁴ Freeze 1997; Figs 1997.

²⁵ Carr 1958 (I):52ff.; 1959 (II):80ff. and 1971(II):169ff.

²⁶ McLean 1949:185.

²⁷ Glinka 1954:45-93. Cf. 3.2.2.

²⁸ Struve 1971:79.

Eimermacher (1972) attributes a central role to Voronskij in Soviet literary policy 1921-27, including e.g. translations of 5 of Voronskij's articles in the 114 reproduced documents from the period 1917-32.³⁰ Yet Voronskij is excluded by Segall.³¹ A neglected field of research is Voronskij's autobiography which has been discussed by Masing-Delic.³² In his exposé of 20th century Russian and Soviet literary criticism Erlich lists only Trockij and Voronskij among the early Soviet Marxist literary critics,³³ while Wellek limits his commentary to Plechanov, Lenin, Gor'kij, Trockij and Pereverzev, and only briefly mentions Voronskij.³⁴ E.J.Brown asserts that Voronskij "deserves more credit than any other literary man for the revival which took place during the twenties".³⁵ Clark finds that no one during NEP was as "powerful" in Soviet literature as Voronskij.³⁶ The most comprehensive Western study of *KN* and Voronskij remains Maguire's *Red Virgin Soil* (1968), which was republished unrevised in 1987.³⁷ While crediting Voronskij with developing *KN* into a centrepiece of literary debate and theory during the 1920s, Maguire detected many weaknesses and inconsistencies in Voronskij's "theory of cognition". Editorial restrictions probably explain why Maguire elsewhere had little to say about Voronskij

²⁹ Stacy 1974:197.

³⁰ Cf. Eimermacher 1972:5-10 and 451. The 5 documents are: 1) Voronskij's letter to Lenin 21 April 1921 (cf. 3.2.4 and 7.5); 2) "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (cf. 4.2.7); 3) "O tekuščem momente i zadačach RKP v chudožestvennoj literature" (cf. 4.2.8); 4) "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej" (cf. 4.2.15) and 5) "Ob užasnoj krokodile, o federacii pisatelej i fal'sivych frazach" (cf. 4.2 and 7.3). In addition extracts are given from Voronskij's address at the May 1924 meeting of the Press Section of the RKP(b) (pp.192-197 and 237-239), cf. 3.2.5.

³¹ Segall 1985:440-444.

³² Masing-Delic 1976. Cf. also Masing-Delic 1992.

³³ Erlich 1975. Trockij is represented with the article "Majakovskij and Russian formalism", from *Literatura i revoljucija* 1923:102-114, while Voronskij is represented with his literary portrait of I.Babel', which first had appeared in *KN* 1924#5.

³⁴ Wellek 1991:298-313.

³⁵ E.J. Brown 1982:157.

³⁶ Clark 1991:221

³⁷ Maguire (1968) 1987.

and *KN*,³⁸ a brevity shared by Terras.³⁹ The second major Western study of Voronskij was Choate's doctoral thesis from 1987 in which he identified Voronskij as the major Marxist literary critic of the 1920s.⁴⁰ Most recently Choate has published an anthology of Voronskij's writings 1911-1936. In it he has translated and edited 26 of Voronskij's major articles, which are now for the first time available in English. In general Choate interprets Voronskij's theory of cognition less critically than Maguire, and e.g. rejects - correctly in my view - Maguire's underestimation of Trockij's influence on Voronskij. Choate also brings in more biographical information than Maguire.

Whereas *Bol'shaja sovjetskaja enciklopedija* identifies his literary portraits as his major achievement as a critic,⁴¹ Terras and Maguire are less concerned by them. As for Choate who does discuss the portraits, I have some supplementary points which I comment on in part 5. Georg Lukács in *Probleme der Ästhetik* (1969) found room for e.g. Gor'kij and Lunačarskij but significantly omitted Voronskij.⁴² Voronskij is also omitted in a recent Marxist survey of Marxist literary criticism in Soviet Russia in the 1920s.⁴³

1.2.2.1 Nordic and Norwegian sources

a) Archives, institutions and libraries:

I have benefited greatly from my 2 visits, in September 1996 and October 1997, to The Slavonic Library, Helsinki University, which is the only library in Scandinavia to maintain a complete edition of *Krasnaja nov'* 1921-42. This has supplemented my personal microfiche copies of the 1921-27 editions of *Krasnaja nov'*.

³⁸ Maguire 1985:512-513.

³⁹ Terras 1991:507,514-515 and 1992:471-472, 494.

⁴⁰ Choate (1987:3). Choate has apparently, like Maguire (1987), not used Eimermacher (1972), yet he refers i.a. to Akimov (1979), Neživoj (1983), Belaja (1986), and to Voronskij's correspondence in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 1983, though he does not mention the author - Dinerštejn (1983).

⁴¹ Prochorov 1971 (V):1093.

⁴² Lukács 1969.

⁴³ Eagleton, Drew 1996 list only Trockij's article "The Formalist School of Poetry and Marxism", from *Literatura i revolucija* (1923) and Vološinov's article "Concerning the Relationship of the Basis and Superstructures" (1929).

b) Individual studies and analyses:

In a Nordic context Voronskij has occasionally been included in individual books ⁴⁴ and even been the object of individual articles⁴⁵. Yet on the whole the sporadic and insufficient coverage of Voronskij in several Western general surveys noted above is repeated in Nordic surveys. Voronskij and *KN* were e.g. not included in Nilsson's survey article in 1972 of Russian literature of the 1920s, but they were summarily included in a brief volume he wrote one year later. ⁴⁶ Voronskij was later excluded by Møller, although one reference to *KN* was included. ⁴⁷ In the first Norwegian survey of Russian and Soviet literary history ⁴⁸ Voronskij was briefly mentioned in the survey article on the 1920s, ⁴⁹ and in the article on the period 1930-53. ⁵⁰ Yet he was omitted from the article on Marxism.⁵¹ In a recent Norwegian survey of Soviet literature ⁵² Voronskij, the progenitor of the very term "Soviet literature", ⁵³ is absent although *KN* is mentioned once. ⁵⁴ *Gogol'* ⁵⁵ - praised by both Akimov ⁵⁶ and Belaja⁵⁷ - is absent in the bibliography of the only Norwegian biography of Gogol'. ⁵⁸ His portrait of Belyj, which I shall discuss in part 5, is omitted in a Norwegian doctoral thesis on Belyj from 1992. ⁵⁹

⁴⁴ Alberg Jensen 1979:52, 65, 285-286.

⁴⁵ Masing-Delic 1976.

⁴⁶ Nilsson 1972; Nilsson 1973:100.

⁴⁷ Møller 1992:57-87. Cf. p.59.

⁴⁸ Kolstad, Stokke 1974.

⁴⁹ Gil 1974:195,206.

⁵⁰ Valderhaug 1974:222.

⁵¹ Rønning 1974.

⁵² Egeberg 1994.

⁵³ Akimov 1995:128.

⁵⁴ Mørch 1994:21.

⁵⁵ Voronskij 1934b.

⁵⁶ Akimov 1979,1989,1990.

⁵⁷ Belaja 1986,1987,1989.

⁵⁸ Kjetsaa 1990.

⁵⁹ Helle 1992.

The only Norwegian scholar who modestly has commented on Voronskij prior to this study is Nag. His study of Hamsun and Russian intellectual life offers a brief commentary and summary of Voronskij's Hamsun-portrait.⁶⁰ This material must today be considered outdated. In the course of writing the present thesis, I have published one popular article in Norwegian, one scientific article in English and one in Russian, as well as given one paper in English at an international conference, in order to disseminate my research.⁶¹

1.2.3 Theoretical approach

Although the theme the dissertation addresses will necessitate some level of comment on Marxism, Marxist aesthetics and Marxist literary theory, it purports to be neither an exhaustive analysis of these concepts nor an attempt to defend or refute them. My cursory recapitulation of some principal events and persons who influenced Voronskij 1921-28 mainly serves as a diachronic and synchronic contextualization of Soviet-Russia and Voronskij's aesthetics during the volatile 1920s.

Marxist literary theory is often assumed to have started with Lukács,⁶² and in explaining "Marxist criticism" some reference works go from Marx and Engels, dwell briefly on Trockij but ignore Voronskij (not to speak of Plechanov), before proceeding to socialist realism, Lukács and Adorno.⁶³ From the vantage point of today we may note that Marxism, Marxist aesthetics and Marxist literary theory have dwindled to a preserve for only the persistent diehard: As acknowledged by a prominent Western Marxist in a recent anthology of Marxist literary theory - in which Voronskij is not mentioned - Marxism as a political alternative became discredited first by Stalin's brutal excesses during the 1930s and, subsequently, by the failure of Marxism nationally and internationally.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Nag 1969.

⁶¹ Vaagan 1996a, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a.

⁶² Lothe 1997:151.

⁶³ Cuddon 1991:527.

⁶⁴ Eagleton, Milne 1996:1.

Yet this is not to say that everything stated in Marxist literary aesthetics and literary theory is irrelevant. Neither does it mean that today there is no point in investigating the by now "defunct" opinions of a Soviet Marxist long since executed by a system he helped create. On the contrary, as I hope to demonstrate, Voronskij's literary aesthetics embody universal issues with long antecedents which continue to concern scholars today. Neither does the quandary of contemporary Marxism mean that the relevance of sociology is at stake in literary analysis. Here I need only mention the work of Bourdieu and his empirically founded correlations between aesthetic attitudes and class positions. ⁶⁵

A survey of contemporary literary theory confirms that literary "grand" theories, not only Marxism but also psychoanalysis and structuralism, are out of favour in the era of postmodernism. Many have instead opted for a variety of "reductionist" paradigms and schemes, ⁶⁶ as my own study of anthropomorphisms in Pasternak's novel *Doktor Živago* exemplifies. ⁶⁷ Some assert that literature should be viewed as a social institution governed by conventions: only a thorough analysis of such conventions can adequately deal with problems of interpretation and appreciation. ⁶⁸ Others extol the explanatory value of New Criticism, new historicism, feminism, deconstruction, post-colonial theory, gay and lesbian studies, etc. ⁶⁹ An interesting approach in the context of Russian literature of the 1920s is the attempt by Maguire to apply the dichotomy "general-particular". ⁷⁰

By extension many of these contending approaches - with their different

⁶⁵ Cf. Bürger 1992:23-34 and also Linneberg 1993:41-54. Cf. also Bourdieu 1998:33,107-109.

⁶⁶ At the founding meeting of The Nordic Society of Literary Science, on 29 August 1997 at The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, Professor Atle Kittang, in his key address, struck a pessimistic note, talking e.g. of a "regression" in contemporary literary science, i.e. a fragmentation of the discipline into reductionist studies like feminism etc. In his view this negative development threatened to denigrate literary science into only a part of cultural studies. Echoing Gumbrecht's *The Future of Literary Science?* (1995), Professor Kittang concurred that literary science needed new tasks and could not not hope for "the unchanged survival of our disciplines".

⁶⁷ Vaagan 1996b.

⁶⁸ Haugom Olsen 1987.

⁶⁹ Culler 1997:131-132.

⁷⁰ Maguire 1972.

"horizons of expectations"⁷¹ - could even be applied to the whole corpus of a given author's work, e.g. Voronskij. Indeed, the state of the arts in contemporary literary theory reveals a multitude of contending analytical approaches, from "reductionist" frameworks to grand theories, each with some level of explanatory power, each often purporting pre-eminence.⁷² As at a football match, where you sit or stand in literary analysis decides what you see.

Since I shall address Voronskij's life and his autobiography some comments on biographical analysis are necessary. Skei rates the biographical approach with its own particular focus and explanatory power as one of many relevant and valid analytical approaches to the literary text.⁷³ In the Voronskij research there have been interesting developments over the last 30 years. Whereas Maguire (1968, unrevised 1987) and Akimov (1979) and Neživoj (1983, 1988) had little to say about Voronskij's vita due to lack of data, Belaja (1987,1989) and especially Choate (1987,1998) later incorporated more biographical material which had become available. The relevance and validity of the biographical approach is a basic premise in this dissertation where I shall relate the content of and the development in Voronskij's literary aesthetics to the course of his life and career.

The framework of analysis adopted in the present dissertation is an amalgam of separate approaches. In parts 1 and 2 the approach is broadly historical-descriptive and contextual. In part 3 elements from biographical analysis and also hermeneutics are introduced to interpret the title of Voronskij's autobiography and the Valentin character. I also employ the typology of Lejeune and others to explain the autobiography's "double narrator".⁷⁴ In parts 4 and 5 I make use of qualitative (interpretative) content analysis borrowed from media research and communication theory,⁷⁵ and in part 5 I employ to some extent simple comparative cross-tabulations and in a concluding point even statistical cluster analysis.

⁷¹ Culler 1997:63.

⁷² Cf. e.g. Culler 1997; Jefferson, Robey 1986.

⁷³ Skei 1995:80-81.

⁷⁴ Lejeune 1989.

⁷⁵ Morris 1975:288; Larsen 1991:67ff.

This composite approach could perhaps best be termed "contextualism", as it facilitates the analysis of a given person's literary texts in a given historical *context*. I believe the applied framework of analysis has allowed me to pursue the objectives in a refreshing - perhaps even a provocative - way, in comparison with much of the literature listed in the bibliography. As to how satisfactorily this has been done and with what level of explanatory power, others must judge.

1.2.4 Literary criticism and literary aesthetics

Voronskij is often treated only as a literary critic. Since I view him in addition as a literary aesthetician, some distinctions are necessary. Literary criticism can be defined as:

[...] the reasoned discussion of literary works, an activity which may include some or all of the following procedures, in varying proportions: the defence of literature against moralists and censors, classification of a work according to its genre, interpretation of its meaning, analysis of its structure and style, judgement of its worth by comparison with other works, estimation of its likely effect on readers, and the establishment of general principles by which literary works (individually, in categories, or as a whole) can be evaluated and understood.[...].⁷⁶

Baldick distinguishes between theoretical, practical, impressionistic, affective, prescriptive and descriptive criticism, noting that:

[...]. Criticism concerned with revealing the author's true motive or intention (sometimes called "expressive" criticism) emerged from Romanticism to dominate much 19th and 20th century critical writing, but has tended to give way to "objective" criticism, focusing on the work itself (as in New Criticism and structuralism) and to a shift of attention to the reader in reader-response criticism. Particular schools of criticism also seek to understand literature in terms of its relation to history, politics, gender, social class, mythology, linguistic theory, or psychology. [...].⁷⁷

The last sentence includes Marxist literary criticism. It is self-explanatory from what has been stated earlier that Voronskij was a Marxist literary critic. This is also the premise of Choate in his doctoral dissertation entitled *Aleksandr K. Voronskii's*

⁷⁶ Baldick 1996:48.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

Literary Criticism. ⁷⁸ I shall argue that Voronskij sought the genesis of beautiful art and literature in the artist's psychology. In this sense I shall argue that his writing qualified more as literary aesthetics than literary criticism. The term "aesthetics" can be defined as a:

Philosophical investigation into the nature of beauty and the perception of beauty, especially in the arts; the theory of art or of artistic taste. ⁷⁹

Literary aesthetics involves the same investigation but limited to literature, i.e. prose and poetry. Voronskij's odyssey took him beyond literary criticism to literary aesthetics. His difficulties in reconciling Marxist utilitarianism with artistic beauty compelled him to include ethics, and he concluded by equating beauty with truth which he even made contingent on a measure of personal freedom.

⁷⁸ Choate 1987.

⁷⁹ Baldick 1996:3.

PART 2: AESTHETICS AND RUSSIA

In this part I first discuss further in 2.0 the term "literary aesthetics", before outlining in 2.1 some major features in the development of aesthetics in Russia prior to the October 1917 Revolution. Before discussing Marxist aesthetics¹ in 2.2, it should be noted that its predicament between art's socio-political utility and the enjoyment of its beauty *per se* was not a new feature in Russian intellectual history: As shown in 2.1 post-Petrine secular art and literature contained this dilemma in seminal form. The monolithic solution of the codified, unitary aesthetics of socialist realism from 1934 onwards had antecedents in pre-Petrine religious universalism. In 2.3 the major determinants of RKP(b) policy in the field of *belles-lettres* are outlined. These elements strongly influenced Voronskij's writing on aesthetics, which is dealt with later in parts 4-5.

2.0 Literary aesthetics - some further distinctions

"Aesthetics" is derived from the Greek *aisthetikos* = sensory, pertaining to sense perception (from *aistheta* = perceptible things; from *aisthenesthai* = to perceive, cf. also *aistetike episteme* = the science of the senses). As defined in 1.2.4 an "aesthetician" is a critic concerned with aesthetics. These concepts must be distinguished from the often pejoratively used terms "aestheticism" and "aesthete".² Literary aesthetics and literary aestheticians seek to provide theories of how beautiful literature comes about, e.g. explaining its characteristics, its genesis, construction or impact on readers, to mention a few possibilities.³ Thus Sheppard, who addresses mostly literary aesthetics, distinguishes among aesthetical theories of imitation,

¹ I use the term "Marxist aesthetics", not "Marxist-Leninist aesthetics". Similarly I refer to "Marxism", not to "Marxist-Leninism". The latter concept, which includes Lenin's adaptations of Marxism, only came into use from the mid-1920s (McCauley 1998:160ff.), and was not used by Voronskij. "Leninism" came into currency from 1923, when work commenced on the first edition of Lenin's collected works, and spread after Lenin's death in January 1924 when his deification accelerated (Figs 1997:804; McCauley 1998:160).

² Morris 1975:21; Cooper 1997:1.

³ Surkov 1975(VIII):964 noted the distinction in aesthetics between abstract beauty and craft. I shall disregard the possibility that literary aesthetics potentially involves also the craft of making a beautiful book.

expression, form and also "user-end" theories.⁴ A further justification for the term "literary aesthetics" in our context, and not just "aesthetics", is that Voronskij, as Maguire has observed, really meant literature when he spoke of art.⁵ Yet by what right do I interpret Voronskij as a literary aesthetician rather than an editor, a literary critic and theorist, and a writer of reminiscences? This is mostly a result of semantics and interpretation. Whereas I define "aesthetics" and operationalize its use, scholars who have noted its relevance in Voronskij's writings, e.g. Porebina (1964), Leleko (1979), Akimov (1979) or Neživoj (1988) used it in general terms and saw it as one of several aspects of his work.⁶ Maguire frequently invoked "esthetics",⁷ yet by not indexing the term cast doubt on its centrality. Choate used "aesthetics" almost indistinguishably from "criticism".⁸ In his recent anthology of Voronskij's writings Choate does index "aesthetics"⁹ but only as a result of its occurrence in Voronskij's articles, which he has translated. Belaja (1987) in her article on Voronskij's aesthetical views which prefaced Voronskij 1987a apparently used "aesthetics"

⁴ Sheppard 1988:145, cf. also Krogh 1996:312-314.

⁵ Maguire 1987:261.

⁶ Porebina 1964:143-146. Leleko 1979:3,23 e.g. refers to Voronskij's "estetiko-teoretičeskie raboty" and hails his contribution to the development of Soviet aesthetic thought. Akimov 1979:261ff. repeatedly referred to Voronskij's "idejno-estetičeskie" views and concluded by hailing Voronskij as an original and passionate theorist of the new socialist aesthetics (p.327). Interestingly Neživoj, who in an earlier study of Voronskij (Neživoj 1983) had little to say about aesthetics, in his doctoral dissertation (Neživoj 1988) found that aesthetics was one of the least studied aspects of Voronskij's work (p.8). In both studies he viewed Voronskij primarily as a literary critic and theorist. Yet in his doctoral dissertation he made some reflections on Voronskij's "aesthetical ideal", a concept which he conceded Voronskij did not use himself (p.28). He argued that Voronskij's aesthetical ideal was a "prototype of reality" (pp.16-128), while the key concept of beauty (p.22) was to be found in reality ("mir prekrasen sam po sebe"). He did not, as I do, identify beauty with truth and relate this equation with Voronskij's personal life. As stated earlier the dissertation in my view is marred in parts by political bias and also lack of biographical information.

⁷ Maguire 1987. A non-exhaustive list would comprise pp.76, 190, 193, 195, 196, 203, 211, 229, 254, 255, 258, 261, 263, 284, 285, 302, 304, 357, 377, 445.

⁸ Choate 1987. Viewing Voronskij as a literary critic "who contributed to Marxist esthetics"(p.2), he noted that Voronskij from 1924 embarked "on a bold, and many thought anti-Marxist, theoretical journey to define these particular aesthetic qualities" (pp.105-106). Yet he excluded aesthetics when stating that Voronskij's analysis was an "essential contribution to Marxist literary criticism" (p.11). Further, stating Voronskij was working on a longer article "devoted to questions of aesthetics" (p.111), he later refers to his "next articles of literary criticism" (p.134).

⁹ Choate 1998:513.

synonymously with "art".¹⁰ She did, though, touch on the main theme of this dissertation by stating that Voronskij in the late 1920s judged that even the best writers of the 1920s - for a variety of reasons - failed to resolve the dichotomy between ideology and art.¹¹

The cited authors have all acknowledged aesthetics as an important aspect of Voronskij's work, although in my view they have not defined it satisfactorily or attempted to operationalize the term and use it as I shall in parts 4-5. In doing so I see aesthetics as a primary motivating force and organizing principle in Voronskij's writings, especially from the mid-1920s when his difficulties began in earnest. From then I believe his disillusionment with developments in Soviet Russia directed his literary quest for beauty towards the concept of truth, two concepts he equated in 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928), to be discussed in part 4.

2.1 Aesthetics in Russia prior to October 1917

The advent of Christianity to Kievan Rus' in 988¹² was partly aesthetically motivated. The emissaries of Vladimir were reportedly so taken by the beauty and splendour of the Greek church service that Vladimir elected to adopt Byzantine Christianity.¹³ The arrival of Greek missionaries, introducing written Old Church Slavonic as well as the arrival of Byzantine artists and artisans,¹⁴ illustrated that art, crafts and literature were seen to serve primarily religious purposes. Medieval architecture, icon and fresco paintings, music and literature were aesthetically defined mostly in terms of religion, as e.g. the churches of Kiev, Vladimir and Muscovy and the large corpus of liturgical, hagiographic and patristic texts bore witness to. Even during the Mongol domination from c.1250 to the mid-1400s the Church's exemption from taxation to the Golden Horde made it the centre of Russian

¹⁰ Belaja 1987:12.

¹¹ *ibid.*p.9.

¹² Vladimir (980-1015) converted to Christianity in 988, having the same year married Anna, the younger sister of the Byzantine emperors Vassilij and Konstantin, and from that year Christianity was introduced as the official religion of Kievan Rus' (Paškov 1997:40).

¹³ Likhachov 1981:111; Bodin 1993:11-12.

¹⁴ Martin 1997:5-6.

civilization, and hagiography remained the main literary genre. The Church persecuted the folkloric tradition transmitted through the minstrels (*skomorochny*). Secular literature, e.g. folkloric and epic tales like *Slovo o polku Igoreve* (1185-1187), travel romances from the 1300-1400s or the medieval epic songs (*byliny*), though popular could not threaten the supremacy of a religiously defined aesthetics. Little else could be expected since both Kievan Rus', Vladimir and Muscovite Rus' defined themselves in religious, not secular, terms. After Ivan IV was crowned tsar in 1547 the autocratic tsar assumed God-like qualities compared with the (from 1589) patriarch. ¹⁵

Terras notes that certain aesthetic principles had always been axiomatic in Russian art. ¹⁶ The aesthetics of Old Russian art and literature served both *utilitarian* and *idealistic* purposes: on the one hand a work of art had a specific religious purpose and function, and on the other hand the same work of art was normally laden with symbolism and expressed the ideals and aspirations of the worshippers. Yet there was no marked dichotomy at this stage, as there would be later, between the *utility* and *pleasure* of art and literature: both were defined primarily in terms of religion.

In Russia the Renaissance of Western Europe made little impact in the face of an entrenched medieval belief in a God-created universe. The strong hold of hesychastic contemplative, non-logical mysticism from the 1300s onward, e.g. reflected in Andrej Rublov's (c.1340-1430) Trinity icon - Russia's most famous painting - only added to Russia's isolation from the West. ¹⁷ Bodin states that Russian intellectuals have often taken a negative view of the Renaissance and demonized its main component - the pre-Christian Greek Antiquity, which the Greek missionaries to Kievan Rus' had rejected. ¹⁸ Although Ivan III (1440-1505) in the 1470s let the Italian architect Aristotel Fioravanti build the Uspenskij cathedral at the Kremlin, he, out of respect to Russian tradition, insisted that it should be modelled on the 12th century Uspenskij cathedral at Vladimir, erected in commemoration of the Russian

¹⁵ Børtnes 1992:1ff.; Bodin 1993:12-14,70; Martin 1997:12-20; Kollmann 1997:52.

¹⁶ Terras 1985:9.

¹⁷ Ware 1963:72ff.; Bodin 1993:76ff.

¹⁸ Bodin 1993:86-87.

struggle against the Tatars and Mongols.¹⁹ Russian, or rather Muscovite, messianism in the shape of the idea of Moscow as "the Third and last Rome", though not sanctioned by the official Russian Orthodox Church, nevertheless reflected Russia's separateness from Western Europe.²⁰ Notwithstanding the weakened hold of the church and state over literature during the Time of Troubles 1606-1613 and the limited Westernization of literature heralded by Simeon Polotskij (1629-80), the religious orientation of art and literature largely prevailed until Peter I (1696-1725).²¹ His forcible Europeanization and secularization entailed a certain level of import of knowledge and technology. French and Italian architecture typified the new capital St. Petersburg, and customs, art and language came under Western influence, as the new encyclopedic journals from 1755 bore testimony to.²² Peter's abolition in 1721 of the Patriarchate was compounded by his successor's confiscation of monastic estates. From Peter's reign onwards art and literature no longer were only religious, but through enforced secularization and modernization "from above" acquired an

¹⁹ Burke 1993:35; Paškov 1997:173-174.

²⁰ The idea of Moscow as the Third and last Rome was first formulated in 1510 by the monk Philotheus of Pskov in a letter to tsar Vasilij III. It envisaged Moscow as the centre of Orthodox Christendom in the wake of, first, the Great Schism in 1054 between Rome and Constantinople, and secondly, as a result of the suppression of Constantinople in 1453 by the Muslim Ottomans (Krag 1932:8-20; Ware 1964:112ff.). After the establishment in 1589 of the Patriarchate in Moscow, the Russian Orthodox Church nevertheless only ranked fifth in the Orthodox hierarchy of autocephalous churches. Kollmann (1997:51) thus argues that whereas the idea played a minor role during the 1500s, it gained in popularity in the 1600s, primarily among the schismatic Old Believers, and that it was discredited by the official Church. Yet Bodin (1993:63ff.) links the theory to apocalyptic messianism and to imperialism, which interacted to project a vision of Muscovite Rossija from the late 1500s as the custodian of the right faith, a bulwark against Asia, and a protector of secular power in the face of the impending Last Judgement. The feeling that Russia had a historic, religiously sanctioned, leading mission internationally re-emerged in Slavophilism in the late 1800s (Ransel 1997:163ff.; Krag (1932) 1991), and later in utopism (Mørch 1997) and Bolshevism. Kalpani has e.g. argued that Russian messianism was a central motive in both the tsarist and Bolshevik policy of colonization and domination of the Caucasus and Central Asia:

"If the tsarist government sought justification for the colonization in Christianity and Russia's mission on earth as the Third Rome - the savior of mankind - the socialist government sought refuge in Marxism. There was an uncanny similarity between the two, each projected itself as the sole champion of truth and salvation with promises of paradise at the end of the road". (Kalpani 1997:110).

²¹ Børtnes 1992:32-34.

²² Alexander 1997:89-98. Torke 1997:55ff. makes the point that the Petrine reforms of Westernization e.g. in the army, finances and state administration, built upon changes initiated by his predecessors in the seventeenth century.

element of *l'art pour l'art*. This potential dilemma presented itself mostly to the small but affluent layer of Western-oriented aristocrats and also to intellectuals. The Slavophiles who emerged from around 1825 onwards rejected Peter's reforms. They were therefore less sensitized to the dilemma in aesthetics, as were the radical critics of the 1800s who viewed art and literature in didactic and utilitarian terms, as we shall see. Yet Peter's measures introduced for the first time the possibility of a predicament between the overall utility of art and literature versus the enjoyment of their artistic beauty *per se*.

In Western Europe this potential dilemma had been seminal in the heritage from pre-Christian Greek Antiquity, as the writings of Plato and Aristotle illustrated.²³ This tradition was not transmitted by Greek apostles to Kievan Rus', which helps explain the subsequent absent tradition of classical Greek secular learning and the attendant "cultural memory"²⁴ in Russia. In Western Europe, the term "aesthetics", while incorporating the Greek view of beauty as the qualifying trait of art, only acquired its modern meaning of "the philosophical theory of beauty" from around 1750 with Alexander Baumgarten's *Aesthetica* (1750-58). Art as a linguistic concept and practice (as distinct from artisanship, craft) only developed in Western Europe from the 1700s (cf. *l'art pour l'art*). The advent of modernism in Western Europe from around 1850 inaugurated the end of the simple paradigm that art is beautiful, and aesthetics is the philosophical theory of beauty.²⁵ As illustrated by e.g. the dadaistic and surrealist art of Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst, modernism did not equate "art" with "beauty".

In Russia aesthetics gained a foothold only from the 18th century onwards, influenced by Western classicism and expressed during the neo-classicist Russian Enlightenment (1730-1790) by writers such as Sumarokov, Lomonosov and Karamzin, who rejected the legacy of medieval Russia.²⁶ Classicist or neoclassicist aesthetics with its characteristic literary circles maintained a strong position in Russia

²³ Cooper 1997.

²⁴ Halbwachs 1950; Connerton 1989.

²⁵ Krogh 1996:311.

²⁶ Serman 1992:47ff.; Marker 1997:114ff.

throughout the age of sentimentalism and preromanticism (1790-1820). Its position started to wane in the age of romanticism (1820-1840). Although epitomized in Puškin's verse, the prose and poetry of Gogol' and Lermontov revealed few traces of neoclassical ideals.²⁷ The critic V. Belinskij (1811-48) inaugurated the era of literary realism from the late 1840s onwards.²⁸ He demanded that art and literature should reflect reality and also progressive and liberal thoughts. His Hegelian aesthetics were based on historical, national and social organicism. Defining art as "myšlenie v obrazach" (thinking in images), Belinskij rejected both aesthetic intellectualism, schematism and allegory, as well as aesthetic naturalism and formalism. He and his followers were ultimately more concerned by the social purpose of art and literature than their aesthetical form. A dilemma regarding the extent of art's and literature's autonomy in relation to their social utility came to typify much of the literary debate in Russia during the 19th century prior to the advent of Marxism. The radical solution of N.G.Černyševskij (1828-89) to this dilemma - formulated in *Ěstetičeskoe otnošenie iskusstva k dejstvitel'nosti* (1855) - was to denigrate the relative importance of art and literature, although stopping short of rejecting them completely, viewing them as merely an imitation of nature. Not coincidentally, an excessive interest in aesthetics was among the characteristics of the "superfluous man", alienated from society, in the Russian social novel of the 1800s. Černyševskij by contrast emphasized the utilitarian, didactic and social roles of art and literature. In the words of Freeborn the cited work:

[...] formulated the principles upon which literary critics, by then quite numerous, would judge and interpret the literary masterpieces shortly to be produced. Černyševskij's was a straightforwardly materialistic esthetic, based on the central propositions that "the beautiful is life" and that art is in every meaningful sense inferior to a reality subject to rational comprehension. His critical followers elaborated upon his ideas with such enthusiasm that by 1865 his doctrine had become the dominant critical view. [...].²⁹

Similar to Voronskij, Černyševskij was the son of a priest and Voronskij

²⁷ Altshuller 1992: 92ff.; Mersereau 1992:136.

²⁸ Peace 1992:189ff.; Freeborn 1992:248ff.; Ransel 1997:164ff.

²⁹ Freeborn 1992:248; cf. also Freeze 1997a:191-193.

mentions his grave in Saratov in his autobiography.³⁰ This line of reasoning was taken a step further by D.I. Pisarev (1840-68), who argued in *Razrušenie éстетiki* (1865) that there was no need for aesthetics as an independent field of enquiry,³¹ a view which permeated his own strictly social and utilitarian literary criticism. He instead asserted the primacy of natural science. Among other radical pre-Marxist critics who were strongly influenced by Belinskij were N.A. Dobroľjubov (1836-61),³² who rejected literature not expressive of contemporary problems - a view that e.g. led him to oppose the fairy tales of Afanas'ev (cf. 3.4.2), and the sociologist N.K. Michajlovskij (1842-1904), who became the intellectual leader of the social revolutionaries, the heirs to the populists (*narodniki*).³³ Michajlovskij equated progress with everything that served to develop most aspects of each individual. This group of critics, much more than the Marxists, shaped Russian social debate and literary criticism during the last half of the 19th century. These radical critics had in common an emphasis on the social, didactic, moral and utilitarian aspects of art and literature and, in consequence, also a rejection of aesthetics as *l'art pour l'art*. Towards the end of last century, however, literary criticism came under the influence of views that focussed on the object of art *per se*. The advent of modernism in Russia from around 1895³⁴ ushered in the major modernist trends prior to 1917 - symbolism, acmeism and futurism, as discussed in 1.1. Among the symbolists Belyj expounded views which Helle (1992) in her analysis of *Peterburg* (1916) interprets in terms of aesthetics and even "pan-aesthetics." Yet as Voronskij's literary portrait of Belyj also illustrates (cf. 5.6.2), Marxists rejected symbolism - and Belyj's anthroposophy - as symptoms of pre-revolutionary bourgeois decadence, a view Helle opposes.³⁵

³⁰ Voronskij 1970:424-425.

³¹ Belaja 1987:15.

³² Neživoj 1988:354 emphasizes - apart from Belinskij and Plechanov - the importance of Dobroľjubov to Voronskij's thinking on literature.

³³ Freeze 1997a:192; Zelnick 1997:203.

³⁴ Bristol 1992: 387ff.; Vaagan 1996a:9.

³⁵ Helle 1992:5ff.

Lev Tolstoj (1828-1910) has occasionally been included in Western textbooks on aesthetics, but mostly to illustrate implausible moralism.³⁶ In Soviet Russia his immense stature as the genius creator of *War and Peace (Vojna i Mir)* and *Anna Karenina* was tempered by an ideological rejection of his religious moralism from around 1880 onwards.³⁷ I find it natural to include him here because his *Čto takoe iskusstvo* (1897-98) vexed Plechanov, Voronskij's teacher. Moreover, Voronskij and other Marxists later hailed Tolstoj's literary technique, especially "snjatje pokrovov", (as opposed to his ideology) as an example to be emulated by young aspiring Soviet writers. Both Plechanov and later Voronskij argued explicitly against Tolstoj's narrow definition of art, since they felt he deliberately diminished the role of art so that it might fit conveniently into his religious worldview. Tolstoj argued that art must express emotions and be capable of *infecting* humanity with the same emotions. Since such emotions could be good or bad, Tolstoj predictably conceived only of two types of art: good or bad art. The exclusiveness of e.g. Shakespeare, Beethoven and Puškin, beyond the confines of the simple *mužik* whom Tolstoj idolized, therefore made their work bad art, in Tolstoj's view.

Before turning to Marxism, we need only note in passing that the aesthetics of the Russian later symbolists, like Vj.Ivanov, Blok and Belyj, were influenced especially by the philosopher Solov'ev. Based on Schelling's Neo-Platonism, they viewed art not just as the presentation of an idea, but as its actual incarnation. As we shall see in parts 3,4 and 5 Voronskij rejected most pre-revolutionary literature, equating it with symbolism, philistinism and religious mysticism. To Marxists, the pessimism, metaphysics and religious mysticism of *fin-de-siecle* modernists only reflected the disintegration of the bourgeoisie as a class.

2.2 Marxist aesthetics

Before addressing the bewildering complexities of Soviet Marxist aesthetics,³⁸ some words on Marxism are appropriate. M.C.Beardsley, a leading proponent of

³⁶ Cooper 1997:164.

³⁷ Kolstø 1994:73ff.; Kjetsaa 1999:173ff.

³⁸ Cf. Surkov 1975(VIII):964-967.

American New Criticism, in a discussion of Marxism asserted that:

[...]. The Marxist is a Moralist with a peculiarly narrow set of morals, for he judges all behavior with respect to a simple goal, the advancement of the revolutionary proletariat toward a classless society. Ethics is reduced to politics [...] aesthetic objects cannot be politically neutral. [...].³⁹

The founding fathers of Marxism no doubt entertained a more flattering view of the all-embracing ideology they founded around the middle of last century: In formulating their theses concerning dialectic materialism, presented in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), Karl Marx (1818-83) and Friedrich Engels (1820-95) combined Hegelian idealism with French utopian socialism, British political economy and Feuerbach's materialism. They believed their theses were vindicated in the natural sciences with Darwin's *Origins of the Species* (1859). Marxists have claimed that dialectic materialism is "an anti-metaphysical and consistent, scientific-materialistic world-view, a theory of cognition and a method", i.e. nothing less than a universally applicable, scientifically infallible model of explanation of all former, present and future human behaviour. Moreover, Marxism is purportedly a "living teaching in continuous development".⁴⁰ The dynamic aspect was important to Marx and Engels. They viewed dialectic materialism as the highest form of cognition in the history of human development, but stressed its evolutionary and dynamic character and its continuity with European thinking all the way back to Aristotle. In their rejection of all former thinking, culture and art Soviet Marxists adhering to Bogdanov's Proletkul't movement 1917-20 and subsequent proponents of "vulgar Marxism" in the 1930s broke decisively with a basic tenet of Marxism. Dissension over the relevance of the classical Russian and European literary heritage was to become a major point of contention in the literary disputes in Soviet Russia during the 1920s. This is also why I have operationalized this point into one of 8 parameters in parts 4 and 5. As we shall see Trockij, Bucharin and Lunačarskij were among the prominent party officials who advocated an eclectic attitude to the classics, a view

³⁹ Beardsley 1958:567.

⁴⁰ Berglund 1978:47-51.

repeatedly defended by Voronskij, e.g. in "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach".⁴¹

Despite the ideology they formulated, Marx and Engels were personally sympathetic to the classics and to bourgeois writers like Fielding, Balzac and the Russian realists.⁴² Possibly they saw no contradiction in this in view of the theory of "false consciousness", i.e. a writer may give artistic expression to an ideology that the artist does not identify with. This was the case with Balzac, in Marx' view.⁴³ Marx and Engels' comments on art and literature were, moreover, rudimentary and partly inconsistent. Literary criticism narrowly defined, i.e. separated from economic and socio-political considerations, was rare in their case. The correspondence between Marx and Ferdinand Lasalle in 1875 regarding Lasalle's play *Franz von Sickingen* (1859) is thus the only example of Marx limiting his comments to purely literary categories. In their comments to this play Marx and Engels nevertheless employ a threefold approach: art is seen at times as dependent on social conditions, at other times as a completely independent quantity and even at times as a political instrument.⁴⁴ Influenced by Hegelian idealism and Kantian aesthetics, Marx and Engels here explicitly acknowledge a distinction between aesthetic enjoyment, such as admiring a work of art like Venus of Milo, and the utilitarian purpose and function of art in societal relations and in the class struggle. Since the progenitors of Marxism thus accepted the dilemma described earlier in 2.0, it was not surprising that Russian Marxists followed suit.

In a sense Russian messianism found a new vehicle with the advent of Marxism in Russia the late 1870s. When Marx's *Kapital* passed the tsarist censorship and was published in Russian in 1873, this was the book's first foreign publication, and it proved an instant success among Russian radicals and populists. The popularity of Marxism in Russia derived from its apparently superior, scientific, explanatory value with regard to contemporary issues compared to the solutions propagated by the

⁴¹ *Prožektor* 1923#12:14-21, cf. 4.2.6 and 7.3 -7.4.

⁴² Demetz 1959, 1967; Arvon 1973.

⁴³ Arvon 1973:33.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* p. 12.

romantics of the 1840s, nihilists of the 1860s and populists of the 1870s.⁴⁵ Many Russian intellectuals and Westernizers (*zapadniki*) were drawn to Marxism precisely because it derived from Western Europe. Its application in Russia was also seen as an antidote to Slavophilism in that it drew Russia towards advanced Europe and away from backward, peasant semi-Asiatic Russia.⁴⁶

The founder of Russian Marxism V. Plechanov (1857-1918), whom Voronskij considered an intellectual mentor, shared Marx's basic view with regard to art and *belles-lettres*. Plechanov's main field of interest was political, economic and social conditions.⁴⁷ Yet as argued repeatedly by Voronskij, and later also by others⁴⁸, Plechanov deals with art and literature in several of his works. Plechanov rejected Pisarev's "razrušenie estetiki", and propounded a partial and qualified rehabilitation of aesthetics.⁴⁹ In practice this became a "sociological aesthetics", in which sociology never became harmonized with aesthetics - in fact, as we have seen, an age-old dilemma that also Voronskij inherited.

In *Pis'ma bez adresa* (1899-1900) Plechanov takes Tolstoj's *Čto takoe iskusstvo?* (1898) which was much discussed at the time, as a point of departure. In contrast with Tolstoj who emphasized the emotive and communicative role of art, Plechanov stressed art's rational and social function:

[...]. Po mneniju gr. Tolstogo, "iskusstvo načinaetsja togda, kogda čelovek , s cel'ju peredat' drugim ljudjam ispytannoe im čuvstvo, snova vyzivaet ego v sebe i izvestnymi vnešnimi znakami vyražat ego". Ja že dumaju, čto iskusstvo načinaetsja togda, kogda čelovek snova vyzivaet v sebe čuvstva i *mysli*, ispytannye im pod vlijaniem okružajuščej ego dejstvitel'nosti, i *pridaet im izvestnoe obraznoe vyraženie*. Samo soboju razumeetsja, čto v ogromnejšem bol'sinstve slučaev on delaet eto s cel'ju peredat' peredumannoe i perečuvstvovannoe im *drugim ljudjam*. Iskusstvo est' *obščestvennoe* javlenie. [...].⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Acton 1995:108-109.

⁴⁶ Bodin 1993:88; Zelnik 1997:210ff.; Figes 1997:139-141.

⁴⁷ Acton 1995:108-109.

⁴⁸ Demetz 1959,1967.

⁴⁹ Belaja 1987:15.

⁵⁰ Plechanov 1948:43 ([...]. According to count Tolstoj "art begins when man, in order to transmit to others an experienced feeling, again calls this feeling forth and expresses it through known external

Plechanov's argumentation was to a large extent generated by his opposition to Darwinism and his efforts to convert Russian Darwinists to Marxism. He e.g. attempted to refute the Darwinist views of Michajlovskij who in *Russkoe bogatstvo* had contrasted Darwin's significant scientific results with Marx's paradigms. More than Marx and Engels Plechanov availed himself of detailed anthropological studies to show the relativity of aesthetics in different societies and that art is always subject to labour and social relations. In *Francuzskaja dramatičeskaja literatura i francuzskaja žīvopis' XVIII veka s točki zrenija sociologii* (1905) he also discusses Kantian aesthetics, especially the possibility of selfless individual enjoyment of beauty:

[...]. Kant govoril, čto naslaždenie, kotoroe opredeljaet suždenie vkusa, svobodno ot vsjakogo interesa, i čto to suždenie o krasote, k kotoromu primešivaetsja malejšij interes, očen' partijno i otnjud' ne est' čistoe suždenie vkusa. [...] "Izučenie iskusstva pervobytnych plemen pokazalo, čto obščestvennij čelovek snačala smotrit na predmety i javlenija s točki zrenija utilitarnoj i tol'ko vposledstvii perechodit, v svoem otnošenii k nekotorym iz nich, na točku zrenija éstetičeskiju. [...] Pol'za poznaetsja rassudkom; krasota - sozercatel'noj sposobnost'ju. Oblast' pervoj - rasčet; oblast' vtoroj - instinkt. [...] Glavnaja otličatel'naja čerta éstetičeskogo naslaždenija - ego neposredstvennost' [...]. No imenno potomu, čto my imeem v vidu ne odel'noe lico, a obščestvo (plemja, narod, klass), u nas ostaetsja mesto i dlja kantovskogo vzgljada na étot vopros: suždenie vkusa nesomnenno predpolagaet otsutstvie vsjakich utilitarnych soobraženij u individuuma, ego vyskazyvajuščego.[...].⁵¹

Plechanov therefore did not resolve the dilemma that always had characterized aesthetics. Plechanov's aesthetics, and later Voronskij's, were also caught between the

signs". I, though, believe that art begins when man again calls forth in himself feelings and *thoughts*, experienced by him under the influence of the reality surrounding him, and gives them a *known form of expression*. It goes without saying that in most instances man does this in order to transmit to others what he has considered and felt. Art is a social manifestation [...]).

⁵¹ *ibid.* pp.186-187 ([...]. Kant stated that enjoyment, which defines the judgement of taste, is free of any interest, and that a judgement of beauty which in the slightest is affected by interest, is very partisan and not at all a clear judgement of taste [...]. The study of art in primordial tribes has shown that societal man initially regarded objects and appearances from a utilitarian point of view and only later changed, in his relations to some of them, to the aesthetic point of view [...]. Utility is acknowledged by our rationality; beauty by our contemplative ability. The domain of the first is calculation, of the second - instinct [...]. The principal distinguishing feature of aesthetic enjoyment is its indirectness [...]. But exactly because we have in mind not an individual person, but society (tribe, people, class) we still have room also for the Kantian view of this question: *the judgement of taste undoubtedly presupposes the absence of any utilitarian consideration, also by the individual who utters it [...].*)

Scylla and Charybdis of utility versus *l'art pour l'art*. This dilemma, as we have seen, made its entry in Russia with post-Petrine art and literature. In the West it can be traced all the way back to Antiquity, in the emphasis on the ethical and moral aspects of art as we see in Plato (427-347), and in Aristoteles' (384-323) thoughts on art as *mimesis* and *katarsis*.⁵² Yet, as noted, the Greek Antiquity and the Renaissance were unknown quantities to most Russians. Some 2000 years later the same dilemma was expressed in the aesthetics of I.Kant (1724-1804).⁵³

The predicament between the socio-political utility versus experiencing the beauty of art and literature *per se* is very pronounced in *Iskusstvo i obščestvennaja žizn'* (1912-13). Plechanov compares French and Russian art and literature in the 1800s, comments i.a. on Hamsun, criticizes Z.Gippius etc. He identifies initially two diametrically opposite views of art and literature: the *utilitarian*, especially Russian literature of the 1860s as expressed by critics like Černyševskij and Dobroľjubov, and in the extreme by Pisarev, and *l'art pour l'art*. The latter characterized romanticism and found its foremost exponent in Russia in the disillusioned Puškin after the failed Decembrist uprising in 1825, as exemplified in his poem "Čern" (The mob).⁵⁴ *L'art pour l'art* is expressive of the intractable contradiction between the artist and his social environment. Art as the obedient servant of politics, however, has nothing to do with aesthetics, and is a phenomenon that Plechanov presumes will evaporate together with class distinctions:

[...]. Flober govorit: "L'art c'est la recherche de l'inutile" ("Iskusstvo iščet bespoleznogo"). [...] No uvlečenie etoj mysl'ju označait liš' vosstanie chudožnika protiv uzkoġo utilitarizma dannogo gospodstvujščego klassa ili soslovija... S ustraneniem klassov ustranitsja i etot uzkiġ utilitarizm, blizkiġ rodstvennik svoekorystija. Svoekorystie ne imeet ničego obščego s eštetikoġ: suždenie vkusa vseġda predpolagaet otsutstvie soobraženij ličnoġ polzy u lica,

⁵² Skirbekk, Gilje 1996 (I):166. Bodin 1993:46,86 convincingly argues that the Greek Orthodox Church was negative to the pre-Christian, heathen art and culture of Greek antiquity and that this was, therefore, not part of the prozelytizing of Greek missionaries to Kievan Rus'. Later, by preferring Byzantine hesychasm to Western European Renaissance, Russia again missed an opportunity of discovering the ideals of Greek Antiquity. This may partly explain the frequent lack of reference by Russian and Soviet writers to Western classics like Aristotle and Plato.

⁵³ Skirbekk og Gilje 1996 (II):102ff.

⁵⁴ This poem was later unjustly used by the radical critics of the mid 1850s, especially Pisarev, to characterize Puškin's entire output as *l'art pour l'art*, cf. Vaagan 1999b:ix-x and 2000b.

ego vyskazyvajuščego. [...].⁵⁵

According to Plechanov propaganda art had always been preferred by both reactionary and revolutionary regimes (!). In marked contrast with Lenin, Plechanov stated that art must evaluate itself. He explicitly condemned art that subjected itself to political dictate, and e.g. viewed Gor'kij's *Mat'* (1908), which Lenin praised, as propaganda.⁵⁶ It is significant that Voronskij's main inspirator maintained that art and literature should not be reduced to mere instruments of party policy, the very opposite of what Lenin argued (cf. below). As we shall see in part 4, this helps explain why Voronskij's literary aesthetics were composed of both ideological and artistic elements.

Plechanov viewed many modernist aspects in Russian art as expressions of pathological bourgeois subjectivism. In *Predislovie k tret'emu izdaniju sbornika "Za dvadcat' let"* (1908) he diagnosed as pathological both the mystical anarchism of Čulkov, Lunačarskij's "god building" (*bogostroitel'stvo*) and the erotics of Arcybašev.⁵⁷ As we shall see in 5.6.2 Voronskij would later reject Belyj on the same grounds. In the same work Plechanov identified the task of the literary critic to be the clarification of those aspects of a society or class' consciousness which are expressed in a literary work:

[...]. Kritiki-idealisti školy Gegelja - a meždu nimi i naš genial'nyj Belinskij v sootvetstvennuju epochu svoego razvitija - govorili, čto zadača filosofskoj kritiki zaključaetsja v tom, čtoby ideju, vyražennuju chudožnikom v svoem proizvedenii, perevesti s jazyka iskusstva na jazyk filosofii, s jazyka obrazov na jazyk logiki. V kačestve stornnika materialističeskogo mirovozzrenija ja skažu, čto pervaja zadača kritika sostoit v tom, čtoby perevesti ideju dannogo chudožestvennogo proizvedenija s jazyka iskusstva na jazyk sociologii, čtoby najti to, čto možet byt' nazvano sociologičeskim ékvivalentom dannogo

⁵⁵ Plechanov 1948:266 ([...].Flaubert states: "L'art c'est la recherche de l'inutile" (Art searches uselessness) [...]. But the attraction of this idea only signifies the artist's uprising against the narrow utilitarianism of a given ruling class or conditions... With the disappearance of classes this narrow utilitarianism, a close relative of self-interest, will also disappear. Self-interest has nothing in common with aesthetics: the judgement of taste always presupposes the absence of considerations of personal advantage in the individual who utters it [...]).

⁵⁶ *ibid.* pp.214-215.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* p.214.

Plechanov's "marriage" between Marxism and Kantian idealism was problematic, and his aesthetics did not escape the age-old dilemma described previously. His critics, like Lunačarskij, accused Plechanov of "objectivism" (In 1908 Plechanov had accused Lunačarskij of "subjectivism" on account of his propagation of *bogostroitel'stvo*). Lenin accused Plechanov of treachery towards Bolshevism. Only after a positive review by Lenin in 1921 was the Menshevik Plechanov, who had died in May 1918, rehabilitated. He was thereafter referred to positively by Trockij and others as a leading Marxist.

Before we leave Plechanov, we should also mention his scepticism to the concept of "the personality". In *Iskusstvo i obščestvennaja žizn'* he ironically refers to a book by the Cubists Gleize and Metzinger which rejects external reality and alternatively seeks "the essential" in a sophistic understanding of the human personality.⁵⁹ In consequence, Plechanov could not, contrary to what Voronskij later did, leave much room for human psychology and the role of e.g. intuition, the subconscious and irrationality. Plechanov interpreted art and literature in the perspective of an anthropological-evolutionary development process as a mirror of social relations. Plechanov's Marxism, however, accepted aesthetical judgements which were not subject to political *fiat*. He was also critical of the otherwise promising Gor'kij's self-centred *Isposed'* (1908), and - as noted - he stated that *Mat'* (1908) confirmed that Gor'kij did not know what Marxism was.⁶⁰

Voronskij considered Plechanov "the best Marxist art critic"⁶¹, and he is rated

⁵⁸ *ibid.* pp.207-208 ([...].The critical-idealist school of Hegel - and moreover our ingenuous Belinskij in the corresponding epoch of his development - stated that the task of the philosophical critic consisted of transmitting the ideas of the artist in his work from the language of art into the language of philosophy, from the language of form into the language of logic.As an adherent of a materialist world conception, I state that the primary task of the critic, in order to transmit the idea of a given work of art from the language of art to the language of sociology, consists in finding that which can be termed the sociological equivalent of the given literary work [...]).

⁵⁹ *ibid.* pp.262-263.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ "Zametki ob iskusstve", *KN* 1925#6(31):260-276; cf. 4.2.9 and 7.3-7.4.

as Voronskij's "favourite teacher" in *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*.⁶² Nothing suggests, though, that they ever met or were personally acquainted. In the obituary "G.V.Plechanov (1918-1920gg)"⁶³ Voronskij does not conceal the Menshevik Plechanov's "tactical" errors in relation to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, but he praises Plechanov's immense erudition and unique importance to Russian Marxism and to Marxism in general. Voronskij also points out that Plechanov's contributions as a literary critic are less known and should be studied. It would be a crime to ignore Plechanov's brilliant and unsurpassed work in literary criticism solely because of his tactical errors.⁶⁴ It would have been easier to accept Voronskij's high appraisal of Plechanov had not later proponents of social and economic determinism ("vulgar Marxism") like V.F.Friče (1870-1929) and V.G.Pereverzev (1882-1969) also claimed inspiration from Plechanovite aesthetics.⁶⁵

The complete subordination of art and literature to party directive only emerged with V.I.Lenin (1870-1924). In a sense this was a return to pre-Petrine times when art and literature also primarily served ideological (i.e. religious) purposes. In "Partijnaja organizacija i partijnaja literatura" (1905)⁶⁶ Lenin i.a. rejected any literary activity by party members that did not advance the party's interests (*partijnost'*), a policy he implemented from October 1917.⁶⁷ Lenin, who had studied classics and literature at the gymnasium in Simbirsk, was arguably as much influenced by Russian radicals like P.Tkačev (1844-1886) and Černyševskij as by Marx. Lenin's insistence on the need for an elitist and conspiratorial party was e.g. derived from Tkačev.⁶⁸ Lenin's article from 1905 has occasioned discussion as to whether he was only

⁶² Voronskij 1970:418.

⁶³ The obituary first appeared in *Rabočij kraj* on 30 May 1920 under the title "Pamjati G.V.Plechanova" and was republished in *Na styke* (Voronskij 1923). Cf. also Choate 1998:27-30.

⁶⁴ Voronskij 1923:284.

⁶⁵ Belaja 1989:77ff.;331.

⁶⁶ Lenin 1960 (XII):99-105.

⁶⁷ Ironically Lenin himself became a victim of this after his death in January 1924 when his embalmed body - contrary to his own and Krupskaja's wishes - were exhibited by Stalin to advance party propaganda, in a manner that many have found not only extremely utilitarian, but also extremely anti-aesthetical.

⁶⁸ Figes 1997:142, 177.

addressing party members and also included *belles-lettres*. Lenin's apologists, including his wife Krupskaja, later asserted he only meant to include party propaganda and agitational literature, a view refuted by Carr.⁶⁹ In the collection of articles entitled *O iskusstve i kulture* (1979) Lenin is attributed a more nuanced view:

[...]. There are doubtless literary activities which hardly can sustain a mechanistic equality, a minority's domination of a majority. There is no doubt that in this area it is essential to secure action of freedom for thought and fantasy, for form and contents. [...].⁷⁰

This more pragmatic view would seem more consistent with Lenin's defence of the fellow travellers in *Pravda* 25 October 1922.⁷¹ His defence had been occasioned by an article written by Pletnev, Bogdanov's successor and the new leader of Proletkul't, in *Pravda* 27 September 1922, which was severely critical of the fellow travellers. Lenin's argument was consistent: Analogous to the Bolshevik reliance on bourgeois military and industrial experts during the civil war 1918-20 and later, under NEP the fellow travellers were necessary in Soviet culture. Lenin had little choice other than retaining many tsarist institutions, which were only renamed, and many of the tsarist civil service personnel and specialists.⁷² Yet Lenin's intervention in support of the fellow travellers in *belles-lettres* did not signify a lessening of his hatred of bourgeois intellectuals. In a letter to Lenin from Germany, Gor'kij in 1922 expressed concern for the intellectuals. In his answer dated 15 September 1922, Lenin referred to the Russian intellectuals as "the lackeys of capital who imagine they are the nation's brain. In reality they are the nation's shit".⁷³ In the autumn of 1922 in a long dispatch to Stalin Lenin identified a number of individuals to be deported and several journals to be curtailed. Stalin transferred the dispatch to GPU's leader

⁶⁹ Carr 1958 (I):46.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Arvon 1973:16.

⁷¹ Several of these articles edited by Lenin, but written nominally by Jakovlev, are referred to in Voronskij's "O proletarsom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (*KN* 1923#7(17): 257-276, cf.4.2.7 and 7.4.

⁷² Carr 1958 (I):63; Orlovsky 1997:251-252.

⁷³ Quoted in Volkogonov 1994a (II):184.

Dzeržinskij as an order from Lenin.⁷⁴ Privately Lenin - like Marx and Engels - had very conventional tastes in literature and art; he e.g. disapproved of modernist *avant-garde* literature like Majakovskij's poem "150,000,000".

In 2 articles about Tolstoj, Lenin emphasizes that literature does not blindly reproduce reality, but rather mirrors it.⁷⁵ Put differently, the object of art mirrors the contradictions and elements which reality contains. It is the mission of the revolutionary to disclose the inherent ideology of the literary work. Behind Tolstoj's "false consciousness"⁷⁶ Lenin detects the "social equivalent" of the Russian peasants. Tolstoj has succeeded in investing his protagonist with historic necessity. Lenin interprets this as nascent peasant resistance to capitalism. Voronskij first experienced Lenin in 1905; thereafter they met at the Prague conference in January 1912 and several times after 1918. Lenin only appeared once in *KN*, in the first issue of *KN*, with the article "O prodovol'stvennom naloge".⁷⁷

Lev Trockij (1879-1940) will be dealt with in greater detail in 3.2.5. Suffice it to say here that in terms of art and literature, Trockij was unique among the Soviet leaders in formulating articulate ideas in book form.⁷⁸ His views on contemporary literature in part 1 of *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) had appeared as articles 1922-23 in *Pravda*,⁷⁹ and were subsequently printed by the publishing house *Krasnaja nov'*. Sparing none in his diagnosticism of Russian and Soviet literature, he was still in favour of literary pluralism and experimentation. He thereby echoed Lenin's defence in 1922 of the fellow travellers, coined "literaturnye popučiki" by Trockij.⁸⁰ Since the Soviet state under NEP accepted different economic forms of production, it also

⁷⁴ *ibid.* pp.179-180. Cf. also Pipes 1998:168-169,174.

⁷⁵ "Tolstoj as a Mirror of the Russian Revolution", written in Geneva 1908, and "Tolstoj and his Age", written in St.Petersburg 1911. Lenin wrote in all 5 articles 1908-11 about Tolstoj, cf. Wellek 1991:304; Rønning 1974:177-79 and Forgacs 1986:171.

⁷⁶ Arvon 1973:33.

⁷⁷ *KN* 1921#1:66-88.

⁷⁸ Volkogonov (I-II) 1994b; Trockij 1991; Broué 1988.

⁷⁹ Choate 1987:71ff.

⁸⁰ Trockij 1923:41ff. Choate 1987:58 cites Trifonov to the effect that the term was coined in 1920 by Lunačarskij.

had to accept different forms of literary production.⁸¹ Though Trockij's main criterium for judging writers remained their "correct" understanding of, and attitude to, the October Revolution, he did acknowledge that the revolution might express itself in different ways in the "transitional society" headed towards what he saw as world revolution and ultimately world communism. Under the "dictatorship of the proletariat" there was in his view no need for, and no reason to encourage, a particular proletarian literature. Voronskij got acquainted with Trockij probably in 1921 after his promotion to Moscow and *KN*. Both were intellectuals, internationally oriented, and both believed Soviet literature must be based on the best in European literature.

By October 1923 Trockij had become severely compromised in the party, as shown in 3.2.5.⁸² Accusations of "Trotskyism", interpreted as a heretical Menshevik deviation from the doctrines of Lenin, played a pivotal role in Voronskij's downfall. In his autobiography Trockij does not mention *Literatura i revoljucija*, which suggests that *belles-lettres* was of marginal interest to him, and Voronskij is listed only once, as "lučšego našego literaturnogo kritika" (our best literary critic).⁸³

N.I.Bucharin (1888-1938) served as editor 1918-29 of *Pravda*, in which Voronskij published about 10 articles 1921-26, cf. 7.2. Bucharin was also co-editor with Voronskij of *Prožektor* 1923-27. He was a candidate member of the Politburo from the 8th Party Congress in March 1919, and advanced to full member at the 13th Congress in June 1924, until his exclusion in November 1929.⁸⁴ Bucharin had been a regular contributor to *KN* since the first issue until 1925, which indicates Voronskij's proximity to him until mid-1925.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Trockij 1923:91-116.

⁸² Carr 1959 (II):77-79; Volkogonov 1994b (II):20ff.; Figes 1997:802-804.

⁸³ Trockij (1930), 1991:539.

⁸⁴ Bucharin assumed responsibility for press and propaganda matters after the assassination in June 1918 in Petrograd of Volodarskij, the People's Commissar for the press, propaganda and agitation (Wieczynski 1977(V):237-238; Volkogonov 1994a (I):330; Figes 1997:626-627; McCauley 1998:261-262.

⁸⁵ "Kavalerijskij rejđ i tjaželaja artellerija" by N. Bucharin (and G.Pjatakov) *KN* 1921#1:251-274; "Nastojščaja potecha i nastojščaja mučenje" *KN* 1921#2:313-320; "Po skučnoj doroge. Otvet moim kritikam" *KN* 1923#1(11):275-289; "Enčmenjada" *KN* 1923#6(16):145-178; "O mirovoj revoljucii, našej strane, kul'ture i pr. (otvet prof. I. Pavlova)" *KN* 1924#1(18):170-188 and *KN* 1924#2(19):104-119; "O formal'nom metode v iskusstve" *KN* 1925#3 (28):248-257 and finally "Proletariat i voprosy

After Lenin's death Bucharin became the highest-ranking spokesman for NEP, emphasizing the need for co-operation between the peasants - the overwhelming majority of the population - and industrial workers.⁸⁶ Bucharin was an opponent of Trockij in the early 1920s and of the trojka Trockij-Kamenev-Zinov'ev from the mid-1920s. He was among the founders of Komintern (chairman 1927-29) and in many instances played a vital role in the field of *belles-lettres*. Known as a leading Marxist theorist, he e.g. supported, as did Trockij, Voronskij's advocacy of continued party liberalism and acceptance of the fellow travellers at the May 1924 debate in the Party Press Section. From 1924, coinciding with Trockij's overall diminished role, Bucharin as a newly elected full member of the Politburo involved himself in *belles-lettres* in support of the fellow travellers, and he took part in the meeting convened in July 1924 by Trockij of high-ranking politicians and critics sympathetic to the fellow travellers, cf. 3.2.5. In February 1925 he was the main speaker at a discussion in the CK RKP(b) on literary issues. His speech "Proletariat i voprosy chudožestvennoj politiki" was published in *KN* as noted. In it he defended the fellow travellers by directing a strong attack at VAPP's efforts to set up a literary monopoly, and he made an appeal for literary pluralism.⁸⁷

Bucharin was also the only one among the Soviet leadership with first hand experience from Scandinavia: He had i.a. lived in Christiania (Oslo) in 1916, and his favourite Scandinavian writer was Knut Hamsun.⁸⁸ In view of their co-operation as co-editors of *Prožektor* and their good relations suggested by Bucharin's appearances in *KN* 1921-25 and Voronskij's in *Pravda* 1921-26 (cf. 7.2), Bucharin may well have helped motivate Voronskij's decision to portray for the first time in *KN* a foreign writer - Hamsun.⁸⁹

chudožestvennoj politiki" *KN* 1925#4(9):263-272 referred to earlier. Stenographic notes of the last article are located at RGALI, cf. 7.11 footnote 3.

⁸⁶ Wieczynski 1977 (V):238; Acton 1995:199.

⁸⁷ Carr 1959 (II):82. Cf. also the abbreviated German translation by Eimermacher 1972:288-294.

⁸⁸ Kan 1993:169.

⁸⁹ Voronskij was probably also influenced by Gor'kij's high esteem of Hamsun, who had been well-known in tsarist-Russia from around 1906 (Vaagan 1996). In a letter to Hamsun in January 1923, written the same day Gor'kij had finished reading *Growth of the Soil*, he writes i.a. that "I have always considered you as one of the greatest artists in Europe" (Kjetsaa 1994:271-272).

There is little doubt that Voronskij, following Trockij's diminished role from October 1923, appreciated Bucharin's support. In a letter to Gor'kij dated 6 March 1925 (cf. 3.2.7) Voronskij wrote "V verchach napostovcy terpjat poraženija. Delu etomu pomogaet t. Bucharin".⁹⁰ Voronskij was referring to the work of the literary commission of the CK RKP(b) headed by Voronskij's principal mentor Frunze, which was to be reflected in the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 regarding art and literature (cf. 7.12). Bucharin reportedly drafted the resolution text.⁹¹ Possibly Voronskij's relations with Bucharin chilled somewhat following the 14th Party Congress in December 1925, when Bucharin enlisted Stalin's support in industrial policy against "the united opposition" Trockij-Zinov'ev.⁹² This did not stop Voronskij from later praising Bucharin in his article "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ".⁹³ Relations between Bucharin and Voronskij became strained, however, and on 18 April 1927 at the expanded meeting of the Press section of the CK VKP(b) convened to discuss *KN*, Voronskij attacked Bucharin, cf. 3.2.10. From 1928 Stalin considered Bucharin as one of the leaders of "the rightist opposition" in the party, and in 1929 he was divested of all important party functions. He was arrested in 1937 and executed the following year, branded as a "Trotskyite".

A.V.Lunačarskij (1875-1933) served as People's Commissar for Education 1917-29 and was nominally responsible also for culture, art and literature. The fact that he never became a member of the Politburo need not mean that the party took a relaxed view of his areas of responsibility. He had been among the early proponents in Russia of Mach's and Avenarius' empiriocriticism, which in Russia became "god building" (*bogostroitel'stvo*). This movement in which he, Bogdanov and Gor'kij were active, even ran a school in Capri in June-November 1909.⁹⁴ In *Religija i socializm* (1908-11) Lunačarskij propagated an elision of socialism and religion. He had acted explicitly against Lenin's instructions when the RKP(b) in late 1920 at

⁹⁰ "In the higher echelons the Napostovcy are being defeated. Comrade Bucharin is helping in this".

⁹¹ Schapiro 1978:350; Choate 1987:187.

⁹² Egge 1993:151ff.

⁹³ *KN* 1927#1 (48):232, cf.4.2.14 and 7.3-7.4.

⁹⁴ Kjetsaa 1994:173ff.

Lenin's insistence took decisive steps to subject Prolet'kult headed by Bogdanov to party directive by placing it under Lunačarskij's Narkompros. As People's Commissar he attempted to build a bridge between Marxism, science and parts of the *avant-garde* culture.⁹⁵ Despite his relative broad-mindedness Lunačarskij's writings, as we mentioned in the introduction, became very one-sided from 1928 as he adapted to Stalinization. In his collected works in eight volumes⁹⁶ Lunačarskij as expected hardly mentioned Voronskij. In the lecture "Voprosy literatury i dramaturgi" (1924) he referred to Voronskij briefly and neutrally in the text, but in the footnotes (added later by others) the reader was assured that Lunačarskij repeatedly criticized the Trotskyite Voronskij.⁹⁷ In the article "Osnovy chudožestvennogo obrazovanija" (1926) Voronskij was criticized for erroneously and one-sidedly having identified art with cognition, and for having disregarded the class struggle.⁹⁸ In an article entitled "Chudožestvennaja politika - političeskoe oružie" (1931) the Pereval group of Voronskij and Gorbov were condemned for their views of art.⁹⁹ Lunačarskij nevertheless supported Voronskij in the first half of the 1920s and, like Trockij and Bucharin, upheld Voronskij's views expressed at the May 1924 meeting of the RKP(b) Press Section.

As nominally in charge of *belles-lettres* 1917-29, Lunačarskij's appearances in journals were indicative of party approval. His longevity in office suggests his ability to adapt to shifting ideological circumstances. Together with Lenin, Krupskaja and Radek, he was among the prominent contributors to the first issue of *KN*, but significantly did not appear in *KN* from mid-1923.¹⁰⁰ His non-appearance in *KN* during the remainder of Voronskij's editorship confirmed his diffidence noted above

⁹⁵ Acton 1995:201.

⁹⁶ Lunačarskij 1963-67.

⁹⁷ Lunačarskij 1964 (II):259 and 626-627.

⁹⁸ Lunačarskij 1967 (VII):440.

⁹⁹ Lunačarskij 1967 (VIII):305.

¹⁰⁰ "Naši zadači v oblasti chudožestvennoj žizni", *KN* 1921#1:146-157. His next - and last - contributions to *KN* under Voronskij's editorship were: "Dostoevskij, kak chudožnik i myslitel'" (*KN* 1921#4:204-21; "Moral' i svoboda" *KN* 1923#7(17):130-136) and "Marksizm i literatura" *KN* 1923#7(17):233-241.

towards Voronskij and the party's ambiguity towards *KN*.¹⁰¹

Two other central party figures referred to previously were M.V.Frunze (1885-1925) and G.K.Ordžonikidze (1886-1937). None of these worked specifically with art and literature, but they acted decisively in Voronskij's support at different times, as I shall briefly return to in part 3. Though never a party member M.Gor'kij (1868-1936) was important to Voronskij as literary editor of *KN*. Throughout the 1920s the exiled Gor'kij exerted an enormous influence on Soviet literature and writers,¹⁰² as I shall comment on in 3.2.7.

Apart from Trockij, Bucharin and Lunačarskij, the older generation of Marxist critics and aestheticians - a group to whom Voronskij was seen to belong as the 1920s progressed¹⁰³ - included others, such as L.Axelrod-Ortodox (1868-1946), V. M.Friče (1870-1929) referred to earlier, P.S.Kogan (1872-1932), V. Polonskij (1886-1932), V. Polanskij (pseud. for P.I.Lebedev 1882-1948) and V. F.Pereverzev (1882-1969), also referred to earlier. Among the younger generation Marxist critics were I. M.Nusinov (1889-1950), P. N. Medvedev (1891-1938), A.Ležnev (1893-1938),¹⁰⁴ D.A.Gorbov (1894-1967),¹⁰⁵ G.Gorbačev (1897-1942) and L.L.Averbach (1903-1938). I shall return to several of these later in other parts of the dissertation. Given this list of names, which easily could be expanded, and what has been outlined so far, it is clear that a recent Marxist version of Marxist literary theory mentioned in 1.2.2b,¹⁰⁶ which only lists Trockij and his article "The Formalist School of Poetry and Marxism" from *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) as representative of Soviet Russia during the 1920s, has serious lacunae.

The Marxist view of the literary text entailed a threefold approach: 1) Analysis of the economic social structure; 2) explanation of social relations and class

¹⁰¹ Choate 1987:89 notes differences between Lunačarskij and Voronskij in February 1924, but does not mention Lunačarskij's failure to appear in *KN* from mid-1923.

¹⁰² Kjetsaa 1994.

¹⁰³ Struve 1971:213.

¹⁰⁴ From 1926 Ležnev became the main theorist of Pereval, cf. Belaja 1989:13-15 and 3.2.9.

¹⁰⁵ Gorbov also joined Pereval in 1926 and was one of the few members of Pereval to survive the 1930s, cf. Belaja 1989:15-19 and 3.2.9.

¹⁰⁶ Eagleton, Drew 1996.

differentiation; 3) deductions from 1-2 and their interaction in a given society's intellectual state, its "social psychology".¹⁰⁷ Yet among Marxists there existed different views in the emphasis of these three approaches. Pereverzev was as noted an extreme representative of the first type of approach in his analysis of Gogol' and Dostoevskij's authorship. This approach was in fashion in the late 1920s, but was subsequently branded by leading Marxist critics and aestheticians as a "vulgarization" and distortion of Marxism. As we shall see in the continuation, Voronskij's literary aesthetics reflected elements from all three approaches without fitting comfortably into either. Phrased differently, Voronskij was not typically Marxist.

Within Marxism, including Russian Marxism, the majority of Marxists during the years 1870-1914 adhered to the so-called "determinist" school, i.e. they considered that fundamental socio-economic social conditions ("basis") were the only cause of all elements in the "superstructure", including also art and literature. The superstructure therefore became a passive mirror image of society's economic conditions. This generated models with differing levels of sociological and economic determinism, propounded from the late 1920s by e.g. Friče and Pereverzev, who both, as Voronskij, invoked Plechanov in questions of art and literature. Here the artist and writer were interpreted as predictable exponents of their class background, cf. "vulgar Marxism", "vulgar utilitarianism".¹⁰⁸ Just as utilitarianism reached its extreme with Pisarev around 1860, the same happened in the 1920s and 1930s with the socio-economic determinist paradigms of Friče and Pereverzev.

Most Western Marxists, and presumably also some Marxists in countries avowing to be Marxist, have acknowledged that starting with Lenin the superstructure can influence the basis, e.g. through political organization, party resolutions and guidance etc. Yet there is still no Marxist theory of how the superstructure functions *per se*.¹⁰⁹ The title of Lukács' *Probleme der Ästhetik* (1969) is significant. Sheppard - apart from reminding us of Marxism's problem with modernism - interprets Marxist aesthetics as (only) a part of the ideology. Although Marxist aesthetics developed

¹⁰⁷ Struve 1971:213.

¹⁰⁸ Belaja 1989:77ff.,331.

¹⁰⁹ Forgacs 1985:187.

sophisticated ideas about the relationship between the contents of literature and reality, Sheppard must conclude that Marxist aesthetics has not succeeded in explaining literature's social and political effects.¹¹⁰

In conclusion the Marxist view of literature can be fruitfully contrasted with its frequently presumed diametrical opposite: formalism. Struve credits the formalists for the advances made in Russian literature, literary criticism and science during the 1920s,¹¹¹ a view many would subscribe to. My intention here is only to observe that the formalist effort to interpret the text as a linguistic phenomenon *per se* was a breach not only with Russian literary criticism since Belinskij, but also with the Marxist view of the literary text as an expression of economic, historic, social (even biographical) and political elements. Formalism and Marxism to a large extent held opposite views in literary analysis, which explains their irreconcilable differences.¹¹² Yet among the Marxists listed above there were nuances of opinion regarding the formalists. Kogan relentlessly rejected them, while Trockij and Lunačarskij were more open-minded to the value of some formalist studies.¹¹³

2.3 RKP(b)/VKP(b) policy in *belles-lettres*: "neutral vigilance"

By the early 1920s Marxism thus had not succeeded in resolving the inherited aesthetic dichotomy between the utility and beauty of art and literature. The practical implications in terms of party policy was "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres*. This policy emerged especially during the NEP years 1921-28, and Voronskij played an important role in both defining and defending it.

As outlined in 1.0 the chaotic and tense situation of the October Revolution and civil war relegated *belles-lettres* far down on the Bolshevik agenda. After Proletkul't in late 1920 was subjected to Narkompros at Lenin's insistence, the proletarian writers changed strategy: rather than seek independence from party control, led by Bogdanov's successor Pletnev they worked from within the RKP(b) to become the

¹¹⁰ Sheppard 1988:145.

¹¹¹ Struve 1971:204ff.

¹¹² Belaja 1989:243-249.

¹¹³ *ibid.* pp.213-214.

party's executive branch in art and literature. The ban on organized intra-party factions in March 1921 meant that the proletarian writers had to convince the party to adopt their points of view. The party leadership, split on many issues including culture, reacted with indecision. As noted the principle of limited competition under NEP excluded imparting a monopoly in art and literature to the proletarian VAPP writers. These grouped around the journals *Molodaja gvardija* (from 1922), *Na postu* (from 1923) and *Oktjabr'* (from 1924). Party leadership disagreement on aesthetics was thereby exacerbated,¹¹⁴ which in turn reinforced a neutral stance by the RKP(b) towards the many contending literary and artistic groups, bolstered by Lenin's and Trockij's defence of the fellow travellers in 1922-23.

During 1921 other elements on the RKP(b) agenda served to decide the party's policy of "neutral vigilance" in the field of aesthetics. The Kronstadt rebellion in March 1921 and the party purges which started in August 1921 encouraged proletarian orthodoxy within the party, but not to the point of dictating party policy. The general exodus of intellectuals added to the sizeable Russian emigré circles abroad, e.g. in Berlin, Paris and Prague. The RKP(b) was sensitive to what the emigré press wrote and knew the emigré dislike of proletarian literature. Lenin considered Voronskij, who served as his personal adviser on emigré literature, as an authority on this topic.¹¹⁵ Several of Voronskij's articles deal with emigré literature, and even after Lenin's death Voronskij continued to show an interest in this area. These were among the factors that set the standard for a party policy of "neutral vigilance" in the field of aesthetics. It was contingent on the overall NEP policy of circumscribed economic liberalism. "Neutral vigilance" therefore did not survive NEP: it lasted in a sense until April 1928, a year after Voronskij had left *KN*, when VAPP organized a conference of proletarian writers and was renamed RAPP.¹¹⁶

"Neutral vigilance" did not mean that the RKP(b), renamed VKP(b) in December 1925, refrained from exerting a relentless suppression of any expression of "counter-revolutionary activities", as noted in 1.0. The journals *Chozjajstvennyje*

¹¹⁴ Carr 1958 (I):64; cf. also Schapiro 1978:251; Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:57.

¹¹⁵ Smirnov 1964:215.

¹¹⁶ Carr 1971(II):406-409.

novosti, Mysl' and *Ėkonomičeskoe vozroždenie* were all curtailed in the autumn of 1922 by the GPU following Lenin's initiative. The mass expulsion of 120 intellectuals in August 1922, approved and partially dictated by Lenin personally,¹¹⁷ included the philosopher Berdjaev. Among the reasons for his expulsion were his links with the "counter-revolutionary" Bereg publishing house.¹¹⁸ Another of the detained, who was not deported, was Zamjatin.¹¹⁹

In her survey article on censorship in Russian and Soviet literary history Perlina distinguishes among 6 sub-periods during the years 1702-1985, of which I need only comment on the last, from 1919 onwards.¹²⁰ In January 1918 a revolutionary tribunal for the press was set up. In May 1919 Gosizdat was founded, and in 1922 Glavlit. All printing and publication activities within the party and state sphere, academic life and *belles-lettres* were thereby subjected to strict supervision, including the small private printing houses permissible under NEP. By the mid-1920s censorship was extensive and detailed.¹²¹ In the previously cited article "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (1923), cf. 4.2.7, Voronskij frankly addressed the problem of political censorship. While defending the existence of a censorship, he criticized it for meddling in purely artistic considerations and affirmed that the censors must understand that one cannot require communist ideology from non-party "transitional" writers. Censorship should be limited to a consideration of whether a work of art was counter-revolutionary or not. In doing so censors ought not to base their assessment only on fragmented statements or on whether a writer addressed "the darker sides of Soviet everyday life". In the same article he called for the party to intervene on his side in his quarrel with the proletarian writers.¹²² *KN* together with Gosizdat's second journal *Pečat' i revolucija*, which was launched a few months after

¹¹⁷ Pipes 1998:168-169,174.

¹¹⁸ Volkogonov 1994a (II):179.

¹¹⁹ Galuškin 1992; Vaagan 1997b.

¹²⁰ Perlina 1985:74-75; cf. also Bassow 1988:19ff for an account of the foreign press corps' working conditions from 1917.

¹²¹ Cf. Izmozik 1996 for an analysis of 2073 censored documents in the party archives of Leningrad from private correspondence between the countryside, urban areas and the Red Army 1924-25.

¹²² Voronskij 1924b:111.

KN, were exempted from preliminary censorship.¹²³ Voronskij's refusal to publish Zamjatin's *My* (1920) in *KN* in the autumn of 1922 showed that Voronskij when necessary was fully capable of political censorship himself.¹²⁴ On the other hand he was liberal enough to publish excerpts from Pil'njak's *Golyj god* (1921) in *KN*, which sarcastically described the Bolsheviks as "leather jackets" (*kožannye kurtki*).¹²⁵

It is perhaps puzzling that despite party emphasis on propaganda and agitation it took about 3 years from the seizure of power in October 1917 before the creation in September 1920 of Agitprop, the central body for ideological-agitational activity. Initially it kept a low profile, leaving *de facto* censorship to the Čeka/GPU, and in March 1921 had only 17 employees. In the autumn of 1921 Agitprop set up a press section which in 1922 assumed responsibility for the local press. During the civil war 1918-20 Bucharin had been in charge of the press, propaganda and agitation affairs. Yet despite the party's activity in agitation and propaganda, the responsibility for ideology, culture and propaganda was diffused among several local administrative units and special bodies within the Red Army and the railroad. Yet no such units existed in the field of art and literature even after the creation of Gosizdat, Glavlit and Agitprop. This meant that art and literature - provided "counter-revolutionary" activities were avoided - could operate relatively freely until 1923. At this point Agitprop assumed a more active role in *belles-lettres*, coinciding with the intensifying literary debate between Voronskij and *KN* versus proletarian critics and writers grouped around *Na postu*. On 21-23 February 1922 a meeting chaired by Jakovlev was arranged in the CK Agitpropotdel. Voronskij spoke in favour of enlisting the support of non-party writers who stood close to the party, one of the basic ideas in creating *KN*. The meeting passed the resolution "O merach ob'edinenija i podnjatija raboty izdatel'stv blizkich nam grupp". The matter was further put on the agenda of the Orgburo which approved the resolution on 27 February. After an intermission of some months during which Voronskij felt compelled to explain "*literaturščina*" in

¹²³ Dinerštejn 1983:532.

¹²⁴ Vaagan 1997b, cf. 5.6.1.

¹²⁵ Published under the title "Otryvki iz romana 'Golyj god'", *KN* 1922#1(5):59-74. This was Pil'njak's second appearance in *KN*, the first having been "Prostye rasskazy", *KN* 1921#4:21-33.

KN to Lenin, cf. 3.2, and during which Lenin's first recorded illness took place in May, the Politburo appointed a commission for the organization of writers and poets in an independent union. The commission decided 26 July 1922 to make Voronskij responsible for the creation of a publishing house, called *Krug* on Voronskij's suggestion.¹²⁶ This was organized as a co-operative (*artel' pisatelej Krug*), but was gradually boycotted from 1923-24 by proletarian writers as their conflict with Voronskij intensified. *Krug* was merged with the FOSP publishing house *Federacija* in 1929.¹²⁷ Voronskij, at this time obviously playing a key role in formulating the party's policy in the field of *belles-lettres*, had received a party mandate to attract fellow travellers to the party's cause, with the ultimate goal of converting them to worthy party members. Yet given the lack of intra-party consensus on Marxist aesthetics, as we have seen, this mandate was open to interpretation. This impasse motivated Voronskij's actions and writings, as shown in parts 3,4 and 5.

The party policy of "neutral vigilance" in the field of aesthetics was approved during a debate in the CK RKP(b) Press Section in May 1924. Voronskij's address, cf. 3.2.5, was supported by Bucharin, Radek, Trockij and Lunačarskij. This policy was endorsed by the 13th Party Congress the same month and reiterated in the CK RKP(b) resolution dated 18 June 1925, cf. 7.12.

On 6-11 January 1925 Voronskij attended the first All-Union Conference of Proletarian Writers, which took VAPP a step further.¹²⁸ According to *Zvezda* one of the main agenda items was "Ideologičeskij front i massovaja literatura" with papers delivered by Vardin, Kanatčikov and Voronskij.¹²⁹ While the two first strongly criticized Trockij and Voronskij's negative views of proletarian literature and art, Voronskij reiterated his view that the artist's class background was irrelevant to his art and he denied the existence of a proletarian art. The conference decided on a platform for a *Vsesojuznaja Asociacija Proletarskich Pisatelej*, thereby confirming

¹²⁶ Koz'min 1985:88.

¹²⁷ Cf. 3.2.8 and 4.2.15.

¹²⁸ Cf. Eimermacher 1972:265-275 for German translations of the conference speeches of Lunačarskij as well as the conference resolution.

¹²⁹ *Zvezda* 1925#1(7):227.

that the proletarian writers from 1925 were a stronger organizational reality than previously. Nevertheless, the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925, cf.7.12, stated that while proletarian literature had an historical right to hegemony in the future (point 9), no single group, including the proletarian writers, could have a monopoly in the arts (point 13) and a continuation of free competition was declared (point 14). The affirmation of continued literary pluralism was a defeat for the leaders of *Na postu*, Rodov, Lelevič and Vardin. In early 1926 these were replaced by L.Averbach and the name of *Na postu* changed to *Na literaturnom postu*.¹³⁰ Averbach from April 1928 also became leader of RAPP, the successor to VAPP.¹³¹ The first advertisements for *Na literaturnom postu* in *KN* appeared in *KN* 1927#1(48). This longevity of "neutral vigilance" until April 1928 was a further slap in the face to the proletarian writers. In a letter to Gor'kij in December 1925 Voronskij with evident satisfaction noted that the *napostovcy* were enmeshed in internal strife.¹³²

2.4 Summary and conclusions

Defining the concept of "literary aesthetics" in 2.0 and its relevance to Voronskij, I outlined in 2.1 the long history of aesthetic thought in Russia from 988 until the October 1917 Revolution. Noting the predicament in post-Petrine secular thinking between the extremes of utilitarianism and *l'art pour l'art* which was far from new in Western aesthetic thought, I argued in 2.2 that this dilemma was neither invented nor resolved by Marxist aesthetics, as Voronskij's literary aesthetics were to illustrate. In 2.3 I argued that the party policy of "neutral vigilance" in the field of *belles-lettres* was contingent on the policy of NEP 1921-28. As NEP pluralism waned in the second half of the 1920s, party "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres* also faded, to be replaced eventually by the Stalinist utilitarian, codified and monopolistic aesthetics of socialist realism. This in a sense reversed aesthetics more than 200 years to pre-Petrine times when art and literature were dominated by official ideology.

¹³⁰ Primočkina 1995:72.

¹³¹ *ibid.*

¹³² *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 1, 1964:27.

PART 3: ALEKSANDR VORONSKIJ: LIFE AND CAREER

The purpose of part 3, which extends into the appendices 7.1-7.15, is to establish, as stated in 1.1, an overall better factual basis than hitherto available concerning the major events and influences in the life of Voronskij. I have divided the discussion into three sub-periods: 3.1) 1884-1921, 3.2) 1921-27 and 3.3) 1927 and later. Integral to the period 1921-27 is a discussion of Voronskij's relationship to Trockij, Frunze and Gor'kij who were his 3 single most important mentors. The events described influenced the contents and direction of Voronskij's literary aesthetics. It follows from my comments in 1.2.3 that biographical and autobiographical analysis can serve as a rewarding approach to Voronskij's literary aesthetics. I therefore have included in 3.4 a discussion of some aspects of Voronskij's autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* (1927- 29).

3.1 The period until 1921: the itinerant revolutionary

Based on my comments on sources in 1.2.1-1.2.2, it seems clear that among the primary sources of Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij's (1884-1937) early life is his autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*,¹ which is limited to the early period 1905-15. There are also his reminiscences of his childhood and adolescence in *Glaz uragana* (1931a) and *Bursa* (1933a). In addition we have several documents and pictures as well as some letters from the family archive, cf. 7.6. Central secondary sources are provided not least by family reminiscences (Voronskaja 1992, 1995, 1997). Useful is also Ovsjannikov's semi-documentary biography *My šli pokorjat' mir. Dokumental'naja povest' ob Aleksandre Voronskom* (1992), in which the author identifies a number of persons and provides additional information to Voronskij's autobiography. Useful brief vitas are provided by Černobaev (1992a, 1992b, 1992c). Efremov (1984) - despite many misprints and mistakes - remains the only available published bibliography of Voronskij's writings. Voronskij's wife Sima Solomonovna (born Pesina) died in 1943 without leaving written documentation as far as can be established. Their only child Galina Aleksandrovna Voronskaja (1914-91) had

¹ Voronskij 1927c, 1928c, 1929bc, 1970, 1987b.

published posthumously *Na dalekom priiske. Rasskazy* (1992), under the pseudonym G.Nurmina (Nurmin was one of her father's pseudonyms, as I shall return to), and under her own name the 3 posthumous works already referred to above. In addition Galina Voronskaja must be credited with collating the family archive in which is found i.a. her own unpublished bibliography from 1982 of her father's writings.² Presumably Efremov (1984) must have based himself on Galina Voronskaja's bibliography. The youngest and only remaining daughter of Galina Voronskaja, Tat'jana I.Isaeva, has edited her mother's 3 listed posthumous articles and is co-author of an article.³ Invaluable are further the studies by Maguire (1987) and Choate (1987,1998), especially the latter due to the larger emphasis on biographical material.

Basing myself on these sources a sketch of his life and career is outlined below; I have corroborated the major events as far as possible against recent Western research.⁴ I quote extracts from unpublished material in the family archive in 3.2.5 and 3.2.9 (Voronskij's "confessions" concerning Trockij and Pereval). Further I quote extracts from unpublished material in the Gor'kij archive/IMLI in 3.2.10 (Voronskij's defence speech of 18 April 1927),⁵ and in 5.3.1 (Sejfullina's 2 letters to Voronskij).

² Cf. 7.6 fr3-it17 and fr4-it42/43.

³ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995.

⁴ Figes 1997; Husband 1997; Orlovskij 1997; Siegelbaum 1997; Zelnik 1997. As all autobiography - cf. 3.4 - Voronskij's reminiscences tell a story, but not the full story. A case in point is anti-Semitism. In view of his subsequent concern with this issue- cf. 3.2.10 - it is odd that he fails to mention e.g. the 690 reported pogroms against Jews in October 1905, which must have been widely known at the time. The pogroms, as has since transpired, were supported by Nicholas II. He furthermore omits the much-publicized Bejlis-affair 1911-1913, a Russian parallel to the Dreyfus-affair, in which i.a. Nicholas II's anti-Semitism was revealed. At the time Gor'kij wrote a passionate appeal from Capri against this "Jewish witch hunt", which was signed by Thomas Mann, Anatole France, H.G.Wells, Thomas Hardy and many leading politicians throughout Europe. Although Voronskij was exiled in Kem' 1912-15, he had access to newspapers and would have been informed of this event. He also fails to mention the White and Cossack atrocities against Jews during the civil war 1918-20 (Figes 1997:197; 241-244; 678). Another pertinent example of Voronskij's selective reminiscences is the plight of the Russian Orthodox Church, about which Voronskij, the ex-seminarist, remained largely silent. The Bolshevik "war of words" 1918-21 against religion took a more ominous turn in February 1922 when local soviets were ordered to loot churches. In the textile town of Shuja, not far from Ivanovo where Voronskij worked 1918-20, the worshippers in March 1922 defended the church against looting Bolsheviks. In response Lenin issued a secret order for the extermination of the clergy, cf. Pipes 1998:150-155. In 1922 8000 people were executed during the resulting brutal campaign. In 1922-23 there were reported 1414 bloody clashes, typically involving Bolshevik machine-gunning of worshippers armed with pitch forks and rusty rifles (Figes 1997:748-749). This cannot have been completely unknown to Voronskij.

⁵ Extracts were previously published in Dikušina, Isaeva 1995

I have compiled a summary in 7.1 which in the absence of a biography is the most complete so far of its kind. It improves on the summary by Efremov in the bibliography he published for Voronskij's centennial jubilee in 1984.⁶ Efremov's bibliography greatly improves on the bibliography by Neživoj,⁷ which also contains many mistakes.⁸ Efremov lists 1029 Soviet articles and books published 1918-83, either dealing with Voronskij, or referring to him. Listings during the years 1934-64 must be assumed to be overwhelmingly negative, and the listings of Voronskij's own works symptomatically show nothing for the years 1935-59. The bibliography cites his debut as "Iz mira kooperacii: Siluěty; Ditenok", in the Odessa journal *Jasnaja zarja*, 1911#51. Voronskij published a number of articles during 1911, but apparently nothing between 1912-16, except possibly one article under the pseudonym "A.Klimskij" (see below). Voronskij's active publishing period was 1917-28, supplemented by a few articles in 1929, 1931, 1933 and 1934. Nothing was published 1935-1959. A few articles and works were published in 1960, in each of the years 1963-67, 1969 and again in 1981 and 1983, which is as far as Efremov goes. This is consistent with his works listed in the bibliography in part 8, which includes also the most recent publications.

In a letter to Zamjatin dated October-November 1922 to be discussed later,⁹ Voronskij comments that Zamjatin and he were both from the same region. A.K.Voronskij was born 27 August (8 September) 1884 in the hamlet Chorošavka in the Kirsanovskij district west of the city of Tambov, in Tambov province.¹⁰ From the age of 3 he grew up in the village of Dobrinka in the Usmanskij district, mid-way between the cities of Tambov and Voronež, also in Tambov province.¹¹ His father had been a village priest and died in 1889 of consumption, which also caused the

⁶ Efremov 1984:8.

⁷ Neživoj 1983:74-78.

⁸ Cf. 7.2, footnote 1.

⁹ Cf. 5.8.1.2. The letter concerns the manuscript of the novel *My*, which Voronskij refused to publish. The novel was first published in the USSR in *Znamja* in April-May 1988 (Vaagan 1997b).

¹⁰ The family archive includes a photograph of his birth certificate, cf. 7.6 fr5-it63.

¹¹ Dinerštejn 1983:572.

premature death in 1905 of Aleksandr's 21-year old sister Ljalja. On the death of her husband Feodosija G. Voronskaja moved back to her father, also a village priest. This clerical family background made it natural for the 16-year-old Aleksandr, after having completed 6 years of religious school (*bursa*), to proceed to the religious seminary in 1900. In *Bursa* he confirms that he was well versed in the scriptures from an early age and studied also Latin and Greek but not German or French.¹² Like many of his co-seminarists Voronskij was radicalized and read banned revolutionary literature.¹³ In 1905 18 seminarists, including Aleksandr, were expelled from the seminary, and another 200 were demoted one class. At this time Voronskij was passing into his 5th and last year before being ordained. The Tambov bishop, Innokentij, identified Voronskij as the leader of the disorder in his report to the education committee of the Holy Synod.¹⁴ The previous year, in 1904, Voronskij had joined the RSDRP where he supported the Bolshevik faction.

In *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj*, part 1, chapters 1-4 which deals with the years 1905-1907, Voronskij describes his 4 years as seminary student how he became radicalized and how the 18-year old Valentin¹⁵ (i.e. Voronskij, cf. 3.4.2) became the leader of the Marxist study circle. The secret password was "Lenin" and *Iskra*, *Revoljucionnaja Rossija*, *Zarja*, *Kto vinovat?* and other illegal literature was read and distributed surreptitiously. In 1905, the year his sister died, and with Russia involved in the disastrous Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05, he travelled to St. Petersburg. He met Lenin's sister, Mar'ja Il'inična Ul'janova, and took part in strikes and agitation work during the failed 1905 revolution.¹⁶ In *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj* part 1, chapters 5-6 Voronskij describes the loneliness of underground work, the constant hunger, how he eventually managed to secure a job in the railway archives, which allowed

¹² Voronskij 1987b:232

¹³ The early 1900s were marked by student unrest in several major cities. By the end of February 1905 the government had temporarily closed all institutions of higher learning, and even the theological academies were affected by student disorders (Figs 1997:166,181. Cf. also Zelnik 1997:206-219).

¹⁴ Ovsjannikov 1992:20.

¹⁵ "Valentin" was one of several aliases used by Voronskij, and the one he used in his autobiography and also for some articles. Others were "Nurmin" or simply "N." and "Glimskij" or "Klimskij". Cf. 3.4.2 and also 7.3.

¹⁶ Zelnik 1997:210ff.; Figs 1997:173ff.

him to work evenings and weekends distributing coded messages, disseminating illegal literature and warning comrades of impending arrests. "Doloi palačej Romanovych!" (Down with the Romanov butchers). He was allowed to advance to agitational work, first in selected factories, then in crowds, which was considered more dangerous. This necessitated addressing large audiences, and Voronskij became a gifted speaker, in the process becoming aware of his proclivity for thinking in pictures and making artistic comparisons.¹⁷ He recounts that at this time he first heard Lenin speak.¹⁸ In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, chapter 1, part 7, we are told that in late 1905 Voronskij, code-named Valentin, was sent to Helsingfors to work in the Bolshevik military branch. In Helsingfors in 1905 he first met with Gor'kij. The failed Sveaborg uprising in December 1905 saw him seek refuge in the village of Nurmijärvi, which later influenced him to adopt "Nurmin" as one of several aliases, e.g. in some of his early articles in *KN* 1921-22. Interestingly, Voronskij admits that his political philosophy differs from classical Marxism.¹⁹ He was obviously well read at this time, and states that while most Russians were like Ibsen's effusive *Peer Gynt*, the Bolsheviks resembled the uncompromising *Brand*.²⁰ An indication of Voronskij's independent mind is given in *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, part 1, chapter 8. Having listened to a reading of Hamsun's *Pan* and *Viktoria* Voronskij attended a lecture by Lenin in 1906. In the ensuing discussion Voronskij (Valentin) describes his disagreement with Lenin over the Bolshevik boycott of the Duma and how he accused Lenin publically of nothing less than deviation from Marxism and Bolshevism, which made Lenin laugh.²¹ After Lenin's proposal had been approved,

¹⁷ Voronskij 1970:99.

¹⁸ Voronskij does not specify where this took place. It could not have been at the Petrograd Soviet: The Mensheviks dominated the Petrograd Soviet in October 1905, and the Bolsheviks were hostile to it. Lenin, who returned to Russia in November 1905, was not allowed to speak in the Petrograd Soviet, although this was later claimed as part of Lenin's posthumous hagiography (Figs 1997:190).

¹⁹ Voronskij 1970:118.

²⁰ *ibid.* pp.127-128.

²¹ Following Nicholas II's reluctant acceptance of constitutional monarchy from April 1906, the government held elections for the first Duma which convened April-July 1906 with a Kadet majority. The elections were boycotted both by the Social Democrats (i.e. Bolsheviks and Mensheviks) and the Socialist Revolutionaries. All parties of the left had ended their boycott when the second Duma, where the socialists won a majority, convened in February 1907. It proved too radical for Prime Minister

Lenin approached Voronskij (Valentin) in a patronizing, but interested manner.²²

Subsequently, under the code name Valentin, he was involved in underground revolutionary work in Vladimir, Tambov, Ekaterinoslav, Saratov and Nikolaev.²³ In April 1907, having been detained 6 months, he was sentenced to one year's imprisonment which was reduced to 6 months in view of his detention.²⁴ Incarcerated in solitary confinement in the Peter-Paul fortress, Voronskij apparently read a great deal, including Marx, Balzac, Flaubert and Dostoevskij.²⁵ For his trial he had prepared a defence speech including quotations from the prophet Ezekiel, but this proved unnecessary since the sentence was relatively mild - it counted in his favour that he was the son of a priest.

He was arrested again in October 1907 in Vladimir where he had been sent by the party on his release to assist the local Bolshevik network in the wake of Frunze's arrest. In prison he met Frunze (Arsenij), his major political benefactor after Lenin's death.²⁶ In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, part 2, chapter 1, Voronskij describes how in the wet and raw Vladimir prison dungeons he enforced on himself a rigid daily regime of physical exercises and German lessons before immersing himself in Homer, Dickens, Ibsen, Tolstoj and Leskov. In February 1908 he received a mild sentence, since the police had failed to produce conclusive evidence. He was exiled for 2 years

Stolypin who soon dissolved it (Figs 1997: 218-225). In the Third Duma (November 1907 - June 1912) the pro-government parties Octobrists, Rightists and Nationalists were in majority. The Octobrists played a pivotal role in the Fourth Duma (November 1912- October 1917). Whatever the politics of the Duma, all laws had to be approved also by the State Council, whose conservative majority effectively blocked any serious liberal legislative initiative occasionally emanating from the Duma. Cf. Zelnik 1997:219-226; Orlovsky 232-235; Paškov 1997:518-519.

²² Voronskij 1970:135.

²³ Ovsjannikov 1992:12.

²⁴ This was far from unique: In the four years 1906-1909 more than 5000 "politicals" were sentenced to death and an additional 38.000 were incarcerated or exiled (Figs 1997:201).

²⁵ As Voronskij was to discover from 1929 onwards, conditions in the tsarist jails and treatment of inmates 1905-1917, albeit harsh, were relatively civilized compared to both the Čeka prisons and tortures from 1918 onwards, and also compared with conditions later in Stalin's camps. Cf. Figs 1997:204, 645-647.

²⁶ Ovsjannikov 1990:53-55 and 1992:44.

to Jarensk in the governate of Vologda.²⁷ The exile proved to be decisive in many ways: Apart from having ample spare time for reading, he met his future wife, Serafima Solomonovna Pesina, a young Jewish telegraph operator from Melitopol in the Crimea who had also been sentenced to exile.²⁸ After his release in 1910 Voronskij worked in Moscow as secretary in the local branch of the tanners' trade union. He despaired on discovering that the Bolshevik underground movement had practically been eliminated, and he moved on to Saratov. From November 1910 he frequented Lenin's childhood home and befriended Lenin's mother and sister Mar'ja. Mar'ja had returned to Saratov in December 1910, and she, Kržižanovskij and Voronskij (Valentin) constituted the Bolshevik leadership in Saratov. Voronskij worked as a journalist in *Privolžskaja gazeta*, but his bibliography does not include published articles from this journal. Early in 1911 he left Saratov for the warmer climate of Evpatorija in the Crimea, where he was also nearer to Serafima S. Pesina, who worked there as a cashier. Ovsjannikov explains that the tsarist police regularly used 3-4 months to track down revolutionaries, which obliged Bolsheviks to relocate with regular intervals.²⁹ According to Voronskij's autobiography, he made his debut in *Evpatorskie novosti* in May-June 1911.³⁰ On 11 June, 1911, he published under his own name an article entitled "Publicističeskie nabroski". The article confirms his early interest in literature, his sympathy with Gor'kij's revolutionary romanticism, and his lack of empathy for "decadent" symbolist writers:

Naša literaturnaja žizn' nesomnenno prodolžae pereživat' period serych budnej, zatiš'ja, daže bol'se - bezvremennaja. [...] U nas byla chudožestvennaja literatura svežaja, kak majskoe utro. Vo glave s Gor'kim ona pela o burevestnike, o gordom svobodnom čeloveke, kotoryj chotel brosit'sja v samuju gušču žizni, [...]. Rascvela pyšnym machrovym volkom i tak nazyvaemaja dekadentskaja literatura s ee strannymi, pretencioznymi priemami, literatura Bloka, Belogo, Ivanova, Sologuba.[...]. Literaturnoe zatišče. Ne to, čtoby ne bylo literaturno-

²⁷ The family archive contains tsarist police reports stamped "secret" from the period 1908-10, cf. 7.6 fr6-it80.

²⁸ Ovsjannikov 1990:53-55 and 1992:44.

²⁹ Ovsjannikov 1990:62,65.

³⁰ This contradicts the bibliography of Efremov, in which the article "Iz mira kooperacii: Siluėty; Ditenok", in *Jasnaja zarja*, 1911, no.51, is given as Voronskij's first article (Efremov 1984:12).

These were all elements that later played a part in his literary aesthetics, as we shall return to in parts 4-5. Voronskij states in his autobiography that it was in Evpatorija that he met his future wife the first time³², although this is at variance with what his own daughter relates, who states they first met in Jarensk in 1908.³³ In Odessa Voronskij met his near-namesake, the editor Vorovskij, and in September he settled in Nikolaev with his future wife, where he built up a Bolshevik underground network. Under the alias "Nurmin" he contributed to the Bolshevik journal *Jasnaja zarja* edited by Vorovskij in Odessa. On September 25 he e.g. published an article under the name "Nurmin" entitled "Literaturnye zametki (Iz obščestvennyh nastroenij)", a type of title he was later to use repeatedly at *Rabočij kraj* 1918-20 and *Krasnaja nov'* 1921-27. The subtitle was "Pustocvet" (barren flower). Reviewing the work of A.Averčenko, Voronskij dejectedly commented that literature had degenerated into eroticism and decadence, God-building (*bogostroitel'stvo*) literature, and finally into collections of easily digestible humoristic and satirical stories. His didactic and social interests were evident in the article "Čto čitajut rabočie" ("What Workers Read"), published in *Jasnaja zarja* on 23 October 1911. This was a study on what kind of books the Nikolaev library society for artisans had lent its readers during 8 months in 1911:

[...]. Za étot period vremeni bibliotekoj vydany 189 knig. Čitatelej ne dolžno vvodit' v smuščenje maloe čislo vydannyh knig. Prežde vsego, rabočemu prichoditsja čitat' uryvkami, posle dolgoj utomnitel'noj raboty za den'. Potom mnogie, esli ne bol'sinstvo rabočich, ne umejut, ne privykli čitat' bystro i dlja togo, čtoby pročitat' tomik rasskazov Tol'stogo, trebuetsja vremja v neskol'ko raz bol'se, čem, naprimer, licam intelligentyh professij. Krome togo, v biblioteke

³¹ Transcript from Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it16 (Our literary life doubtlessly continues to experience a grey period, even a premature lull. [...]. We had a fresh literary life, like a May morning. Headed by Gor'kij it sang in praise of the stormy petrel, of proud, free man, who yearned to immerse himself in the midst of life, [...]. The so-called decadent literature blossomed like a soft-coated wolf with its strange pretentious methods, the literature of Blok, Belyj, Ivanov, Sologub. [...]. There is a literary lull. Not because there have not been any literary novelties - we have had enough of them.). This article is listed as no. 38 in Efremov (1984:12), i.e. not as the first article Voronskij published in 1911.

³² Voronskij 1970:395ff.

³³ Nurmina 1992:9.

knjige imejatsja po odnomu ékzemplaru, i často dolgo prichoditsja vyždat', poka dojdut očered'. Najbolee sprašivajatsja čitateljami-rabočami: L.N.Tolstogo (129 vydač), Amfiteatrov (103), Turgenjev (54), Pisemskij (52), Čechov (50), Dostoevskij (48), M.Pečerskij (28), Korolenko (18), Salias (18), Kuprin (17); zatem idut Mel'sin, Čermontov, Čigikov, Averčenko, Zolja, Ostrovskij, Garin - po 15-16 vydač. Za nimi V.Gjugo, Nekrasov, Gončarov, Nikitin. Puškin čitajatsja malo: čislitsja vsego 5 vydač. [...]. Gor'kogo i Andreeva v tekuščem godu sprašivajut men'se, čem v prošlom. [...]. Sovsem net u čitatelej nikakogo interesa k dekadentskoj literature Saloguba, Brjusova, Ivanova i dr. Tak kak ich nikogda ne sprašivajut, biblioteka ne priobretaet ich proizvedenij. [...].³⁴

Voronskij omits Trockij, who had grown up in Nikolaev and Odessa³⁵, when he depicts these two towns in his autobiography. Ovsjannikov refers to Vorobčenko (1986) and Semenovskij (1984) who praise Voronskij - together with Gor'kij and, Ol'minskij and Podbel'skij - for founding a journalistic-satirical tradition.³⁶ In a letter to Lenin in Paris in late 1911 Voronskij (Valentin) informed that the Bolshevik organization in Nikolaev was restored following a two-year interruption.³⁷ At the request of Maria Il'inična Ul'janova in November 1911, Voronskij (Valentin) represented Saratov at the VI conference of the RSDRP in Prague 5-17(18-30) January 1912. This is the only recorded travel abroad made by Voronskij.³⁸ Finland, where Voronskij had lived in 1905, was part of Russia until 1917. Voronskij's lack

³⁴ Transcript from Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it16 ([...]. In this period of time 189 books were lent out by the library. Readers should not be disappointed by this small number of books. First, the worker had to read in snatches, after long and wearisome work all day. Secondly, many workers, if not the majority, were not accustomed to reading quickly, since reading a booklet by Tolstoj is more time-consuming (for a worker) than for intellectuals. In addition, the library only has one copy of each book, and the reader is often obliged to wait his turn. In most demand by readers-workers are: L.N.Tolstoj (129 loans), Amfiteatrov (103), Turgenjev (54), Pisemskij (52), Čechov (50), Dostoevskij (48), M.Pečerskij (28), Korolenko (18), Salias (18), Kuprin (17); then Mel'sin, Čermontov, Čigikov, Anerčenko, Zolja, Ostrovskij, Garin - each with 15-16 loans. Behind these came V.Gjugo, Nekrasov, Gončarov, Nikitin. Puškin is little read: only 5 loans in all. [...]. Gor'kij and Andreev are less in demand this year than last year. [...]. Readers have no interest at all in decadent literature of Salogub, Brjusov, Ivanov and others. Since these are not read, the library does not procure their works. [...]). The article is listed as no. 35 in Efmov (1984:12), but he fails to mention it was signed Nurmin.

³⁵ Voronskij does not refer to - at least the 1970 edition of his autobiography does not include any references to - Trockij, who grew up in Nikolaev and Odessa (Volkogonov 1994b(I):28ff.). This omission contrasts with the elaboration in the autobiography of Voronskij's close relations with Lenin's family in Saratov.

³⁶ Ovsjannikov 1990:63.

³⁷ Ovsjannikov 1990:63; cf. also Vorobčenko 1986:147-148.

³⁸ This point was confirmed to me by his grand-daughter Tat'jana I Isaeva on 28 October 1997. The family archive contains a document dated 1977 confirming that in 1912 the police in Nikolaev, Chersonskij gubernate, granted Voronskij permission to attend the conference, cf. 7.6 fr4-it41.

of international travel perhaps contrasts oddly with his classical and European training, and one may only speculate whether increased international travel and contacts could have affected his views and career. The Prague conference was nominally an All-Russian congress of the RSDRP, but several prominent Mensheviks such as Plechanov and Trockij, who were invited against Lenin's wishes, failed to attend. Shortly afterwards rival Menshevik conferences were organized. The Prague conference was to be the last party conference until the 7th party conference in April 1917, and in Voronskij's autobiography it is treated as a major event in his political career. He did not play a similarly prominent role at any later party conference. In Prague he recounts having spoken up in favour of launching *Pravda*, a proposal that was approved despite Lenin's scepticism.³⁹ Voronskij (Valentin) returned to Russia as representative of the party CK, entrusted to inform Bolshevik contacts in Nikolaev, Odessa and Saratov of the conference resolutions.

Voronskij reportedly edited temporarily the Bolshevik journal *Prosveščenie* in St.Petersburg 1911-14 where Gor'kij was literary editor.⁴⁰ Voronskij sent him 2 articles in 1914 from his exile in Kem' under the pseudonym "A.Klimskij". Only one article was published, and in another journal.⁴¹ If Voronskij really edited this journal, this must have been a short period in early 1912. The spies of the tsar had infiltrated the Prague conference, and Voronskij was under surveillance and arrested, for the third time, in May 1912 in Saratov along with Mar'ja Il'inična Ul'janova. It did not benefit Voronskij (Valentin) that the tsarist police had code-named him "Ubornyj" (The Cleaner) on the strength of his ability to shake off pursuers.⁴² Several Bolsheviks were detained, including the editor Vorovskij in Odessa. Voronskij (Valentin) was incarcerated until September 1912 and sentenced to three years' exile

³⁹ Ovsjannikov 1990:67.

⁴⁰ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:9. Cf. also Vaagan 1998a.

⁴¹ Ovsjannikov 1992:129; Voronskij 1987a:56. The Bolsheviks, having won a stunning 6 of 9 labour seats in the Duma elections of 1912 at the expense of the Mensheviks, were by 1914 in control of all major labour unions in Moscow and St.Petersburg. *Pravda*, to which Gor'kij contributed financially, had by 1914 attained the largest circulation among the Socialist newspapers, and sold daily 40,000 copies (Zelnik 1997:225; Figes 1997:245).

⁴² Ovsjannikov 1990:72.

to the remote hamlet Kem' on the White Sea.⁴³ In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, (part 2, chapters 2–4 which comprises 1/3 of the whole book) Voronskij describes e.g. how the prisoner convoy had to walk for 2 months on foot from Archangel'sk to remote Kem'. He gives a vivid depiction of his 3-year exile in the little community of 70 convicts of which some 2/3 were "politicals", both Social Democrats, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks (the largest groups) but also Socialist Revolutionaries, Maximalists, and others.

Voronskij's friend (*podruga*) Serafima (Sima) Solomonovna Pesina voluntarily joined Voronskij in Kem' in the summer of 1913, and their only daughter Galina, to whom his autobiography is dedicated, was born there in 1914.⁴⁴ Not much is known about Voronskij's relationship to Serafima Pesina, partly because Voronskij omits them from his description of his 3-years in Kem'. The family archive contains some pictures of Sima, including a photograph I date to Lipetsk 1929 of Sima, Voronskij and his mother, as well as a letter Voronskij wrote his mother from Kem'.⁴⁵ Their life in exile seems not to have been too unpleasant, and their relationship was apparently romantic.⁴⁶ This contrasted with Voronskij's incarceration in 1937 under Stalin. There were ample opportunities to read, discuss politics and philosophize. Voronskij could indulge in literary study and became the self-proclaimed editor of a handwritten camp newspaper *Severnyj burevestnik* which appeared in 5–6 editions. He even, much to the amusement of the inmates, had a dog called Stolypin after the assassinated prime minister.⁴⁷

⁴³ The family archive i.a. contains copies of police interrogation protocols from Saratov and from Archangel'sk, dated 1912, cf. 7.6 fr4-it33; fr5-it53.

⁴⁴ Levin 1975:8; Ovsjannikov 1992:127. Voronskij's grand-daughter Tat'jana I Isaeva has told me that Voronskij and his "podruga" Sima were not married until after 1917 due to the prohibition of marriage between Jews and non-Jews in tsarist Russia. The tsarist government's refusal to recognize civil marriages even forced Lenin to marry Krupskaja in church before his exile 1897-1900 in order that she might accompany him (Figs 1997:148). Viewing the family as a microcosmos of the paternalist Tsarist hierarchy, the Bolsheviks from 1918 introduced measures to dissolve the traditional family. Not only were civil marriages recognized, but divorce was made readily available, and full rights were extended to children born out of wedlock. (Husband 1997:282).

⁴⁵ Cf. 7.6 fr3-it12/19, fr7-it92/95/99/100.

⁴⁶ Ovsjannikov 1992:130

⁴⁷ Petr A. Stolypin (1862-1911), Russian Prime Minister from July 1906-August 1911. The hangman's noose was popularly known as "Stolypin's necktie", and the railway cars transporting "politicals" to

On being released in September 1915 Voronskij was not conscripted,⁴⁸ but went with his family first to Tambov to his mother, then continued to Ekaterinoslav, to the workers' district Zaporoz'e-Kamenskoe; there he found employment as an accountant, clandestinely building a Bolshevik underground network.

In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, part 3, chapters 1-2,⁴⁹ Voronskij deviates from this chronology by describing - after his release in September 1915 - events that took place in 1911, i.e. his work in Moscow as secretary in a tannery trade union. Many former Bolshevik comrades had given up the cause. Forced to sleep outside, since he had no passport and was thus unable to register in hotels, and pursued by the police, Voronskij went to his native Tambov to try and get a new passport there. Many former Bolshevik comrades and co-seminarists in Tambov had also abandoned politics for safer and more lucrative professions. Interestingly, Voronskij quotes the Bible and thinks of the Apocalypse.⁵⁰ He also played with children and told them fairy tales. On acquiring a new passport, he relocated to Saratov. In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, part 3, chapters 3-4,⁵¹ Voronskij describes his sojourn in Saratov, how he frequented the home of Lenin and befriended Lenin's mother and his sister Mar'ja,

Siberia were known as "Stolypin carriages" (Figs 1997:221).

⁴⁸ Voronskij is reticent on why he was not enrolled before April 1916. The answer may be the Bolshevik attitude to the war effort. Russian forces had been suffering humiliating setbacks and great losses from early 1915 (Paškov 1997:524). Nicholas II reasserted his autocratic rule by assuming supreme military command in August 1915 and by proroguing the Fourth Duma in September 1915, when Voronskij returned from exile. Government affairs were from then run by the erratic Tsarina and Rasputin. By 1916 the most competent segments of the Russian military like Brusilov, Commander of the South-Western front, and patriotic nobles like prince Lvov realized that radical reforms were a necessary precondition for military success. A doomsday atmosphere prevailed; the Romanovs were demonized as German traitors by ordinary people, and the affluent engaged in displays of "hysterical hedonism" (Figs 1997:269-283; Orlovsky 1997:232-234). The Mensheviks were split on the issue of war, and Plechanov supported the tsar's war effort. The Bolsheviks, by contrast, were united in their opposition to the war, and Lenin hoped Russia would lose the war since he believed this would effect the demise of the tsarist regime. While the Bolsheviks had 5 of their Duma deputies arrested in November 1914, the party had gained in strength and had an estimated 10,000 members by early 1917, of which 3000 were in Petrograd alone (Figs 1997:292-301). Voronskij therefore had no incentive to fight the tsar's war.

⁴⁹ Published in *Novyj mir* 1929#1:169-202 where half of chapter 2 was omitted.

⁵⁰ Voronskij 1970:353; cf. also 1987b:524.

⁵¹ The missing half of chapter 2 and the 3 sequel chapters of part 3 were omitted from *Novyj mir*. The complete autobiography was not published before 1970 according to Voronskij's bibliography. The autobiographical *Bursa*, however, was republished in 1966, cf. Efremov 1984:11.

how Mar'ja Il'inišna, the Pole Stanislav Kržižanovskij and Voronskij (Valentin) constituted the Bolshevik leadership in Saratov, and in 3:4 how he travels to the Crimea and makes his debut there in *Evpatorskie novosti* in Evpatorija ⁵² (not mentioned in Voronskij's bibliography by Efremov 1984), meets a dark-eyed Jewish beauty, begins writing in the Odessa journal *Jasnaja zarja* edited by the Marxist Vorovskij. In 3:5 we find the important passages with the narrator and Valentin on the Sokolov mountain which I shall return to in 3.4. The chapter describes how Voronskij was requested by Mar'ja Il'inišna to represent Saratov at the Bolshevik conference in Prague. As one realizes this is a transposition of events from 1911, which I have recounted above.

From April 1916 to February 1917 he was involved in agitational work among soldiers at the Western front, and during the February Revolution in 1917 he was promoted to chairman of the Kajdanovskij soviet of soldier deputies. ⁵³ In March-April 1917 he was in Petrograd, but apparently played no role at the 7th Party Congress in April 1917 or in the decisive events in Petrograd prior to October. ⁵⁴ On the orders of the CK RKP(b) secretary Elena D.Stasova ⁵⁵ he went in April to Odessa to take charge of the Bolshevik fraction in the local soviet. Kuprianovskij affirms that Voronskij dedicated himself full-time to literary and editorial work from 1917.

⁵⁶ Ovsjannikov more precisely notes that this only took place from the summer of

⁵² Cf. Semenovskij 1984 and 7.6 fr3-it16.

⁵³ Ovsjannikov 1992:130. Voronskij's activities must have been agitational: Following the tsar's abdication in March 1917, the Petrograd soviet formally recognized the provisional Government, but supplanted its authority by establishing the soviet's authority over army units. Soldiers' committees were created, nominally to maintain order, but in reality they served to spread revolutionary and anti-war sentiment (Orlovsky 1997:238).

⁵⁴ The Bolsheviks were split on policy towards the Provisional Government before Lenin's return in early April 1917. His "April Theses" to some extent united the party in a rejection of dual power and a demand for "all power to the soviets". In the autumn Lenin's demand for an immediate armed uprising was passed by a 10-2 majority on 23 (10) October by the Bolshevik CK. Kamenev and Zinov'ev voted against, while Trockij and Stalin voted for (Orlovskij 1997:241, 249-250).

⁵⁵ Voronskaja (1992) relates how from 1954 she started work on the rehabilitation of her father and how she received decisive support from the aging Stasova, who had personally known Voronskij and who vouched for him. Galina Voronskaja worked for Stasova on returning to Moscow from her 22-year exile in 1957, the same year Voronskij was officially exonerated and re-instated as a party member with effect from 1904.

⁵⁶ Kuprianovskij 1983:618.

1917, and that Voronskij in Odessa from July 1917 became editor of the new Bolshevik daily *Golos proletariata*. From September he became co-editor of the daily *Izvestija Odesskogo Soveta*, and from September-October also political adviser to the military daily *Soldatskaja mysl'*.⁵⁷ In response to the events in Petrograd, his articles predominantly addressed political issues, much more than e.g. in 1911 in Odessa, and he now also used his own name in most cases. *Golos proletariata* No. 4, 27 July 1917, featured the article "Organizacija vlasti" signed A.Voronskij. Retrospectively, his defence of democracy seems ironical in view of the Bolshevik *coup-d'état* in October 1917 and subsequent events:

Soedinennoe zasedanie ispolnitel'nych komitetov predstavili Kerenskomu pravo obrazovat' kabinet po svoemu usmotreniju iz predstavitelej vsech partij, stojaščich na počve programmy 8 ijulja. [...] otkaz ot svoich prav so storony političeskich partij i sovetov v pol'zu odnogo lica vlečet za soboj obrazovanie ne koalicionnogo kabineta, a kabineta, otvečajuščego vzgljady odnogo lica. Slovom, jasno i tverdo my vstupajem v anti-demokratičeskiju polosu. [...].⁵⁸

In *Izvestija Odesskich sovetov raboščich deputatov i predstavitelej armii i flota*, on 27 October 1917, Voronskij exuberantly informed his readers in the article "Staraja vlast' svergnuta" of the Bolshevik takeover in Petrograd two days previously:

Kak ni korotki, kak ni otryvočny pribyvajuščie iz Petrograda izvestija i svedenija o proischodjaščich grandioznych istoričeskich sobytijach, no odno obstojatel'stvo sleduet sčitat' jasno i opredeljeno ustanovlennym. Staraja vlast' svergnuta. Pravitel'stva Kerenskogo i pročich izmennikov revoljucii ne suščestvuet. Novaja vlast', vyšedšaja iz nedr Sovetov -vlast' Sovetov. Nemedlennoe predloženie demokratičeskogo mira, nemedlennaja peredača vsech zemel' krest'janskim komitetam, peredača vsej vlasti Sovetam na mestach, sozvy Učreditel'nogo Sobranija - vot zadači revoljucionnoj vlasti. [...].⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ovsjannikov 1992:158.

⁵⁸ Transcript from Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it16. (The unified meeting of executive committees has given Kerenskij the right to form a cabinet of his choice composed of representatives from all parties adhering to the programme of 8 July. [...] the political parties and soviets' rejection of their rights in favour of one person entails the forming not of a coalition cabinet, but a cabinet complying with the views of one person. Briefly, we are clearly and strongly entering an anti-democratic situation. [...].) This article is listed as no.53 and dated 14 October 1917 in Efremov (1984:13), who in addition omits the issue no.

⁵⁹ Transcript from Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it16. (However brief, however fragmentary the information and news received from Petrograd is about the grandiose and historical events that have taken place, one circumstance should be clearly and exactly established. The old power has been dethroned. The Kerenskij government and similar traitors to the revolution no longer exist. The new

As one of 4 delegates from Odessa in January 1918 Voronskij attended the 3rd All-Russian Congress of Soviets in Petrograd. Here he met Lenin for the first time since Prague in January 1912, and Lenin appointed him to the position of Commissar-organizer for Russian-Roumanian affairs in Southern Russia. Back in Odessa he became *de facto* leader of the Executive Committee of the Odessa soviet. Joining the 3. Ukrainian army evacuation of Odessa in March 1918,⁶⁰ Voronskij relocated to Saratov where he stayed a couple of months. In June 1918 in Saratov he received an invitation from the Gubispolkom (provincial executive committee) of the textile region Ivanovo-Voznesensk, "the Red Manchester",⁶¹ to find suitable employment there. To Voronskij this was doubly tempting because his old friend Frunze served as leader of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Gubispolkom and, therefore, stood behind the invitation. Frunze was also military commander of the Jaroslavl' military district.⁶² On passing through Moscow, Voronskij was appointed by the CK RKP(b) secretary Elena D.Stasova as editor of *Rabočij kraj* in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, a position he assumed in June 1918 and which he retained through the civil war period until January 1921. At *Rabočij kraj* conditions were very simple. The small editorial staff of 5 only had one small room at its disposal, and as editor Voronskij had to contend with all kinds of shortages, especially of paper. Voronskij proved very productive, in 2 ½ years publishing 370 signed articles, of which 50 (or 14%) dealt with art and literature.⁶³ The family archive contains transcripts of many of these

power, which has emanated from the depths of the Soviets - is the power of the Soviets. The immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the immediate transfer of of all land to the peasant committees, the transfer of all power to local Soviets, the convening of a Constitutional Assembly - these are the tasks of the revolutionary power. [...]). This article, as well as several others in the same journal, is omitted in the bibliography by Efremov.

⁶⁰ Channon 1995:102-103; Figes 1997:575.

⁶¹ Ovsjannikov 1992:175. Ivanovo-Voznesensk had a developed textile industry, thus making it a "Russian Manchester". It was among the first places where the the Bolsheviks (in Augsut 1917) won control over the local soviet (Figes 1997:459).

⁶² Archangel'skij 1970:505; Wieczynski 1979(XII):39.

⁶³ Kuprijanovskij 1982:218. Transcripts of about 50 of Voronskij's articles from Odessa from July 1917-January 1918 and a number of his 370 articles from *Rabočij kraj* 1918-21 are available in the family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it6 and -it16. Excluding Vorobčenko 1986, Semenovskij 1984 and Kuprijanovskij 1983 this material remains largely unexplored.

articles, and they confirm that he mostly wrote political, even propagandistic, articles in support of the Bolshevik civil war effort. Yet his literary interests and talents occasionally emerged. E.g. on 17 June 1920 he published the following brief sketch, signed Nurmin:

Staryj mir

Zimnjaja noč'. Taet. Ticho i pustynno na ulicach. Padajut snežinki. Gde-to daleko lajut sobaki. Nejasno beleet sobornaja cerkov'. Segodnja novyj god po staromu stilju. Pervyj čas noči. No sobor molčaliv i odinok. Černejut temnye vpadiny okon, molčat kolokola. Okolo sobora pojavljajutsja kučki ljudej. Oni vypolzajut neožidanno iz pereulkov i brodjat vokrug sobora, ostupajas' po mokromu snegu i skol'zkim dorožkam... Bot dve staruški. Oni čto-to šepčut, probirajas' k paperti. Ešče gruppa ljudej. V temnote nevidno, iz kogo ona sostoit...Odinokaja figura ostanovilas' i smotrit na sobor. No sobor ugrjum i neprivetliv. Molčat kolokola. Bezmolvie i molčanie v oknach, v každoj nejasnoj linii sobornych belych sten. Ėto čto že? Ničego segodnja ne budet?...Novyj god prazdnovali po novomu stilju... A po staromu ne budut?...Dolžno byt' net...Dve staruški bredut nazad. V ich sgorblennyh figurach - pečal' i gore starogo mira. Bog znaet, čto delaetsja na belom svete: ničego ne ponjatno. Byla tupaja, trudnaja besprosvetnaja žizn', no ponjatnaja, osveščennaja vekovečnym prošlym ukladom. Žizn' ušla. Kuda poneseš' žaloby duši na étu temnuju žizn', na étu prošloe, kotoroe tjažkim plastom leglo na plečach?... Brodjat odinokie figury, gruppy ljudej s nedoumeniem i pečal'ju. No sobor nem, on - zastyvšee kamennoe bezmolvie ...Teper' po vsej Rusi dnem i noč'ju brodjat tysjači ljudej: starje oskolki uchodjaščej žizni. Brodjat s nedoumeniem, so zloboj, s pečal'ju. Ich mnogo, poraboščennyh starym mirom i ne našedšich zapovednyh trop k novomu...Oni teper' vse brodjat v potemkach.

Nurmin ⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Transcript from the Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it16. (The Old World. Winter night. Thaw. The streets are quiet and empty. A light snow is falling. Somewhere in the distance dogs are barking. Unclearly, the assembly church is becoming white. Today is New Year according to the old style. The first hour of the night. Yet the church remains silent and solitary. The dark window sockets blacken, the church bells are mute. By the church small groups of people appear. They crowd unexpectedly out from narrow streets and wander around the church, stumbling on the wet snow and slippery paths. Two old women appear. They are whispering something, struggling towards the church-porch. Another group of people. In the dark one cannot distinguish individuals. A lonely figure has stopped and is looking at the church. Yet the church remains sullen and unwelcoming. The bells are mute. Silence and calm in the windows, in each unclear line of the white church walls. What is this? Is there nothing taking place tonight? They have celebrated New Year in the new style. And won't they celebrate in the old style? Must be they won't. The two old women struggle back. In their crooked frames one sees the sorrow and grief of the Old World. God knows what is happening in this world: nothing is comprehensible. There was once a dull, difficult, pitch-dark life, but it was understandable, enlightened by age-old structures. Life has passed. Where can you take your spiritual complaints about this dark life, about this past which burdened your shoulders like a heavy cover? Solitary figures roam about, groups of bewildered and grief-stricken people. Yet the church is frozen in a stony silence. These days in Rus' thousands of people are wandering about day and night: old remnants of a bygone life. They are roaming about bewildered, angry, grief-stricken. There are many of them, enslaved by the Old World, and they have not found the precious paths leading to the New World. They are all roaming about in darkness). The article is listed as no. 409 in Efremov (1984:23).

This sketch illustrates several points of relevance to Voronskij's later literary aesthetics, e.g. his blending of ideology and artistry. Also interesting is his reliance on the faculty of vision, expressed in the dichotomy darkness-light. Seeing the Bolshevik route ahead to the New World is equated with seeing the light, while remaining in the Old World is identified with being lost in opaque darkness. As we shall see he relied on metaphors of vision in his autobiography and in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928). As regards his attitude to Christianity at this stage, I shall return to this in 3.4.

Considering the tumultuous civil war events described in 1.0, it is surprising that Voronskij found the time and occasion to address even 14% of his articles to literary matters. Yet the newspaper established a literary column, and a small circle of promising young local poets emerged under Voronskij's tutelage. This was positively noticed in Moscow, e.g. by the Commissar for Education A.Lunačarskij.⁶⁵ The newspaper quickly acquired the reputation as the best provincial newspaper.⁶⁶ Voronskij also wrote several "hagiographic" articles in *Rabočij kraj* on Lenin. Yet from May 1922 when Lenin's illness had become apparent, Voronskij's references to Lenin became less frequent. There are in fact several indications that Voronskij was critical of Lenin, as I shall return to. In July-August 1920 Voronskij, in his capacity of member of The All-Russian Executive Committee (Vse-rossijskij ispolnitel'nyj komitet), was commissioned to make an appraisal of the situation in the Tambov countryside, his home region.⁶⁷ In a report to Lenin dated 26 September 1920 Voronskij gave a very dismal description of the Tambov countryside, and his report reportedly alleviated the enforcement of the confiscations.⁶⁸ In the same letter

⁶⁵ Lunačarskij 1964 (VII):520.

⁶⁶ Ovsjannikov 1992:182ff.

⁶⁷ Voronskij and Ovsjannikov both omit mentioning the ruthless Bolshevik food requisitions 1918-21, soon to be compounded by a disastrous famine crisis 1921-22, particularly in Samara province, or that the food levies had ignited widespread anti-Bolshevik peasant riots in much of peasant Russia. The "Antonov rebellion" in Tambov, named after the Left Socialist Revolutionary activist A.Antonov, started in August 1920 in the village of Kamenka in protest against the Bolshevik food confiscations. The rebellion rapidly spread throughout the southern half of Tambov province and parts of neighbouring Saratov, Voronež and Penza. By the end of 1920 the rebellion had grown into what Lenin later acknowledged as the greatest threat his regime had ever confronted (Figs 1997:752-755).

⁶⁸ Ovsjannikov 1992:192-194.

Voronskij did not conceal his readiness for larger assignments in Moscow, cf. 7.5.

In December 1918 Frunze was appointed as military commander of the 4th Army at the eastern front, a position he acceded to in March 1919.⁶⁹ Voronskij succeeded him as chairman of the Gubispolkom in Ivanovo-Voznesensk.⁷⁰ Having served for 2 ½ years at *Rabočij kraj*, Voronskij was transferred to Moscow in January 1921,⁷¹ but his articles in *RK* continued to appear until June 1921, cf. 7.2.

3.2 The period 1921-1927: promotion to Moscow

Voronskij's promotion to become the first editor of what soon became the leading Soviet "thick" journal was a sign of Lenin's and Krupskaja's confidence in this 37-year old veteran Bolshevik, whose work at *Rabočij kraj* had attracted the attention of both Gor'kij and Lunačarskij. Perhaps Lenin also remembered this was the man who had proposed launching *Pravda* in 1912. The party's confidence in Voronskij during the early 1920s, which was noted in 2.3, was reflected when he was commissioned by Agitprop to give a series of lectures on Russian literature at the Ja. M.Sverdlov Communist University, K.Liebknicht Pedagogical Institute and at the All-Union Institute of Journalism. Whereas Voronskij's major preoccupation 1921-27 remained his editorship of *KN*, he also engaged in a succession of other literary activities. Apart from being Lenin's personal adviser in relation to the white press, he was also literary editor of *Pravda* 1921-22, co-editor with Bucharin 1923-27 of *Prožektor* (as noted in 2.3.) which was an illustrated and popular version of *KN* published at *Pravda*. Further, he held editorial posts in *Naši dni*, *Al'manach Krasnoj novi* and, temporarily, *Pereval*. Voronskij also founded and led the co-operative publishing house *Krug* 1922-27, as mentioned in 2.3, based on *KN*'s literary branch. Further, during the early 1920s he edited the literary series of *Glavpolitprosvet*, in addition to being editor of the literary section of *Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo*

⁶⁹ Archangel'skij 1970:505.

⁷⁰ Ovsjannikov 1990:54.

⁷¹ The family archive contains a document dated 1977 confirming that the local Ivanovo-Voznesensk RKP(b) meeting on 16 November 1920 granted Voronskij permission to leave *Rabočij kraj* and be transferred to *Glavpolitprosvet* in Moscow, cf. 7.6 fr4-it40.

(Gosizdat). He also served as member of the board of Gosizdat 1922-24.⁷²

3.2.1 Post-revolutionary publishing

The establishment of Gosizdat in 1919 did not generate any significant quantitative increase in the publication and diffusion of books, journals and newspapers before 1922, due to the constrictions caused by the civil war 1918-20. The number of e.g. journals published in the area that from 1922 became SSSR, increased from 884 journals in 1918 to 889 (1923), 1120 (1925), 1197(1928) and 7536 (1932).⁷³ Among the major Soviet Russian publishers of literary journals and newspapers were Narodnyj komissariat prosvěščenija (Narkompros), Proletkul't (curtailed 1920) and local Soviets. The private publishing houses possible under the NEP-induced Sovnarkom decree of December 1921⁷⁴ generated some 30 journals and almanacs of different orientation and duration, e.g. *Rossija* (1922-25, from 1926 *Novaja Rossija*) and *Russkij sovremennik* (1924) in which E.Zamjatin had a leading role.⁷⁵ Among the early, short-lived post-revolutionary journals and newspapers were *Tvorčestvo* (1918-22) published in Moscow under the editorship of A.Serafimovič, V.Friče and others; and *Plamja* (1918-29), published in Petrograd under the editorship of A.V. Lunačarskij. Several attempts were made to create a "thick" journal modelled on the journals of the 2 preceding centuries. The All-Russian Executive Committee (VCIK) published 1918-19 six volumes of the *Vestnik žžni* addressing a wide range of issues from politics, social life, science, art and literature. The various avantgarde groupings all published their own journals: the futurists published *Gazeta futuristov* (1918), *Iskusstvo kommuny* (1918-19), *Iskusstvo* (1919), and the symbolists published six issues of the *Zapiski mečatelej* (1919-22), where A.Blok, A.Belyj and E.Zamjatin were among the contributors. Some pre-revolutionary journals temporarily continued (*Russkaja mysl'*, *Russkoe bogatstvo*, *Vestnik Evropy*), but were eventually curtailed due to their critical attitude to

⁷² Dinerštejn 1983:535, 615; Belaja 1987:6

⁷³ Vvedenskaja 1957:4-7;123.

⁷⁴ Maguire 1987:372.

⁷⁵ Surkov 1967 (IV):287-89.

Bolshevik post-revolutionary policies. Attempts were also made to start up some new independent journals such as *Knižnyj ugol'* (1918-22), *Vestnik literatury* (1919-22), *Dom Iskusstva* (1920-22).

In the early 1920s several new monthly "thick" literary journals appeared: Apart from *Krasnaja nov'* (from 1921), *Sibirskie ognj* (Novosibirsk) and *Molodaja gvardija* (from 1922), *Oktjabr'*, *Zvezda*, the bimonthly *Rabočij žurnal* (from 1924) and *Novyj mir* (from 1925) all made their entry. A more critical-bibliographical journal was *Pečat' i revoljucija* (1921-30), as well as the literary-critical journals *Na postu* and *LEF* (both 1923-25). A new phenomenon was the appearance of illustrated "profound" weeklies/biweeklies such as *Prožektor* (1923-35), *Krasnaja niva* (1923-31), *Ogonek* (from 1923), the satirical journals *Krokodil* (from 1922), *Lapot'* (1924-33), *Krasnyj perec* (1922-26) and others.

3.2.2 *Krasnaja nov'* (KN)

The most impressive study of *KN* has been done by Maguire.⁷⁶ Here my intention is merely to outline a few landmarks, drawing on Maguire and newer sources, as well as on my own reading of *KN*. Shortly after his transfer to Glavpolitprosvet in Moscow in January 1921, the 37-year old veteran Bolshevik A.K.Voronskij was appointed (in early February) by Krupskaja, head of Glavpolitprosvet and Lenin's wife, to become head of the editorial section. Only days later, on February 5, Voronskij proposed to the board of Glavpolitprosvet to launch a journal *Krasnaja nov'*. The same day he and Krupskaja co-signed a letter to the Politburo.⁷⁷

Na zasedanii 5/II s.g. Komitet Glavpolitprosveta postanovil izdat' periodičeskij žurnal (predpolagaetsja nazvat' *Krasnaja nov'*). V žurnale namečajutsja otdely: literaturno-chudožestvennyj, politiko-ėkonomičeskij, publicistečeskij, naučnyj, informacionnyj, bibliografičeskij. Žurnal rassčityvaetsja na novogo čitatelja: slušatelej rabočih fakul'tetov, komandnyh kursov, sovetskich kursov, sovetskich i partijnyh škol. Ob'em žurnala 14-15 pečatnyh listov. Vychodit' budet odin raz v poltora - dva mesjaca v količestve 15000 ěkzempljarov. V glave žurnala budet postavlena literaturnaja kollegija,

⁷⁶ Maguire 1987.

⁷⁷ Smirnov 1964:213-15; Kuprijanovskij 1982:217.

podobrannaja po namečajuščimsja otdelam, o čem v nastojaščee vremja vedutsja sootvetstvujuščie peregovory s avtoritetnymi učenyi, chudožnikami i partijnyimi tovariščami. Spisok členov redakcionnoj kollegii dopolnitel'no budet soobščén. Rukovodstvo organizacionnoj rabotoj poručaetsja tov. Voronskomu, zavedujuščemu redakcionno-izdatel'skim podotdelom Glavpolitprosveta. Vedutsja takže peregovory s Gosizdatom otnositel'no slijanija otdel'nyh žurnalov v odin pri Glavpolitprosvete. [...].⁷⁸

The quotation outlines the new journal's profile, intended readership and organization and illustrates that Voronskij's initial tasks were organizational, not literary. At the founding meeting in Lenin's office in early 1921 in the Kremlin, Voronskij was appointed main editor and Gor'kij literary editor. Voronskij commented on the founding meeting in his speech at the 6-year jubilee of *KN* in 1927.⁷⁹ In a memorial article from December 1936 "Vstreči i besedy s Maksimom Gor'kim",⁸⁰ Voronskij relates that he discussed the possibility of launching *KN* with Lenin and Krupskaja before the founding meeting which he dates to February, and that they recommended that he involve Gor'kij. On 28 March Lenin had requested his secretary to provide a complete set of *Rabočij kraj*, adding that Gor'kij recommended the proletarian poets Žižin, Artamonov og Semenovskij. These three were central in Voronskij's group portrait "Pesni severnogo rabočego kraja".⁸¹ The fact that Lenin bothered to check out Voronskij before arranging the founding meeting in his own office is a measure of the importance he, and Krupskaja, attributed to the venture.

The appointment of the well-educated veteran Voronskij may also have been influenced by the majority of party members during the NEP-period 1921-28, as

⁷⁸ Quoted in Smirnov 1964:215. (At its meeting on 5 February The Committee of Glavpolitprosvet decided to issue a periodical journal (proposed name *Krasnaja nov*). These sections are envisaged: literature, politics-economics, journalism, science, information, bibliography. The journal is directed at the new reader: students of workers' faculties, commander courses, soviet courses, soviet and party schools. The size of the journal will be 14-15 printed lists (1 printed list = 4,000 printed letters; *auth.comm.*). It will appear once every 1,5 - 2 months in an edition of 15,000 copies. At the head of the journal will be appointed a literary board, arranged into outlined sections presently being discussed with competent scientists, artists and party comrades. A list of board members will be made public later. The leadership of the organizational work is entrusted to comrade Voronskij, leader of the editorial-publishing subsection of Glavpolitprosvet. Talks are also being conducted with Gosizdat regarding the fusion of separate journals into one at Glavpolitprosvet. [...]).

⁷⁹ Cf. "Iz prošlogo" in *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna*, Voronskij 1927b:199-205; and Koz'min 1985:88; 94-95.

⁸⁰ Voronskij 1987a:52-73.

⁸¹ *KN* 1921#2:215-222, cf. 5.1.2.

mentioned in 1.0, being young and inexperienced with little education. The first issue of *KN* appeared in June 1921 and totalled 300 pages with articles by Lenin, Krupskaja, Lunačarskij, Bucharin, Radek and Frunze, to mention the most prominent contributors. The disappointingly meagre literary contingent - *Partizany. Rasskazy* by the unknown *sibirjak* Vsev. Ivanov, *Golodajuščie* by the senior peasant writer Pod'jačev, *Sovremennye častuški* by Semenovskij and poems by Požarov and Kolokolov - contrasted with the journal's subtitle: *literaturno-chudožestvennyj i naučno-publicističeskij žurnal*. The non-appearance of the journal's literary editor Gor'kij, despite Voronskij's reminder in a letter dated 24 March 1921,⁸² can be ascribed to factors I shall address in 3.2.7. However, after the first early issues the literary contributions improved and *KN* established itself as the leading literary journal of the early 1920s, including the first years after 1925 when the "thick" monthly *Novyj mir* started to be published.

KN was, intentionally or not,⁸³ a Soviet parallel to the comprehensive journals of the 1700 and 1800 century. As shown by Maguire Voronskij, in his double role as main editor and writer/contributor, cast *KN* in the mould of a Russian journal tradition stretching back to the "encyclopedic" journals of the 1700s, e.g. *Trudoljubovaja pčela* (1756) by Sumarokov, which developed into the "thick" (*tolstye*) journals of the 1800s. The "thick" journals in which literature and literary criticism accounted for at least half of each issue, played a key role in Russian intellectual life during the entire 1800s. Their heyday was over by 1884 when censorship stopped *Otečestvennye zapiski*. From then newspapers took over as the main vehicles of news and debate. Some "thick" journals opposed this trend and appeared in the late 1800s, e.g. *Russkoe bogatstvo* and in 1897 the first legal Russian Marxist journal: *Novoe slovo*. The bimonthly "thick" journals could not compete with daily newspapers in terms of events, and at the same time specialized scientific and artistic publications made their entry, e.g. the elitist symbolist literary journals *Mir iskusstva* (1889-1904) and *Vesy* (1904-1909). Technical progress and reduced

⁸² *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:9.

⁸³ Maguire 1987:36ff. argues that the Bolsheviks in launching *KN* deliberately sought to duplicate the very influential "thick" journals from the 1840s onwards, thereby appropriating badly needed legitimacy.

illiteracy also facilitated increased publishing of books. It was no longer necessarily the case that fiction first appeared in journals and then in books. This served to diminish the role of the "thick" journal. The last such journals were *Evropejskij vestnik* and *Russkoe bogatstvo* which ceased to appear alongside P.Struve's *Russkaja mysl'* shortly after 1917.⁸⁴

In this perspective the launching in 1921 of *KN* can, as noted in 1.0, be seen as an ambitious attempt by the RKP(b) to play a decisive role in Soviet *belles-lettres* in the era of NEP. At this time the party needed both domestic and international legitimacy, as discussed in 1.0. By 1921 Lenin's deteriorating state of health and the emerging succession struggle had become an issue to be reckoned with.⁸⁵ Towards the end of 1921 he fell seriously ill and could only attend parts of the 11th Party Congress in March 1922. He suffered his first known brain stroke in May 1922.⁸⁶ As noted in 1.0, Stalin was at this time actively maneuvering: from 1922 he was the only Bolshevik simultaneously to be a member of the 4 most important centres of power: The CK, the Politburo, the Orgburo and the Secretariat. Moreover, in April 1922 he became Secretary General of the CK, which conferred on him extensive control of the daily running of the RKP(b).⁸⁷

The initial edition of 15000 copies of *KN* was very ambitious, as Voronskij acknowledges in "Iz prošlogo",⁸⁸ in view of the scarcity of printing paper, the intended readership, and the famine. Nonetheless, the first issue of *KN* was reportedly torn away, necessitating the printing of an additional 10,000 copies - an unheard of success. As per March 1921 RKP(b) membership has been estimated at 730,000⁸⁹ of which only 5-8% or 36,000-58,000 individuals had intermediary or higher

⁸⁴ Surkov 1967 (IV):280ff.

⁸⁵ Volkogonov 1994a (II):323ff.

⁸⁶ Volkogonov (1994a(II):328) emphasizes that Lenin's decision to extradite *en masse* intellectuals in August-September 1922 took place at a time when he was mentally incapacitated, e.g. could not perform elementary arithmetic.

⁸⁷ Schapiro 1978:207ff.; 245; Deutscher 1977:232-235; Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:59-62.

⁸⁸ Voronskij 1927b:202.

⁸⁹ Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:56-57.

education.⁹⁰ Adjusting for party purges in the period to January 1922, when membership figures fell to 515,000, and adjusting also for improved literacy figures,⁹¹ one can estimate the potential readership figures within the RKP(b) to around 40,000 individuals in mid-1921 when the first issue of *KN* appeared. It is difficult to assess the size of the non-party readership. Adjusting for a certain level of recirculation of the 25,000 copies through libraries, it must therefore be assumed that the journal could reach large sections of those with intermediary and higher education within - and to a less extent outside - the RKP(b). Subsequent editions in 1922 were reduced to 8,000 and in 1923 to 7,000, whereafter figures stabilized at around 11,000.⁹² In the period June 1921 - December 1927 a total of 59 issues of *KN* appeared (1921:4; 1922:6; 1923:7; 1924:8; 1925:10; 1926:12; 1927:12), each issue containing an average of 300-400 pages, cf. 7.3.

During Voronskij' editorship 1921-27 important works were published in *KN*, e.g. Gor'kij's *Moi universitety*, *Delo Artamonovyč*, and the first chapters of *Žžn' Klima Samgina*; *Golyj god* (excerpts) by Piln'jak; *Bronepoezd No.14-69* by Vsev. Ivanov; *Cement* by Gladkov; *Peremena* by Šaginjan; *Barsuki* by Leonov; *Virineja* by Sejfullina; *Konarmija og Odesskie rasskazy* by Babel', *Aëlita* and *Golubye goroda* by A.Tolstoj; *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva* by Ognev; *Kaščeeva cep'* by Prišvin; *Razin Stepan* by Čapygin, *Zavist'* by Oleša; *Anna Snegina* and *Rus' Sovetskaja* by Esenin; *Duma pro Opanasa* by Bagrickij; *Sami* and several ballads by Tichonov as well as many poems by Majakovskij and Aseev. All in all some 75 prose writers, 104 poets and 101 critics appeared in *KN* under Voronskij's helmsmanship 1921-27.⁹³ In Maguire's estimate *KN*'s strength, which put it ahead of other thick literary journals, was its offer of a consistent body of theory, vigorous criticism and an impressive array of *belles-lettres*.⁹⁴ The most frequently published writer in *KN* was Vs.Ivanov,

⁹⁰ Schapiro 1978:237.

⁹¹ The 1920s were characterized by intensive training of party cadres. In 1927-28 there were more than 40,000 party schools, study groups and organized courses of all kinds gathering a total of 750,000 students (Schapiro 1978:347).

⁹² Maguire 1987:17.

⁹³ Dinerštejn 1983:537.

⁹⁴ Maguire 1987:437.

recommended initially by Gor'kij. Ironically, Vs.Ivanov was to succeed Voronskij as member of the editorial board in 1927, and he and Voronskij at this time became estranged. Trifonov estimates that art and literature averaged 20% of the contents in *KN* during Voronskij's editorship,⁹⁵ which is less than Maguire's estimate of about one third.⁹⁶ In some cases entries Voronskij could have published in *KN* - e.g. by Mandel'stam, Pasternak, Zoščenko, Libedinskij and others, cf. 5.1.3. - were instead relegated to the almanac *Naši dni*.⁹⁷

Another early Voronskij favourite among the fellow travellers was Pil'njak, who was considered the most outstanding new Soviet writer in the wake of *Gol'j god* (1921). It was no coincidence that Pil'njak received 10 pages in Trockij's *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) - more than any other writer. Pil'njak became a main contributor to *KN* from the autumn of 1921. It is illuminating that Pil'njak's last contribution to *KN* coincided with Voronskij's departure from the journal.

After Voronskij left *KN* in April 1927 the journal quickly deteriorated in quality and scope⁹⁸ and was eventually disbanded in the difficult war year 1942, after 22 years of existence. Clark observes that it was one of the very few major literary thick journals founded under NEP not to survive.⁹⁹ Maguire saw the deterioration of all thick journals, not just *KN*, in the second half of the 1920s as emblematic of overall political ossification, and concluded that by 1928 *KN*'s job was done anyway.¹⁰⁰ The two final issues of *KN* (1942#1-2 and 1942#3-4) only contained 110 and 160 pages respectively, i.e. only a third of the volume found in the early issues from 1921-22.

⁹⁵ Trifonov 1983:534.

⁹⁶ Maguire 1987:379.

⁹⁷ *Naši dni* was initially edited by Veresaev. In its first issue (1922#1), which featured contributions by e.g. Pasternak and Zoščenko (none of these were major contributors to *KN*), Voronskij published a commemorative article "Pamjati V.G. Korolenko". In 1922#2 - featuring e.g. articles by Libedinskij, Gladkov and Fedin, proletarian writers Voronskij disapproved of - he is listed as editor. In issue 1923#1(3) no editor is specified. While I do not have information regarding issue no.4, Voronskij is once again listed as editor in issue 1925#1(5) in which he published the article "Na raznye temy". His reappearance as editor at this time is intriguing in view of the problems he was experiencing in late 1924/early 1925 at *KN*, cf. 3.2.3.

⁹⁸ Maguire 1987:435

⁹⁹ Clark 1991:217.

¹⁰⁰ Maguire 1987:376-378;436-437.

When the journal was terminated in 1942 the editorial board was composed of N.Aseev, V.Bachmet'ev, Vs.Ivanov, E. Kovalčuk (main editor), A.Tvardovskij, A.Fadeev and M. Šaginjan. The very last issue was introduced by "Prikaz Narodnogo Komissara Oborony" on the occasion of the 1 May celebrations, ordering all armed units to perform their utmost. It also contained, *inter alia*, 3 patriotic war poems by Anna Achmatova.¹⁰¹

Seen in isolation the 71 articles Voronskij published during 6 years in *KN* 1921-27, cf. 7.2-7.3, were fewer than the 370 articles he had published in *Rabočij kraj* during 2 ½ years 1918-20. Yet if we add his 10 books 1923-28, cf. 7.4, and consider his other assignments already noted, there is all reason to conclude that he thrived at *KN*. Considering Voronskij's great contribution as editor of *KN* 1921-27 and his eventual fate, it is a measure of his status as a non-person from 1935 that e.g. *Bol'shevistskaja pečat'. Sbornik materialov*, published by *Politizdat pri CKVK (b)*, Moscow 1940, fails to mention Voronskij.

3.2.3 From main editor to member of editorial board

Voronskij's position and influence in *KN* can be conveniently sub-grouped into 4 periods: a) March 1921- mid-1924: main editor; b) mid-1924 - April 1927: member of editorial board of 3 (except January-February 1925); April 1927- November/December 1927: nominally member of editorial board of 4, but did not attend, and d) from November/December 1927 onwards: formally resigned from editorial board.

From its launching in early 1921 until mid-1924 Voronskij remained main editor of *KN*, with the exiled Gor'kij as literary editor, cf. 3.2.7. While there was an editorial board, Voronskij dominated as main editor. In *KN* 1924#5 (22):341 we find listed "Otvstvennyj redaktor - A.Voronskij". In the next issue *KN* 1924#6 (23):363 we find: "Redakcionnaja kolegija: A.Voronskij, F.Raskoľ'nikov, V.Sorin". Voronskij's demotion was brought to a climax half a year later in *KN* 1925#1(26):335 where it is briefly stated "Redakcionnaja kolegija", without specification of individual names. In *KN* 1925#2(27):292 however we find "Redakcionnaja kolegija:

¹⁰¹ *KN* 1942#3-4:56-57 "Pervyj dal'nobojnyj v Leningrade, "Nastuplenie" and "Pesnja o leningradskoj materi" (pp.56-57).

A.Voronskij, V.Sorin, Em. Jaroslavskij".

The change in late 1924 came as a result of the success by people around *Na postu*, *Okjabr'* and *Molodaja gvardija* in having their representative Raskol'nikov elected to *KN*'s editorial board. Raskol'nikov attempted to elicit Gor'kij's support, but in a letter dated 26 January 1925 Gor'kij categorically rejected co-operation with a journal where Raskol'nikov played a prominent role. It is possible that Gor'kij from his exile in Sorrento also contacted Bucharin, the editor of *Pravda* and member of the Politburo, who also served as co-member of the board with Voronskij in *Prožektor* 1923-27, to secure Voronskij's reinstatement on *KN*'s board. *Pravda* printed an article on 11 February in support of Voronskij.¹⁰² In a letter to Voronskij dated 12 February 1925 Gor'kij quoted in detail from his letter to Raskol'nikov and thereby gave Voronskij his full support. In a letter dated 6 March 1925 Voronskij informed Gor'kij that Raskol'nikov had been replaced with Jaroslavskij, who was not associated with *Na postu*, and that it was again possible for Voronskij to work at *KN*. Voronskij furthermore writes: "V verchach napostovcy terjat poraženija. Delu éтому pomogaet t.Bucharin".¹⁰³ Voronskij was reinstated in late February 1925, but as shown above only as member of the *KN* editorial board. Contemporaries did not doubt that Gor'kij's intervention had been decisive for Voronskij's reinstatement.¹⁰⁴ But the respite was only to last until April 1927. The editorial board with Voronskij, Sorin and Jaroslavskij lasted for nearly 2 years. In *KN* 1927#7(54):255 readers were informed that "Redakcionnaja kolegija: Vs.Vasil'evskij, A.Voronskij, F.Raskol'nikov, V.Friče". In *KN* 1927#11(58):247 the following was announced: "Redakcionnaja kolegija: Vs.Vasil'evskij, F.Raskol'nikov, V.Friče".

3.2.4 *Literaturščana, voronščana and krasnonovščana*

Voronskij's own early editorial objectives at *KN* in the new period of NEP

¹⁰² Choate 1987:184.

¹⁰³ "In higher echelons the napostovcy are suffering a defeat. Comrade Bucharin is helping in this matter" (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 1, 1964:18).

¹⁰⁴ Primočkina 1995:70-71.

appear in his letter dated 21 April 1922 to Lenin.¹⁰⁵ With the letter he enclosed a copy of *KN* 1922#2(6), defending *KN*'s emerging literary profile:

[...]. Teper' neskol'ko slov o "literaturščine", peregruženosti belletristikoj" i pr. V protivovos "starikam", počti sploš' belogvardejcam i nytikam, ja zadalsja cel'ju dat' i "vyvesti" v svet gruppu molodych belletristov - našich ili blizkich nam [...]. Vse oni iz Krasnoj Armii, iz podlinnych nizov, s krasnoarmejskimi zvezdami [...]. Imejte v vidu, čto Vsev. Ivanov - eto pervaja bomba, razorvavšajasja uže sredi Zajcevych i Zamjatinyh. Uveren, čto budut i drugie [...].¹⁰⁶

These comments were evidently occasioned by criticism of *KN*'s increasingly literary profile. *KN* 1921#1 and #2 were sub-divided into *politiko-ekonomičeskij otdel, iskusstvo i žžn', otdel naučno-popul'jarnyj, vnutri sovetskoj Rossii, inostrannoe obozrenie, iz prošlogo, v porjadke diskussii, iz zarubežnoj pressy*, reflecting the journal's encyclopedic character. Yet in *KN*1921#3 the first 3 sub-divisions had disappeared and had been replaced by a long list of literary articles and poetry amounting to some 300 pages, interspersed by a few ideological articles. As mentioned in 1.0 Gor'kij, before being *de facto* forced to leave Russia on 16 October 1921 due to his long-standing differences with Lenin,¹⁰⁷ had edited the 3 first issues of *KN*, i.e. *KN* 1921#1-3. The preponderance of literary articles had become apparent already in *KN* 1921#3,¹⁰⁸ and Voronskij, after assuming the role of literary editor from issue #4, had further strengthened this trend. Carr inaccurately states that "But

¹⁰⁵ The publication of Voronskij's correspondence with Lenin (Smirnov 1964) was the single most significant element in the process of exoneration and rehabilitation of Voronskij from 1957. Voronskij's ties with Lenin were also emphasized in the lecture by Kuprijanovskij in October 1984 at the centennial conference to commemorate Voronskij's birth (Koz'min 1985:83-87).

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Smirnov 1964:216 [...]. Now some words about 'literariness', 'overflow of belles-lettres' etc. In contrast with 'the old ones', almost completely white-guards and moaners, I have set myself the task of 'uncovering' and publishing a group of young writers - ours or close to us [...]. All of them are from the Red Army, from the real grass roots, decorated with Red Army stars [...]. Bear in mind that Vsev.Ivanov is the first bomb, who has shattered the Zajcevs and Zamjatins. I am convinced that there will be others [...]. (cf. also Dement'ev 1982:6).

¹⁰⁷ Kjetsaa 1994: 257; Figs 1997:773,783-785; Spiridonova 1998:212.

¹⁰⁸ As noted in 2.1 Lenin and Gor'kij had markedly different views of literature. Thus Smirnov (1964: 217) describes i.a. the disagreement between Lenin and Gor'kij in March 1921 when Lenin, Krupskaja, Gor'kij and Voronskij met in Lenin's quarters in the Kremlin in order to launch *KN*. Gor'kij presented Lenin with some newly translated works, among them a volume of Indian fables. Lenin was angry at this unnecessary waste of resources in the face of other pressing needs in Soviet Russia, cf. also 4.1.

the literary items always came first", ¹⁰⁹ which misses this early reorientation of editorial policy. After Gor'kij's departure, Voronskij as sole editor bore the responsibility of this change of editorial policy. Voronskij's (and Gor'kij's) literary reorientation of *KN* testifies to his editorial independence. This independence was reinforced by the emerging succession crisis after Lenin's illness from May 1922. ¹¹⁰ It also depended to some extent on Agitprop's failure in the era of NEP to involve itself seriously in literary matters before 1923, when the reorientation had become permanent.

Voronskij's rapid transformation of *KN* into a vehicle for his literary aesthetics caused accusations of "*voronščina*" and "*krasnonovščina*" by his critics, and an acrimonious dispute ensued. ¹¹¹ Thus in *Na postu* in early 1924 Il. Vardin published a lengthy article expressively entitled "Voronščinu neobchodimo likvidirovat'", diagnosing the malady "*voronščina*":

V čem osnovnaja ošibka tov.Voronskogo i ego storonnikov? V tom, što oni nedoocenivajut *političeskogo* značenija literatury, što oni pereocenivajut "ob"ektivnyj moment" v tvorčestve popučnikov, što oni nejasno predstavljajut sebe soveršenno isključitel'noe položenie literatury v epochu gigantskoj vojny klassov. Literaturnaja politika tov.Voronskogo eto - faktičeski naša tradicionnaja, "počti-marksistskaja" [...], intelligentskaja, progressivno-kul'turničeskaja politika. Ona v obščem pravil'no učityvaet značenie kul'turnogo nasledstva, bolee ili menee pravil'no stavit vopros ob istoričeskoj preemstvennosti, no okazyvaetsja soveršenno bespomoščnoj v razrešenii aktivnyh političeskich zadač proletariata v oblasti literatury. Malo togo: v uslovijach revoljucionnoj epochi eto tradicionnaja literaturnaja politika faktičeski prevraščaetsja v orudie, za kotoroe razbitaja na glavných pozicijach buržuazija uchitrujaetsja ucepit'sja. Na našich glazach politika t.Voronskogo prevratilas' v politiku anti-revoljucionnuju. [...]. ¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Carr 1958 (I):53.

¹¹⁰ Husband 1997:266.

¹¹¹ Kasack 1992:1408.

¹¹² Vardin, in *Na postu* 1924#1(5):9-10 (Wherein lies the fundamental mistake of comrade Voronskij and his adherents? In their neglect of the *political* significance of literature, in the overestimation of the "objective element" in the work of the fellow travellers, in their vague conceptualization of a unique role for literature in the epoch of gigantic class war. The literary policy of comrade Voronskij is actually our traditional "semi-Marxist" [...], intellectual, progressive-cultural policy. In general this policy correctly teaches the significance of the cultural heritage, it more or less correctly questions historical continuity, but it is completely helpless when faced with the need to resolve active political tasks of the proletariat in the field of literature. Moreover: under the conditions of the revolutionary epoch this traditional literary policy is in reality transformed into an instrument, which the bourgeoisie, beaten on the main issues, contrives to grab. In our eyes the policy of comrade Voronskij has been transformed into an anti-revolutionary policy [...]).

As shown by Choate, the most savage and pogromist attacks against Voronskij, alleging *inter alia* Voronskyism to be "literary Trotskyism", were published in *Zvezda* in February 1925.¹¹³ Later Voronskij, as we shall see in his article 4.2.15 "O federaciji sovjetskich pisatelej" (1927), concluded retrospectively that a virtual crusade had been launched against the "criminal and vicious *krasnonovščina*".

3.2.5 Lev Trockij

It is not known if Voronskij met Lev Davidovič Trockij¹¹⁴ (1879-1940) before he was promoted to Moscow. Most probably he established contact with Trockij soon after his accession to the editorship of *KN*. This would have been natural given Voronskij's new importance and their shared intellectualism and interests in literature. In addition - a point no one seems to have commented on but which new material cited below seems to suggest - Voronskij's marriage to a Jew and Trockij's Jewish background may have provided an additional link. As noted Voronskij was also literary editor in *Pravda* 1921-22, and Trockij's articles in *Pravda* 1922-23 which went into *Literatura i revolucija* (1923) must have struck a common chord. Trockij first appeared in *KN* in mid-1922.¹¹⁵ Prišvin relates that on 24 August 1922 he was informed by Voronskij that there was little hope of having Prišvin's novel *Rab obez'janij* published. Prišvin then decided to write to Trockij, perhaps on Voronskij's advice. A little later, in September, Prišvin came to the editorial offices of *KN*:

[...]. Vošel Voronskij i, vzjav menja za ruku, provel v pustuju komnatu i tam peredal otvet Trockogo po telefonu o moej povesti "Rab obez'janij": Priznaju za vešč'ju krupnye chudožestvennye dostoinstva, no s političeskoj točki zrenija ona splošč' kontrrevoljucionna. [...].¹¹⁶

It seems odd that Prišvin should need to visit Voronskij at *KN* to get Trockij's

¹¹³ Choate 1987:174-176.

¹¹⁴ Pseudonym for Bronštejn.

¹¹⁵ "Delo bylo v Ispanii". *KN* 1922#3(7):123-143. See below for a list of Trockij's contributions to *KN*.

¹¹⁶ Prišvin 1995: 267 ([...]. Voronskij entered, took me by the arm, and took me into the empty room where he gave me Trockij's answer, which he had received by telephone, about my story *Rab obez'janij*: I acknowledge that the work has strong artistic qualities, but from a political point of view it is thoroughly contra-revolutionary [...]).

answer unless Voronskij acted in an intermediary role and was close to Trockij. The nuances between Trockij's and Voronskij's views on the key issue of proletarian culture which were pointed out by McLean at an early stage, were later obfuscated. ¹¹⁷ Trockij asserted in *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) that it was of no avail in the transitional society to develop a specific proletarian culture and literature since the imminent world revolution and classless society would render all this obsolete. Voronskij argued in 4.2.7 "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (1923), as we shall see later, that a proletarian literature necessarily would develop in the future Soviet Union. Voronskij's opponents later muddled this distinction and claimed that Trockij and Voronskij both rejected proletarian literature as such.

Soviet sources maintained that Voronskij became a Trotskyite from 1926. ¹¹⁸ Voronskaja stated that "V 1926g otec primknul k trockistskoj opoziciji, čotja, kažetsja, ešče v 1923g podpisal kakoe-to zajavlenie". ¹¹⁹ Some Western scholars shared the view that Voronskij only declared himself a Trotskyite from 1926, e.g. Broué who listed Voronskij among Trockij's intimates, but only in the second half of the 1920s. ¹²⁰ Akimov insisted that Voronskij's Trotskyism was limited to a few erroneous statements in 1924, that Voronskij was opposed to the theory of permanent revolution and that Voronskij did not share Trockij's views on classical literature. ¹²¹ The parallels in the political fortunes of Trockij and Voronskij were noted by Maguire. Not convinced of any collaboration between the two, he could not exclude that their largely concurrent views on fellow travellers and proletarian culture may have been coincidental. ¹²² As argued by Choate, Voronskij largely shared Trockij's views on proletarian culture, and I agree with his proposition that Voronskij must be

¹¹⁷ McLean 1949:194-195.

¹¹⁸ Dement'ev 1987:19-20.

¹¹⁹ Voronskaja 1997:86 (In 1926 father joined the Trotskyite opposition, though he had apparently already signed in 1923 some kind of declaration).

¹²⁰ Broué 1988:420-421.

¹²¹ Akimov 1979:272-273.

¹²² Maguire 1987:417-420.

considered a Trotskyite from 1923-1924 onwards.¹²³ Ovsjannikov interpreted Choate (1987) to the effect that Voronskij's arrest as late as January 1929 showed that he had succeeded in concealing his true sympathies.¹²⁴ Belaja rejected Choate's views as based on suppositions, instead affirming that Voronskij's ideas were intrinsically different from Trockij's during the 1920s.¹²⁵ Yet as conceded by Voronskij in May 1936 to the CKK VKP(b) he shared Trockij's views on proletarian culture and admitted adherence to the Trotskyite opposition from 1923.¹²⁶

In view of these differences and the decisive impact of Trockij on Voronskij's ultimate fate, I find it appropriate to briefly recapitulate the salient points in Trockij's career 1923-28, including one new finding, that have a bearing on Voronskij. Contrary to the expectations and hopes of many, Trockij failed to represent Lenin's views on the succession at the 10th Party Congress in April 1923.¹²⁷ Having thus spoiled this chance to use Lenin's authority against Stalin, Trockij in October 1923 eventually addressed a letter to the CK RKP(b) accusing the party leadership of inefficiency and dictatorial exclusiveness.¹²⁸ Voronskij (together with Smirnov and Bubnov who were editorial advisers to *KN* but who signed in other capacities, cf. below) were among the 46 who signed a letter to the Politburo in October 1923 in support of Trockij's letter sent one week before. Most of the 46 communists who signed the so-called "Platform of the 46",¹²⁹ which was more explicit than Trockij's letter in its criticism, were close to Trockij and the formulations reflected his views:

¹²³ *ibid.* pp.49-56;71-81.

¹²⁴ Ovsjannikov 1992:197.

¹²⁵ Belaja 1989:42-46 and 337-338.

¹²⁶ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:290.

¹²⁷ Husband 1997:267.

¹²⁸ Egge 1993:145; Volkogonov 1994b, (II):17-18.

¹²⁹ Among the others to sign were the vice chairman of Gosplan and VSNCH SSSR G.Pjatakov, the deputy leader of the RSFSR Narkom for agriculture V.Obolevskij, Moscow's military commander N.Muratov, the leader of Agitprom CK RKP(b) A.Bubnov, the editor of the newspaper *Trud* V.Kosior, the leader of Politupravljenija RKKK V.Antonov-Ovseenko, the leader of Politotdel of Moscow military district L.Serebrjakov, the editor of the newspapers *Bednot* and *Kommunar* L.Sosnovskij and the People's Commissar for Post and Telegraph I.Smirnov (Ovsjannikov 1992:195-196; Volkogonov 1994b, II:17). Maguire 1987:418 and Choate 1987:54 only mention that Smirnov and Bubnov signed qua members of the editorial board of *KN*, which is misleading.

[...] sekretarskaja ierarchija, ierarchija partii vse v bol'sej stepeni podbiraet sostav konferencij i s'ezdov, kotorye vse v bol'sej stepeni stanovjatsja rasporjaditel'nymi soveščanijami étoj ierarchii...; Frakcionnyj režim dolžen byt' ustranen - i éto dolžny sdelat' v pervuju očered' ego nasaditeli; on dolžen byt' zamenen režimom tovariščeskogo edinstva i vntri-partijnoj demokratii. [...].¹³⁰

Voronskij's signature proved fateful, at least if we are to judge by his "confession" quoted in 3.3. below. The Politburo then accused Trockij of "factionalism", which Trockij rejected in a letter to the Plenum of the CK where he also appeared in person. Figes notes that Trockij's attendance at this meeting, which was confirmed only in 1990¹³¹, has been missed by Trockij's main biographers - Deutscher and Broué, and is understandably not mentioned by Maguire or Choate. Much of the heated debate seems to have involved Trockij being a Jew: Trockij rejected allegations of "Bonapartism", claiming that he twice had turned down proposals by Lenin for higher office, in 1917 (Commissar of the Interior) and in September 1922 (Deputy Chairman of Sovnarkom). In Trockij's view a Jew in these prominent positions would further inflame anti-Semitism. This helps to explain why Voronskij, married to a Jew, on several occasions, cf. 3.2.10, criticized "Judophobia", and may also explain a further common bond between Trockij and Voronskij. This aspect has not been noted by scholars who have commented on the Trockij-Voronskij relationship. In any event, the meeting censured Trockij by 102 votes to 2 for "factionalism", after which Trockij in the view of Figes was finished as a major force.¹³²

Trockij had in reality already lost the power struggle against Stalin. He was relegated to passivity, and could do little to stop Frunze being appointed Deputy Commissar of War in the spring of 1924, contrary to Trockij's wish.¹³³ Trockij in his autobiography states that although he for some time had seen the co-operation

¹³⁰ Quoted in Volkogonov 1994b, (II):17-18 ([...] the secretarial hierarchy, the hierarchy of the party, increasingly takes on the structure of conferences and congresses, which increasingly become the ceremonial meetings of this hierarchy ..; The fractional regime must be eliminated - and this has to be done primarily by its propagators; it has to be replaced by a regime of comradely unity and intra-party democracy [...]).

¹³¹ Figes 1997:803.

¹³² *ibid.*

¹³³ Trockij 1991:487.

between Stalin, Kamenev and Zinov'ev take shape in order to isolate him, he had been ill during the whole autumn and winter of 1923. In January 1924 the Politburo was forced to convene in the bed-ridden Trockij's own quarters. Trockij stated that he was ill in large parts of 1924, plagued by continuous bouts of fever.¹³⁴ In May 1924, however, he was well enough to intervene decisively on Voronskij's behalf at the meeting on literature in the Press Section of the CK RKP(b). The conference resolution e.g. called for continued acceptance of fellow travellers, to deny any single group literary hegemony and to chair regular meetings in the Press Section involving writers and Communist critics to survey literary developments.¹³⁵ The Trockij-led faction upholding Voronskij's views comprised Ter-Vaganjan, Polonskij, Bucharin, Radek, Jakovlev, Osinskij and Lunačarskij while the opposing faction consisted of Vardin, Raskol'nikov, Lelevič, Averbach and others.¹³⁶ In the second half of July 1924 Trockij's interest in literary issues surfaced in a letter he sent several writers:

По инициативе Николая Ивановича Бухарина, предлагают собрат' предварительное совещание товарищей, интересующихся художественной литературой, литературной критикой, с целью установления более точного отношения партии к литературе. Те или другие выводы и предложения совещания (если бы после обмена мнений удалось к таким прийти) могли бы быть предложены Политбюро ЦК. Совещание назначено на 26 июля с.г. в среду в 11 часов утра в помещении Революционного Совета (Знаменка, 23). Состав совещания по соглашению с тов. Бухариным назначен следующий: Л.Б.Камнев, Бухарин, Троцкий, Осинский, Меšчеряков, Šmidt, Воронский, В.яч. Полонский, Яковлев, Пятаков, Преображенский, Попов-Дубровский, Стеклов, Лебедев-Полжanskij.

L.Trockij ¹³⁷

¹³⁴ *ibid.* pp.474-475, 492.

¹³⁵ Eimermacher 1972:241. The same source gives summaries of the speeches by Voronskij, Vardin, Osinskij, Raskol'nikov, Polonskij, Bucharin, Jakubovskij, Radek, Trockij, Rodov, Lunačarskij, Meščerjakov and Keržencev (pp.192-242).

¹³⁶ Choate 1987:157-158. Choate also explains that the conference had been planned since the year before by Lunačarskij and Voronskij.

¹³⁷ Quoted in Volkogonov 1994b, (I):370-371 (At the initiative of Nikolaj Ivanovič Bucharin, I propose to gather a preparatory meeting of comrades who take an interest in fiction, literary criticism, with the aim of defining more accurately the relationship of the party towards literature. Whatever conclusions and propositions the meeting may reach (if after our exchange of opinions this proves possible) could be presented to the Politburo of the Central Committee. The meeting has been scheduled for 26 July this year at 11 o'clock a.m. at the premises of the Revolutionary War Soviet (Znamenka, 23). With the agreement of comrade Bucharin, the following participants will attend: L.B.Kamnev, Bucharin, Trockij, Osinskij, Meščerjakov, Šmidt, Voronskij, Vjač. Polonskij, Jakovlev, Pjatakov, Preobraženskij, Popov-Dubrovskij, Steklov, Lebedev-Poljanskij. L.Trockij).

The letter shows that Trockij and Bucharin considered Voronskij one of the central figures in Soviet *belles-lettres* at the time. It also reflects the fading fortunes of Trockij and Bucharin's rising star. These two had shared exile in Vienna and New York, and as noted earlier both belonged to the internationalist, intellectual camp in the Bolshevik leadership,¹³⁸ which also explains their natural mutual affinity with Voronskij. Bucharin had become a full member of the Politburo from June 1924, and in several respects he replaced Trockij as the most prominent politician to take an interest in *belles-lettres*.

Trockij was dismissed in January 1925 as Commissar for War and supreme commander of The Red Army and Fleet and succeeded by his deputy Frunze. This took place after attacks of "Trotskyism"¹³⁹ during the autumn of 1924. Not coincidentally, Voronskij was removed from *KN* also in January 1925, cf. 3.2.3. In May 1925 Trockij was appointed leader of the concessions committee, and responsible for the electro-technical and scientific-technical industry. It was not before April 1926 that Trockij, Kamenev and Zinov'ev agreed on a "united front" against Stalin's party apparatus. Trockij formulated the united front's thesis that Russia was confronted by *Thermidor*, i.e. that Stalin's party bureaucracy would asphyxiate the revolutionary tradition and the masses. "The united front" were not allowed to appear in the party-controlled press. During the summer of 1927 Voronskij was one of over 3,000 Left Oppositionists who signed the "Declaration of the 84", and he was also mentioned explicitly in a letter dated 1 July 1927 from Trockij, Zinov'ev and Evdokimov to the CK of the All-Russian Union of Metalworkers.¹⁴⁰ The Left Oppositionists were unable to print their programme prior to the 15th Party Congress in December 1927. Trockij, Zinov'ev and Kamenev were all removed from their remaining positions. In October 1926 Trockij had been removed from the Politburo, he was excluded from the CK in October 1927 and from the VKP(b) in November 1927. In January 1928 he was exiled, first to Siberia and

¹³⁸ Figes 1997:291-292.

¹³⁹ Schapiro 1978:292-293; Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:66ff.; Trockij 1991:489-495).

¹⁴⁰ Choate 1998:xvi, 455-459.

from 1929 abroad.¹⁴¹ Voronskij was excluded from the VKP(b) in February 1928.

It must therefore have been politically significant that Trockij appeared in *KN* as late as in 1926 and 1927.¹⁴² Voronskaja relates how her father phoned Trockij one evening late in 1926 to convince him to attend a literary evening, and that Trockij was persuaded into attending.¹⁴³ In my reading Voronskij's sympathies with Trockij are apparent as early as in 4.2.7 "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (1923). Here, as also Choate has pointed out,¹⁴⁴ Trockij is cited no less than 9 times (Lenin only twice), and *Literatura i revoljucija* 3 times.¹⁴⁵ The increasing disillusionment noticable in Voronskij's writings in the second half of the 1920s was therefore also a result of his adherency to Trockij's lost cause.

3.2.6 Michail Frunze

When Voronskij was reinstated to the editorial board of *KN* in March 1925, his old comrade Michail Vasilevič Frunze (1885-1925) must have had some bearing on the decision. As mentioned in 3.1 Voronskij in December 1918 succeeded Frunze as chairman of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk Gubispolkom. Repulsing by mid-June 1919 the white forces of Kolčak beyond Ufa, Frunze quickly established himself as a victorious leader of the 4th Army on the eastern front.¹⁴⁶ He disagreed early with

¹⁴¹ Schapiro 1978:309; Rosenfeldt, Pape 1992:72-74, Trockij 1991:514ff.

¹⁴² Trockij contributed to *KN* 3 times in all, first in 1922 with the article "Delo bylo v Ispanii", *KN* 1922#3(7):123-143. This is about how Trockij in 1916 was expelled from France to Spain and how he was surveilled by Spanish police. A continuation, in which he describes his stay in Spain, his travel to Cuba and America, did not appear until 4 years later, which is significant, in *KN* 1926#1(36): 127-159. His last contribution, an article entitled "Radio, nauka, tehnika i obščestvo", was published in *KN* 1927#2(49):131-143, featuring his speech on 1 March 1926 at the opening of The first All-Union Meeting of the Society of the Friends of the Radio. In addition Dajan reviewed Trockij's book on Lenin "L.D. Trockij. O Lenine" in *KN* 1924#2(21):343 and Zonin reviewed Trockij's *Vorogy byta. Épocha "kul'turničestva" i ee zadači* in *KN* 1925#1(26):311. *KN* 1926#8(44):243 featured an advertisement for Trockij's *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) (which had been published by the publishing house *Krasnaja nov'*) just above an advertisement for Voronskij's *Na styke* (1923), both priced at 2 roubles.

¹⁴³ Voronskaja 1997:85.

¹⁴⁴ Choate 1987:149

¹⁴⁵ By contrast, Trockij is only mentioned once in 4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'" (1923), in a 6-page passage which was included in Voronskij 1924b, but excluded when this article was republished in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf.4.2.4.

¹⁴⁶ Figs 1997:653-654.

Trockij on several military-strategic issues, which had become evident by the 9th Party Congress in March 1922.¹⁴⁷ Frunze's power basis as member of the CK from March 1921 was strengthened when he became Deputy Commissar for War in March 1924, against Trockij's wish¹⁴⁸ and also succeeded Trockij as Commissar for War in January 1925. From mid-1924 as mentioned above, Bucharin had replaced Trockij as the highest ranking official with a keen interest in *belles-lettres*, cf. 3.1. Whereas Voronskij felt an intellectual affinity with Trockij and until 1926 with Bucharin, his relationship with Frunze was based more on friendship.

In the spring of 1925 a literary commission chaired by Frunze was appointed to prepare the groundwork of what subsequently became the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925, cf. 7.12. At a meeting of the commission in March 1925 Frunze defended Voronskij and *KN* against the *napostovcy*, whom he sharply criticized. On this occasion he also spoke in favour of a rapprochement between Voronskij and the proletarian writers.¹⁴⁹

The CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 drafted by Bucharin, was published in *Pravda* on 1 July 1925.¹⁵⁰ As explained in 1.0 and further elaborated in 2.3, this resolution was consistent with the party policy 1921-28 of "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres*. This policy was consistent with Trockij's *Literatura i revolucija* (1923), and with the views of Voronskij and Pereval. The affirmation of "neutral vigilance" enabled Voronskij from mid-1925 onwards to maintain the prominent presence in *KN* of fellow travellers, which had characterized *KN* 1921-24/25, but which had been interrupted by Voronskij's editorial absence from late 1924 to March 1925, cf. 3.2.

Much to Voronskij's chagrin his main political benefactor Frunze died unexpectedly 30 October 1925, only 40 years of age. Voronskij's special affinities with, and dependence on, Frunze have been described by his granddaughter.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Wieczynski 1979 (XII):39-41.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:18. Cf. also Eimermacher 1972:295-299 for a German translation of Frunze's speech.

¹⁵⁰ Schapiro 1978:350; Choate 1987:187.

¹⁵¹ Voronskaja 1995.

Frunze had been undergoing surgery for cancer, but died of a heart seizure as a result of reaction to chloroform anesthesia.

The Frunze-Voronskij relationship dated from 1907. Frunze is mentioned twice in Voronskij's autobiography, both times when the party in 1907 sent Voronskij (Valentin) to the Vladimir area to counteract the organizational disruption following the arrest of Frunze (Arsenij),¹⁵² whom he encounters, sentenced to death, in the Vladimir prison. The Voronskij and Frunze families got acquainted 1918-19 when they had neighbouring dachas in the Garelinskij Park outside Ivanovo.¹⁵³ Voronskij as mentioned above replaced Frunze as chairman of Gubispolkom in Ivanovo-Voznesensk in December 1918. In *Rabočij kraj* 17 November 1920 Voronskij published a salutary article on Frunze which he later republished in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924), as one of 5 political silhouettes.¹⁵⁴ Frunze was among the prominent contributors to the very first issue of *KN*.¹⁵⁵ On being promoted as Trockij's successor to Commissar for War in January 1925, Frunze consulted his friend Voronskij on the phrasing of his letter of acceptance.¹⁵⁶ The grief - and frustration - that Frunze's death aroused in Voronskij can be read from his obituary in *KN* in late 1925.¹⁵⁷ The sudden disappearance of Voronskij's major political benefactor was further exacerbated with the publication in *Novyj mir* in May 1926 of Pil'njak's story *Povest' nepogašennoj luny* with the dedication "Voronskomu, družeski" ("To Voronskij, in friendship").¹⁵⁸ The story, which implied Stalin's connivance in

¹⁵² Voronskij 1970:140.

¹⁵³ Voronskaja 1995:230.

¹⁵⁴ The others were Lenin (2), Petlinja (1) and Sennikov (1).

¹⁵⁵ "Edinaja voennaja doktrina i Krasnaja Armija", *KN* 1921#1:94-106.

¹⁵⁶ Voronskaja 1995:234.

¹⁵⁷ The obituary of Frunze in *KN* 1925#9(34):277-279, cf. 7.13, carried Voronskij's name, in contrast with the unsigned obituary of F. Dzeržinskij in *KN* 1926#9(44):118-121, which Efremov (1984:28) without further reasoning attributes to Voronskij. The Frunze obituary did not have the customary black ornamental frame, which the obituary of Dzeržinskij did have. In comparison, the 3 obituaries of Lenin in *KN* 1924#1(18):135-69, one of which Voronskij wrote, were adorned with the customary black frame.

¹⁵⁸ *Novyj mir* 1926#5:5-33. In a foreword Pil'njak stated that the story was fictitious, and had nothing to do with Frunze. Cf. also Vaagan 2000a (forthcoming).

Frunze's death, was immediately suppressed. In the June issue Voronskij published a disclaimer in an open letter to the editors:

V 5-ij knige žurnala *Novyj mir* napečatana povest' Borisa Pil'njaka *Povest' nepogašenoj luny*. Chotja v predislovii povesti i soderžitsja ukazanie, što reč' idet ne o smerti tov. Frunze, no vsja bytovaja obstanovka, nekotorye podrobnosti i.t.d. govorjat ob obratnom. Povest' deržit čitatelja v uverennosti, što obstoitel'stva, pri kotorych umer 'komandarm', geroj povesti, sootvetsvujut dejstvitel'nym obstoitel'stvam i faktam, soprovoždavšim smert' tov. Frunze. Podobnoe izobraženie gluboko pečal'nogo i tragičeskogo sobytija javljaetsja ne tol'ko grubejšim iskaženiem ego, krajne oskorbitel'nym dlja samoj pamjati tov. Frunze, no i zlostnoj klevetoy na našu partiju VKP(b). Povest' posvjaščena mne. Vvidu togo, što podobnoe posvjaščenie dlja menja, kak dlja kommunista, v vysokoj stepeni oskorbitel'no i moglo by nabrosit' ten' na moe partijnoe imja, zajavljaju, što ja s negodovaniem otvergaju èto posvjaščenie.

S tovariščeskim privetom A.Voronskij. ¹⁵⁹

Accompanying the letter was a notice from the editors fully supporting Voronskij's disclaimer, and also apologizing for having published the story.¹⁶⁰ Voronskij's political and literary career was now clearly in decline. His dependence on Frunze was evident in a bitter complaint made to his daughter after his disgrace: "Byl by živ Michail Vasilevič, on nikogda by ne dal menja na rasterzanie ètoj drjani".¹⁶¹

3.2.7 Maksim Gor'kij ¹⁶²

The failure of Maksim Gor'kij (Peškov) (1868-1936) to appear in the first issue

¹⁵⁹ *Novyj mir* 1926#6:184 (In the fifth edition of *Novyj mir* the story by Boris Pil'njak *Story of the Unextinguished Moon* is printed. Although the foreword notifies that the story is not about the death of comrade Frunze, the whole setting and some details etc. testify to the contrary. The story makes readers believe that the conditions surrounding the death of the "commander", the hero of the story, correspond to actual conditions and facts accompanying the death of comrade Frunze. Such a conceptualization of the profoundly sorrowful and tragic event is not merely a most uncouth distortion and extremely affronting to the memory of comrade Frunze, but also an evil slandering of our party VKP(b). The story is dedicated to me. Since such a dedication is an affront to me as a communist, is offensive in the extreme and could cast a shadow on my party name, I declare that I indignantly reject this dedication. With comradely greetings A.Voronskij).

¹⁶⁰ *Novyj mir* 1926#6:184

¹⁶¹ Voronskaja 1995:236 (Were Michail Vasil'evič alive, he would never have let this trash tear me apart).

¹⁶² This is an adaptation of my paper "Blizost' i otдалennost'. Voronskij i Gor'kij", presented at the international Gor'kij conference *Maksim Gor'kij na poroge XXI stoletija. XXVIII Gor'kovskie čtenija*, Nižnij Novgorod, 27-28 March 1998 (forthcoming in conference proceedings).

of *KN* must be attributed to his enforced exile from October 1921.¹⁶³ His long-standing differences with Lenin from 1909 had by 1921 grown into deep disillusionment. Distressed i.a. with the Bolshevik terror, the suppression of writers and intellectuals (many of whom Gor'kij personally saved), the crushing of the Kronstadt rebellion and the Bolshevik indifference to the famine crisis, by 1921 he had become opposed to the Bolshevik regime. The last straws proved to be the Bolshevik regime's foot-dragging in granting the dying Blok a visa for treatment abroad,¹⁶⁴ and its handling of the famine relief talks with President Hoover and Fridtjof Nansen, both incidents in August 1921.¹⁶⁵

In addition the personal chemistry between Voronskij and Gor'kij may have been lacking. The 54-year-old veteran Gor'kij probably did not approve of a 37-year old Bolshevik superior with several obvious editorial shortcomings.¹⁶⁶ In "Vstreči i besedy s Maksimom Gor'kim" written in December 1936¹⁶⁷ Voronskij e.g. wrote that Gor'kij was rude during their first meeting after the foundation meeting in Lenin's office. Voronskij nonetheless credited Gor'kij for having counselled him to attract the Serapion brethren Vs. Ivanov and B.Pil'njak, the peasant poet Pod"jačev and others to *KN*. I might add that Vs.Ivanov, Semenov og Zoščenko received Voronskij in a reserved manner when he - following Gor'kij's advice - visited them in Petrograd and procured Vs. Ivanov's manuscript *Bronepoezd No.14-69*, which quickly appeared in *KN*.¹⁶⁸ Voronskij also wrote that Gor'kij wanted *KN* to publish Lunc's drama *Vne zakona*, which Voronskij declined on ideological grounds.

According to Voronskij the *KN* editorial board (i.e. effectively Voronskij himself) and Gor'kij did not correspond regularly until 1924.¹⁶⁹ Instead of appointing

¹⁶³ Dement'ev 1982:5; Kjetsaa 1994:257; Figes 1997:819.

¹⁶⁴ Figes 1997:783-785.

¹⁶⁵ Spiridonova 1998:212-213.

¹⁶⁶ Voronskij 1927b:201-202.

¹⁶⁷ Voronskij 1987a:58.

¹⁶⁸ *KN* 1922#5(9):75-124.

¹⁶⁹ The Voronskij - Gor'kij correspondence consists of 59 letters (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 2, 1965:7-79), cf. 7.5. Although Voronskij prior to 1924 wrote four letters to Gor'kij, including 2 letters after the launching of *KN*, he apparently received no answer from Gor'kij before January 1924. Most

a successor to Gor'kij as literary editor, Voronskij from October 1921 assumed responsibility also for the literary section of *KN*, thereby extending his own organizational mandate in the quoted letter above. Although Gor'kij's name was still listed, the journal from 1921 appeared "bez ego podderžki", in Voronskij's own wording.¹⁷⁰ This deviates somewhat from what Voronskij stated in "Iz prošlogo", the speech he made in February 1927 at the 6-year jubilee of *KN*. Here he stated that although Gor'kij left in the autumn of 1921, he retained a constant link with the editors of *KN*, sending manuscripts and offering advice.¹⁷¹ In 1923, one and a half year after his exile, Gor'kij's first contribution was published in *KN*.¹⁷² Thereafter he became a regular contributor. As noted in 3.2.3 he also actively defended Voronskij and opposed VAPP in the years prior to Voronskij's departure from *KN* in April 1927. The correspondence between Gor'kij and Voronskij confirms that the exiled Gor'kij in Sorrento continued to exert influence from 1924 on *KN*'s literary profile. Voronskij claims that among Gor'kij's many manuscripts the best were published in *KN*, while the rest with Gor'kij's approval were redirected to *Novyj mir*, *Pravda*, *Izvestija*, *Zvezda* og *Prožektor*.¹⁷³ The *Na postu* group were aware of Gor'kij's differences with Lenin and knew that the real reason for his exile from October 1921 was not just his health, and they considered Gor'kij a fellow traveller.¹⁷⁴

In his literary portrait of Gor'kij - "O Gor'kom" - published in *Pravda* 7-8 April 1926 and subsequently in *KN*¹⁷⁵ - Voronskij reviewed 4 volumes of Gor'kij's collected works.¹⁷⁶ He pays tribute to Gor'kij as a master of the word and the lively story, who now was experiencing an "Indian Summer". He concluded that Gor'kij

of their correspondence (41 letters) took place 1925-27. It was suspended temporarily in March 1928 and was resumed in November-December 1930 before it finally stopped in April 1931, coinciding with Gor'kij's final return to the Soviet Union. Cf. Vaagan 1998a.

¹⁷⁰ Voronskij 1987a:61.

¹⁷¹ Voronskij 1927b:202.

¹⁷² The first part of the serial *Avtobiografičeskie rasskazy*, *KN* 1923#1(11):3-43.

¹⁷³ Voronskij 1987a:63.

¹⁷⁴ Primočkina 1995:70.

¹⁷⁵ *Pravda* 1926#79:2 (7 April) and #80:3 (8 April); *KN* 1926#4(39):200-213.

¹⁷⁶ Maksim Gor'kij, *Sobranie sočinenij*, Vols. XVI-XIX, Moscow 1926.

was still the country's foremost writer. Voronskij was favourable to Gor'kij's reminiscences of L.Tolstoj, and he emphasized the stories "Požary", "Bugrov", "Storož", *Moi universitety*, "Ošel'nik", "Ėnacharka", "Leonid Andreev", and some other smaller pieces in Volume XVII as "Pauk", "Gorodok" and "Sadovnik". Yet he was negative with regard to the experimental "Karamora", both for stylistic and ideological reasons. In general Voronskij harboured several ideological reservations to Gor'kij's authorship, to which he deemed it necessary to draw attention. He reacted e.g. to Gor'kij's pessimism in viewing nature as evil and capricious. It was only man with his reason, according to Voronskij, whom Gor'kij took a positive view of.

Voronskij found e.g. that Gor'kij constructed a dichotomy between reflection and instinct, between brain and heart. Voronskij saw the self-taught Gor'kij as anti-intellectual and sceptical to abstract experience. In support of this he referred to the negative portrayal of philosophers, radicals and populists (*narodniki*) in Gor'kij's work. Gor'kij took a detached view of revolutionaries, and this in Voronskij's opinion was indicative of a breach between thought and the instinct of life. This, he alleged, was the tragedy of the revolution, and caused Gor'kij's doubts and troubles, his pessimism. Voronskij maintained that the aging "stormy petrel" (*burevestnik*) presently wrote better, but had less appeal. The reason lay in his faulty ideology. Gor'kij's view of art was biased; he ought to clear up his inner contradictions, Voronskij maintained, and not create an artificial dichotomy between man and cosmos. Voronskij furthermore reminded readers that Gor'kij liked to depict the peasant romantically, but that he conveniently omitted the dirt, ignorance and exploitation in the countryside. Voronskij found Gor'kij guilty of distorting the revolutionary perspective and deplored Gor'kij's scepticism to intellectuals and their vanguard role vis-a-vis the peasantry.

In her paper on the Gor'kij-Voronskij relationship presented at the 1984 Voronskij centennial conference Dikušina failed to mention Gor'kij's 10-year exile to Sorrento 1921-31. She instead emphasized their concurring estimates of Esenin, Vs. Ivanov, Leonov Sejfullina, Babel', Tichonov, Oleša, Fadeev, Platonov, Čapogin, Prišvin and others, but noted that they differed in their estimates of Pil'njak and

Proust.¹⁷⁷ Gor'kij supported Voronskij's emphasis on the importance and relevance of the classical literary heritage to Soviet literature reflected in 4.2.6 "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach" (1923). Gor'kij was also favourable of Voronskij's programme article 4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremenost'" (1923). Omitting Voronskij's criticism above, Dikušina mentions the differences between the two, including Gor'kij's reproach dated 17 April 1926 in response to Voronskij's portrait "O Gor'kom". In his letter Gor'kij i.a. stated:

[...] ja ne soglasen s Vašim uravneniem truda derevni s trudom goroda, ja sčitaju ego ne toľko ošibočnym, no i - vrednym, osobenno vrednym u nas i v naši dni [...]. Odno delo pojmat' zajca, drugoe - ělektričestvo [...].¹⁷⁸

The letter is illustrative also because towards the end Gor'kij invites familiarity and inquires about Voronskij's first name and patronymic. During 5 years of correspondence and even after his intervention at *KN* on Voronskij's behalf in early 1925 Gor'kij had addressed the younger Voronskij neutrally as "tov. Voronskij". Another point omitted by Dikušina is Gor'kij's support for Gladkov's *Cement* (1925). In 1923 Voronskij had written favourably about Gladkov's *Cement* in a group portrait, cf. 5.1.2. Later he adopted a deprecating attitude to Gladkov, which had led Gladkov to complain to Gor'kij. *Cement* was serialized in *KN* 1925#1-6(26-31), coinciding partly with Voronskij's absence from *KN* January-February 1925, cf. 3.2.3. In a letter dated 17 March 1928 Gor'kij lectured Voronskij concerning the article 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928). Here Gor'kij ironically referred to the attempts at existential harmonization, and he rejected Voronskij's attributions of a chaotic view of nature as well as philosophical and artistic solipsism.

The differences between Gor'kij and Voronskij surfaced when Voronskij in a letter dated 27 November 1927, after his departure from *KN* in April, offensively confronted Gor'kij with rumours that Gor'kij had referred ironically to him as a venerable critic (*mastyj kritik*). Responding in a letter dated 4 December 1927

¹⁷⁷ Also omitted is Gladkov, whom they sharply disagreed about, cf. Primočkina 1992:73.

¹⁷⁸ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 2, 1965:31-32 ([...] I do not agree with your equalization of peasant labour with city labour; I consider this not only fallacious but also detrimental, especially detrimental in our country these days [...] one thing is to catch a hare, another is electricity [...]).

Gor'kij confirmed the allegation, but he made it clear that he respected Voronskij, particularly after having read the first part of his autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*, and assured Voronskij he had not used the term ironically. Gor'kij claimed he had adopted the term because Voronskij had not shown Vs. Ivanov (Voronskij's successor at *KN*) the respect Gor'kij thought he deserved. Their disagreement nonetheless did not prevent Voronskij in his letter of 27 November 1927 from stating:

[...]. Raschodjas' s Vami v nekotorych vzgljadach, ja vsega ljubil i uvažal i cenil Vaš čudesnij talant. "Krasnaja nov" byla v osnovnom stavkoj na Vas, na Vašu literaturnuju tradiciju, ja skazal by - na Vašu školu. Kogda ja dumal i dumaju o literature naših dnej - ja vsega deržu v pamjati Vas - Tolstogo i Vas [...].¹⁷⁹

As I shall comment on further in 3.3, Gor'kij stood up in defence of Voronskij on his departure from *KN* in April 1927 by temporarily halting the publication of *Žizn' Klima Samgina* in *KN*. Their correspondence was temporarily suspended from March 1928 to November-December 1930, coinciding partly with Voronskij's expulsion from the party in February 1928, and his exile to Lipetsk lasting until late 1929, cf. 7.1. It is very unlikely that the non-party member Gor'kij, with his long record of differences with Lenin who returned to the Soviet Union for the third time in April 1931, had any bearing on Voronskij's reinstatement in the VKP(b) in April 1930. Although few details are known, it is far more probable that he played a role in Voronskij's securing in September 1930 of a position in Gosizdat as senior editor of Russian classics.¹⁸⁰

During the celebrations of Gor'kij's 60th anniversary in the spring and summer of 1928 when he visited Soviet Russia, Fadeev managed to convince the leader of RAPP, Averbach, of the tactical correctness in ceasing to cast Gor'kij as a "non-proletarian" and "non-socialist" writer. Averbach and Gor'kij thereafter

¹⁷⁹ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 2, 1965:59-60 ([...]). While I have disagreed with you on some points, I have always loved, respected and appreciated your wonderful talent. *Krasnaja nov'* was fundamentally a tribute to you, to your literary tradition, I could say - to your school. When I thought and think about contemporary literature, I always keep you in mind - Tolstoj and you. [...].

¹⁸⁰ Vaagan 1998a:3.

exchanged letters where Gor'kij for first time encouraged RAPP to involve itself in the convening of an All-Union Conference of Soviet Writers, an idea which became the precursor to the Union of Soviet Writers from 1932.¹⁸¹ Gor'kij moreover contributed to *Na literaturnom postu*, a journal from which he had previously distanced himself,¹⁸² and he allowed himself to be drawn into the internal strife in RAPP 1931-32 which led to the CK VKP(b) resolution of 24 April 1932 "O perestrojke literaturno-chudožestvennykh organizacij". He refused, however, to write the biography Stalin wanted.¹⁸³

3.2.8 The All-Russian Writers' Union¹⁸⁴

From the mid-1920s Voronskij engaged himself in the fellow traveller-dominated All-Russian Writers' Union - Vserossijskij sojuz pisatelej (VSP). Soviet encyclopedias are taciturn on non-proletarian literary organizations prior to 1932-34, and little is known about VSP. It had been established in 1918 as Moskovskij professional'nyj sojuz pisatelej. Renamed in 1920 to VSP, it added from 1922 the epithet "Soviet" to its title: Vserossijskij sojuz sovetkich pistaelej, or VSSP, although the term VSP remained more usual. The VSP was a loosely organized body whose primary concern was - as the "*professional'nyj*" of its original name showed - literary excellence.¹⁸⁵ Its loose organization and elitism combined to keep membership figures low, at approximately 350 at most, and the VSP as an organization moreover retained a low political profile, though several fellow traveller members were less discreet, e.g. Zamjatin, who was a prominent founding member of the Petrograd section of VSP, cf. 5.6.1. In 4.2.5 "Na perevale"(1923) Voronskij

¹⁸¹ Primočkina 1995:73-74.

¹⁸² Primočkina (1995:74) argues that Gor'kij's change of attitude towards VAPP/RAPP from complete rejection 1920-27 til gradual reconciliation 1928-32 was caused by Gor'kij's belief that he exerted a positive stylistic and substantive influence on the proletarian literature.

¹⁸³ Spiridonova 1998:213-217.

¹⁸⁴ I am grateful to comments on this issue from Dr. Aleksandr Ju. Galuškin, Moscow, who is presently involved in a larger study of Russian and Soviet literary organizations.

¹⁸⁵ Thomson 1972:88.

noted that it was boring (*skuka*) at the VSP. Yet addressing in May 1924 the Press Section of the CK RKP(b) he noted that the VSP had evolved progressively and was headed by the communist Kasatkin, cf. 4.2.8. From 1925 many members of VSP published in the new "thick" monthly journal *Novyj mir*.¹⁸⁶ Although many outstanding fellow travellers - and a few proletarians - were published there - Babel', Pasternak, Majakovskij, Leonov, A. Tolstoj, Prišvin, Gor'kij and the proletarian Gladkov - it ranked second to *KN*.¹⁸⁷ In 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ'" (1927) Voronskij emphasized that the VSP accepted the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 on art and literature.

By 1928, when a campaign was unleashed against Pil'njak and Zamjatin who were the leaders of the Moscow and Leningrad sections of the VSP, it was in decline, as were most other literary organizations other than VAPP/RAPP. It is not known if Voronskij joined VSP as an ordinary member before being elected to its board in February 1925,¹⁸⁸ but I doubt this. His own prominence and also his mentor role vis-a-vis Pereval as well as the "heretic" Zamjatin's role in VSP may have kept him from joining. Preferring the thick journal to the literary organization,¹⁸⁹ he until the mid-1920s had no need for VSP. But on his election in February 1925, he was as noted earlier experiencing severe problems at *KN* and may have been seeking other channels, as his listing as editor of *Naši dni* noted earlier also suggested. In February 1926 when V. Veresaev was elected president of VSP, Voronskij was elected to the board along with M.Gerasimov, E.Zozulja, V.Kirillov, V.Lidin, V.L'vov-Rogačevskij, A.Novikov-Priboj, I.Novikov, A.Svirskij, A.Sobol', Ju. Sobolev and A.Ėfros.¹⁹⁰ He was re-elected in February 1927.

The founding meeting of The Federation of Soviet Writers' Unions - Federacija ob"edinenij sovetskich pisatelej (FOSP) took place in January 1927. It had been

¹⁸⁶ Terras 1985:311 states that *Novyj mir* was an organ of the Writers' Union, i.e. VSP, a claim Kasack 1992:846 does not support. The first issue of *Novyj mir* in January 1925 cited Lunačarskij and Steklov as editors and Izvesitija as publisher. No special link with VSP was mentioned.

¹⁸⁷ Nepomnyaschchy 1985:311.

¹⁸⁸ Maguire 1987:408-409.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.* p. 394.

¹⁹⁰ Dement'ev 1967 (I):789.

convened by VAPP, Vserossijskoe obščestvo krest'janskich pisatelej (VOKP) and VSP. The objective was to create a common platform for the affiliated groups on the basis of the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 in the field of art and literature. FOSP had its own publishing house Federacija. Voronskij's *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928) was published by Krug, but his two-volume *Literaturnye portrety* (1928b-1929) were published by Federacija, cf. part 8. Later both Asociacija rabotnikov levogo fronta iskusstva (LEF), Pereval, Kuznica and Literaturnyj centr konstruktivistov joined FOSP.

As to membership numbers Carr gives the following as per 1.10.1925: VAPP:2898, VOKP:709, VSP:360.¹⁹¹ The other groups were significantly less numerous. Carr also mentions that Gusev in *Pravda* 30.4.27 quoted the membership of VSP as 800 and that, according to *Izvestija* 6.5.28, VAPP by then claimed to have 4,800 members distributed among 30 national sections, including members from 80 local proletarian writers' unions.¹⁹² The FOSP publishing house Federacija launched the newspaper *Literaturnaja gazeta*, before being disbanded in 1932.¹⁹³

In January 1927 at the founding meeting of FOSP, Voronskij was member of the VSP-delegation together with V.Veresaev, V.Kirillov, M.Gerasimov, A.Tichonov and A.Svirskij, who were all elected onto the FOSP council.¹⁹⁴ In February 1927 he became board member of the Moscow section of VSP together with V.Veresaev, M.Gerasimov, E.Zozulja, V.Kirillov, V.L'vov-Rogačevskij, V.Lidin, I.Novikov, I. Novokšenov, B.Pil'njak, A.Svirskij, A.Ėfros, while A.Tichonov and A.Novikov-Priboj were elected as candidate members.¹⁹⁵

3.2.9 Pereval

The first issue of the almanac *Pereval* appeared in June 1924, and a note from the editors announced that:

¹⁹¹ Carr 1971(II):400 cites *Žurnalist*, No.1, 1926, p.16.

¹⁹² Carr (ibid.) here quotes I.Rozanov: *Putevoditel' po sovremennoj russkoj literature* (1929:335).

¹⁹³ Lunačarskij (ed.) 1939 (XI):22.

¹⁹⁴ ibid. p.797; cf. also Maguire 1987:32.

¹⁹⁵ Dement'ev 1967(I):800.

[...] Pri redakcii žurnala Krasnaja nov' organizovalas' grupa molodych pisatelej, prozaikov i poëtov. Osnovnoe jadro ich svjazano s Kommunističeskoj partiej i Komsomolom. Drugaja časť bespartijna, no stoit na kommunističeskoj točke zrenija, libo blizka k nej, javljajas' organičeski svjazannoju s raboče-krest'janskoju sredoju. [...].¹⁹⁶

The editors further made it clear that they encouraged young writers identifying with the October Revolution and ideology to submit material. Of particular interest was work which reflected the new everyday factory and industrial life which was neglected in contemporary literature. The link with *KN* was not coincidental since Voronskij was mentor to the group, which was formed in late 1923, having broken away from *Oktjabr'* in reaction to its authoritarian leadership.¹⁹⁷ Belaja who has described the Pereval critics and writers as "the Don Quixotes of the 1920s",¹⁹⁸ states that until 1926 the group kept a low profile.¹⁹⁹ In 1926 the group comprised Kataev, Zarudin, Guber, Prišvin, Malaškin, Bagrickij, Ognev and others. They at first took inspiration from Voronskij's article 4.2.3 "Na perevale"(1923),²⁰⁰ which extolled Voronskij's view that Soviet literature was lacking and at a crossroads. The aesthetical premises of the Pereval critics and writers were initially inspired by Voronskij's article 4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'" (1923).²⁰¹ In the first issue of the almanac *Pereval* Voronskij is listed as a co-editor, along with Veselij, Golodnyj and Kazin. In the successive 3 issues (1924, 1925 and 1926) he is not listed as co-editor. His only contributions to *Pereval* were the article "Prolazy i podchalimy" in the fourth *Pereval* almanac in 1926, and his portrait of Marcel Proust in the sixth and final *Pereval* almanac in 1928, cf. 7.2. This confirms his distance to the group. A total of 8 volumes of stories were published 1924-32, but

¹⁹⁶ *Pereval* 1924#1:3 ([...] A group of young writers of prose and poetry has been formed at the editorial offices of the journal *Krasnaja nov'*. Its core is affiliated with the Communist Party and the Komsomol. Another segment is non-partisan but supports the Communist point of view, or is close to it, being organically linked with the worker-peasant milieu [...]).

¹⁹⁷ Maguire 1987:397-408.

¹⁹⁸ Belaja 1989:19 states that by the late 1920s many considered the Perevalcy to be Don Quixotes, i.e. they worked for freedom in art when the idea of freedom was becoming ever more dangerous.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.* p.6.

²⁰⁰ *KN* 1923#5(16):312-322, cf. 4.2.4 and 7.3-7.4.

²⁰¹ *KN* 1923#3(15):347-384, cf. 4.2.4 and 7. 3-7.4.

volumes 7 (1930) and 8 (1932) appeared under the titles *Rovesniki* and *Pereval'cy*, respectively.²⁰²

From 1926, when Ležnev and Gorbov joined Pereval and emerged as the group's main theorists, their articles shaped Pereval aesthetics.²⁰³ Ležnev's articles were published in book form in *Sovremenniki* (1927) and *Literaturnye budni* (1929), and Gorbov's in *Poiski Galatej* (1929). Belaja finds that these writers' work together with Voronskij's *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) are interrelated and all directed at the defence of culture, personality and artistic freedom.²⁰⁴ Viewing the revolution as a new kind of renaissance, an idea Voronskij formulated and which inspired Ležnev and Gorbov, post-revolutionary artistic creation was envisioned as a holistic act embracing both the artist and the model.²⁰⁵ This comprehensive view, or in Maguire's phrasing "general" (as opposed to "particular") view,²⁰⁶ refuted many other art and literary critics' and theorists' dichotomies, e.g. "mysl serdečnaja / myslnaja", "jazyk logiki / jazyk obrazov".²⁰⁷ Yet the Pereval group theorists acknowledged the influence of Belinskij and Plechanov, and they claimed with some right that they were Marxists, since about half their adherents in 1925 were members of the party or Komsomol.²⁰⁸

A characteristic feature of Pereval aesthetics was their *KN*-inspired belief in the cognitive aspects of art and in the artist's intuition. This contrasted sharply with LEF's constructivist ideas and VAPP's belief in party dictate. The Pereval writers believed that the new Soviet literature unleashed by the "renaissance" of October

²⁰² Glinka 1954:25. In describing the Pereval group Glinka emphasizes the roles of Voronskij, Ležnev, Gorbov, Zarudin, Kataev, Guber, Sletov, Vichrev and himself. In his comments on Voronskij he states that *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) was long considered by most writers, not just Pereval writers, as the only serious treatment in the whole Soviet literature of the psychology of art. Cf. also Belaja 1989: 338-339.

²⁰³ Belaja 1989:13-15.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.* p.337.

²⁰⁵ *ibid.* pp.212-213.

²⁰⁶ Maguire 1972:98ff.

²⁰⁷ Belaja 1987:30-31.

²⁰⁸ *Pereval* no.5, 1926, was e.g. printed by the publishing house Molodaja gvardija and no. 6, 1928, by Gosizdat.

1917 intuitively would absorb the principles of "life's new truth". The revolution, in their view, was an intensive spiritual movement comprising all mankind's social being and internal world. Those who identified the revolution with only political and economic changes were seen to hold an amputated view of the revolution.²⁰⁹

The Pereval issued a manifesto in *KN* in early 1927 signed by 56 writers.²¹⁰ It would seem that Voronskij thereby dropped some of his guarded distance to the group. The manifesto rejected VAPP and exhorted all energetic writers in the SSSR to support and join Pereval to form a literary centre based on the CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 "O politike partii v oblasti chudožestvennoj literatury", cf. 7.12. Possibly Voronskij, in view of the increasing difficulties he met with from 1925, attempted to transform the *Pereval* almanac into an alternative to *KN*. Glinka doubted this and stated that Voronskij kept his distance to the Pereval writers, encouraging them to think and behave as independently as himself, and at their own risk. Struve, however, attributed a more active role to Voronskij, asserting that he used the group and the almanac to construct a bridge between fellow travellers and proletarians.²¹¹ Belaja later seemed to agree with both, noting Voronskij's exile from January 1929 and instead emphasizing the contributions of Ležnev and Gorbov to Pereval.²¹²

The uncompromising wording in the Pereval manifesto, e.g. the references to creating "an artistic centre" in points 8-9, cf. 7.14, did not pass unheeded. When Voronskij was arrested in February 1937 the main accusation was his alleged active part in organizing an "anti-Soviet, Trotskyite terrorist organization preparing acts of terror against the leadership of VKP(b) and the Soviet state".²¹³ The family archive contains a 10-page handwritten statement by Voronskij rejecting these accusations, dated February 1937, from which I have quoted below. In a similar type of confession about Trotskyism dated 20 July 1937, which I shall return to below, he

²⁰⁹ Belaja 1989:7.

²¹⁰ *KN* 1927#2(49):233-236, cf. 7.14.

²¹¹ Struve 1971:229.

²¹² Belaja 1989:12-13; 337ff.

²¹³ Quoted in Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:276. Cf. also 7.15.

also states that he used Pereval from 1927 to further Trotskyist objectives. The charges, which reflect the atmosphere of the witch-hunts following Kirov's death in 1934 and the Moscow trials 1936-38, were distortions of Pereval's attempts to offer a literary alternative to VAPP/RAPP. After Voronskij's departure from KN in April 1927 and the abandonment in April 1928 by the VKP(b) of its policy of "neutral vigilance", many adherents of Pereval left to join RAPP. By 1930 there were only a handful members left in Pereval. Like RAPP itself, Pereval was dissolved in 1932.²¹⁴ Nearly all the Pereval writers and critics were subjected to repression and perished in Stalin's purges in the late 1930s. In 1937 Pereval was accused of being infested with Trotskyist counterrevolutionaries.²¹⁵ Voronskij's handwritten statement dated February 1937 mentioned above, which is previously unpublished, reads as follows: (only the two first of ten pages are quoted):

Pokazanja obvinjaemogo
 (svidetelja).....
193.....g.

O "Perevale"

Literaturnaja grupa "Pereval" organizovalas' vokrug žurnala "Krasnaja Nov" v konce 1924go i vnačale 1925goda. V nee vošli kommunisty-pisateli i bespartijnye. Po vozrastu sotav tože byl pestryj ot mastitogo M.M.Prišvina do komsomol'skich poetov Golodnogo i Svetlova. Pervonačal'no preobladajuščuju rol' v "Perevale" igrali pomimo menja Ognev, Malaškin, Evdokimov, Artem Veselyj, Golodnyj, Svetlov, Nasetkin, Akul'sin, Družinin, Zarudin i dr. "Pereval" organizovalsja v bor'be s napostovcami. Osnovnoe položenija, kotorye on ostaival, svodilis' k sledujuščim punktam:

- 1) Specifika iskusstva zaključaetsja v éstetičeskom poznanii žizni;
- 2) Iskusstvo tem soveršennee, čem ono neposredstvennee i konkretnee.
- 3) Iskusstvo i revolucija dolžny sočetat'sja organičeski, a ne mehaničeski.
- 4) Klassovost' iskusstva ne isključaet, a splošč' i rjadom vključaet ob'ektivnost'.
- 5) Golaja tendencioznost' i prednamerennost' vredit iskusstvu.
- 6) Izučenie klassikov ne est' tol'ko izučenie pamjatnikov prošlogo; oni, klassiki, do sich por i ešče dolgo budut imeť živoje, dejstvjuščee značenie.
- 7) Nado izobražat' živogo čeloveka so vsemi ego dostoinstvami i nedostatkami, izbegat' šampov, agitplakatonosti, i.t.p.
- 8) Nado učityvat', čto strana sovetov vse ešče javljaetsja po preimuščestvu stranoj krest'janskoj i početomu udel'nyj ves popučikov i krest'janstvujuščich pisatelej prodolžitel'noe vremja ves'ma budet značitel'nym, a poka i opredelajuščim. Proletarskoe iskusstvo poka slabee iskusstva popučikov.
- 9) Klassovost' v iskusstve otnjud' ne protivorečit gumanizmu.

²¹⁴ Terras 1985:336; Glinka 1954:42.

²¹⁵ Belaja 1989:19; 351.

K ětim i drugim podobnym položenijam, kotorye razvivalis' mnoju, ja prisoedinil ešče odin važnyj punkt pod vlijaniem statej Trockogo o tom, čo v perehodnyj period diktatura proletariata nevozmožno proletarskoe iskusstvo, kak v moment, kogda preobladajut čisto boevye zadači; v period že socialističeskogo stroitel'stva reč' budet itti uže ne o proletarskom, klassovom iskusstve, a ob iskusstve bezklassovom, socialističeskom. Ětot tezis, odnako, razdelijsja ne vsemi pereval'cami, naprimer, ego ne razdeljal A.Ležnev, i kažetsja, Kataev, a takže Svetlov i Golodnyj. V 1925-26gg "Pereval" bystro razrostalsja i krepil, vključiv v sebja do 60-65 pisatelej i poëtov ser'eznoj literaturnoj kvalifikacii. V period 27-28 godov v "Pereval" v izvestnoj ego časti usililis' Trockistskie nastroenija: ja, Artem Veselij, N.Zarudin, Svetlov, Golodnyj sčitali sebja Trockistami. [...].²¹⁶

As stated in 1.2.1 the content and accuracy of this type of statement, in reality a confession induced by the NKVD on Voronskij's arrest in February 1937, should of course not be exaggerated. Still it cannot be rejected, in my view, as primary source material. Voronskij's defiance is visible when he later in the statement categorically rejects the accusations that Pereval was a terrorist organization preparing attacks on the party and state leadership. His summary of Pereval's views is in fact quite lucid and consistent with what we have already stated. One

²¹⁶ Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it5. (Statement of the accused (witness); About "Pereval"; The literary group "Pereval" was organized in conjunction with the journal "Krasnaja Nov" at the end of 1924 and the beginning of 1925. The membership included communist and partyless writers. In terms of age members varied from the venerable M.M.Prišvin to the Komsomol poets Golodnyj and Svetlov. Apart from myself, the leading roles in "Pereval" were initially played by Ognev, Malaškin, Evdokimov, Artem Veselyj, Golodnyj, Svetlov, Nasetkin, Akul'šin, Družinin, Zarudin and others. "Pereval" was formed to battle the adherents of *Na postu*. The basic positions, which it tried to vindicate, came down to the following points: 1) The specific character of art lies in the aesthetical cognition of life; 2) Art is the more perfect the more it is direct and concrete; 3) Art and the revolution must be created organically, not mechanically; 4) Class art does not exclude, but without exception includes, objectivity; 5) Naked bias and premeditation are harmful to art; 6) The study of the classics does not only involve the study of relics from the past; they, the classics, to this day have, and will have for a long time to come, vivid and real meaning; 7) Living man must be portrayed with all his values and shortcomings; we must avoid clichés and poster agitation and the like; 8) We must learn that the country of soviets is still predominantly a country of peasants, and therefore the specific weight of fellow travellers and peasant-oriented writers will continue to be considerable for some time, and for the time being will even be determinative. Proletarian art is for the present weaker than fellow traveller art; 9) Class-orientation in art in no way contradicts humanism. In addition to these and similar views, which were developed by myself, I added another important point, influenced by the articles of Trockij on the impossibility of a proletarian art during the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that now when only war challenges prevail, but during the period of socialist building the question will not be about proletarian class art, but about classless, socialist art. However, not all members of Pereval agreed with this view. For instance, A.Ležnev, and apparently Kataev, and furthermore Svetlov and Golodnyj did not share this view. In 1925-26 "Pereval" grew quickly and strengthened, comprising up to 60-65 writers and poets with serious literary qualifications. During the period 1927-28 a Trotskyite mood took foothold in "Pereval": I, Veselyj, N.Zarudin, Svetlov, Golodnyj considered ourselves Trotskyites). [...].)

discrepancy, which is repeated later in his confession of Trotskyism signed 27 July 1937 cf. 3.3, is the founding date of Pereval, which Voronskij dates one year later than what other sources claim. Probably this is a mistake by Voronskij.

3.2.10 Voronskij's defence speech 18 April 1927

After his death in January 1924 the canonization of Lenin accelerated. It was only natural that Voronskij in his autobiography emphasized his long-standing intimacy with Lenin going back to 1905, which had influenced Voronskij's appointment as editor of *KN* in 1921. In his speech "Iz prošlogo" at the 6-year jubilee of *KN* in February 1927, ²¹⁷ Voronskij paid tribute to Lenin and acknowledged frankly that at times he had exploited Lenin's interest and involvement in *KN* in order to further the interests of the journal. He even admitted that Lenin had criticized him for accepting articles in *KN* by Bazarov and Suchanov. He deplored that Marxism in the field of *belles-lettres* was becoming completely vulgarized and expressed the hope that *KN* could find common ground together with the new federation of Soviet writers. ²¹⁸ His speech did not go down unnoticed by his opponents. In March 1927 Voronskij felt compelled to send a letter to the chairman (1926-30) of the CKK VKP(b) S.Ordžonikidze in which he rejected accusations of oppositional activity. ²¹⁹ The celebrations were discussed at an extended meeting of the Press Section of the CK VKP(b) on 18 April 1927 to discuss *KN*. Maguire did not have access to the unpublished minutes and based his analysis on secondary sources. ²²⁰ The minutes were not cited by Eimermacher (1972), Choate (1987,1998) or by Belaja (1989) but a few extracts were quoted in Dikušina,Isaeva (1995).²²¹ In Moscow in October 1997 in the IMLI/Gor'kij archives I read through the stenographic minutes from the

²¹⁷ According to *Večernjaja Moskva* 22 February 1927, the jubilee was celebrated on 21 February in Dom Gercena. Gor'kij sent on this occasion a warm congratulatory telegram to Voronskij (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:45).

²¹⁸ Voronskij 1927b:201.

²¹⁹ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:276-279. Cf. also 7.5 and 7.6 fr3-it27.

²²⁰ Maguire 1987:178-182.

²²¹ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:273.

meeting, totalling 130pp.²²² The meeting was chaired by Bumažnyj, and gathered nearly 60 persons. Voronskij, who had been summoned, was obliged to defend his 6-year editorship of *KN* against attacks from many quarters, and the minutes, which have not been published previously, offer valuable insight into his editorship. In the following I shall therefore render some pertinent passages:

Voronskij, who was given the floor first, complained that he had not been informed that it was an extraordinary meeting with almost 60 participants (p.1) The editors of *KN* had not been warned in advance (p.2). Voronskij maintained that many present were unknown to him, and that the rest belonged to the *Na postu* group. He was unable to identify familiar readers of *KN* (p.3). He went on to explain how he had developed the prose and poetry section of *KN* (literaturno-chudožestvennyj otdel prozy i poëzii) to become the dominating feature of *KN* (p.3), and he stated why *KN* over the last 1½ years had rejected 1700 manuscripts, that he alone was not able to check everything, and that Ležnev, employed at *Pravda* and in *KN*, as well as Gorbov and S.Klyčkov assisted in appraising manuscripts:

[...]. U menja rabotaet celoe konsul'tacionnoe bjuro i často my berem vešči ne dlja togo, čtoby pomeščit' v "Krasnoj Novi", a tol'ko dlja togo, čtoby davat' otzyvi. V ètom konsul'tacionnom bjuro glavnoe učastie prinimaet t. Ležnev, rabotajuščij v "Pravde" i v "Krasnoj Novi", tov. Gorbov, koe-kakie rukopisi, esli nužno vypravit' so stilističeskoj storony, ja tol'ko otdaju Sergeju Klyčkovu - èto glavnyj obrazom, so storony stilistiki [...]. Na kakom osnovanii ja otvergaju gromadnoe bol'sinstvo togo materiala, kotoryj prinosilsja? Prežde vsego, ja dolžen skazat', čto čašče vsego temy izbitie, očen' mnogo tem odnositel'no graždanskoj vojny, pri ètom preobladaet batal'nye kartiny. Nužno skazat', čto bol'sinstvo ich pišetsja ne sovsem plochim jazykom i v ètom otnošenii ja vižu kakoe-to otraženie našej revoljucii i prikosnovenie našej revoljucii k demosu, i raboče-krest'janskim nizam, kak-to ottuda idet v našu literaturu možet byt' ne vpolne obrabotannyj, no očen' chorošij jazyk.[...].²²³(p.7).

²²² The minutes are not included in appendices 7.7-7.8, but are registered as follows at *Archiv Gor'kogo*: "Perepiska *Krasnaja nov'* 2-2-1 "Krasnaja nov'. Stenogramma razširennoho zasedanija kollegii otdela pečati CK VKP(b) po povodu o žurnale "Krasnaja nov'" 1927, 18 aprel' (130pp.) KN.N.1559/60". Maguire 1987:178-183 stated he had not read these unpublished minutes, and he based his analysis on secondary sources. He e.g. states (p.179) that between 80-100 people attended, which is at variance with the minutes' figure of 50-60.

²²³ [...]. I have a complete consultative office at work, and we often receive material not for publication in *Krasnaja nov'* but for reviews. In this consultative office comrade Ležnev, who works at *Pravda* and at *KN*, takes part (and) comrade Gorbov, if stylistic alterations are needed, I pass some manuscripts to Sergej Klyčkov - this is mainly a matter of stylistics [...]. On what basis I reject the large majority of material brought in? First and foremost, I must say that more often than not because the themes are hackneyed, many themes regarding the civil war, in which battle scenes prevail. It needs

In the ensuing long passages to p.15, Voronskij elaborates on the selection criteria in choosing articles to *KN*. He also comments on the "publicističeskij otdel" (journalistic section) (p.15): social'no-političeskij, èkonomičeskij, memuarnej otdel, cf. 7.3 for the sections "Za rubežom" and "Ot zemli i goroda" in *KN*. The most controversial sub-section in Voronskij's opinion is presumably "Literaturnye kraja" in which he admits to having waged a battle against *Na postu* (p.17), and he asserts his intention to continue until the bitter end:

[...]. Perechožu k otdelu Literaturnye kraja. Ètot otdel dlja nastojaščego sobranija samyj žgučij. Tut ja vel bor'bu protiv napostovcev i skažu sejčas, što i budu ee vesti poka budu živ ili poka ne ustanovjat'sja normal'nye otnošenija u menja s tovariščami napostovcami. No pravil'no bylo by zdes' skazat', što vo vsej ètoj istorii ja javljajus' passivnoj ženskoj storonoj, a napostovcy aktivnoj mužskoj..[...].²²⁴ (p.17).

Voronskij then rejects allegations of "nacional'naja ograničenost'" (national constrictions) advanced by Bucharin, affirming that on the contrary that he has criticized narrow nationalism in the work of e.g. Pil'njak and Esenin in many articles. Nonetheless he is not prepared to set up a section for foreign literature in *KN*:

[...]. Ja ne mogu do sich por pozvolit' sebe roskoši zavesti innostrannyj otdel.[...].²²⁵ (p.19).

Bucharin's comments are interpreted by Voronskij as evidence that Bucharin cannot have read his literary-critical articles (p.18), and he calls for greater efforts by *Pravda* (Bucharin) on the issue of anti-semitism, cf. 3.2.5. This may reflect Voronskij's sympathy with Trockij and is a measure of his concern for his Jewish wife Sima Solomonovna:

to be said that the majority of these are not badly written language-wise, and in this regard I see a certain reflection of our revolution and our revolution's approach to the demos, for the worker-peasant grassroots, (and) somehow from there a very good language, perhaps not completely embellished, is making its way into our literature. [...]. (p.7).

²²⁴ [...]. I turn now to the section Literaturnye kraja. This section is the most controversial to the present audience. Here I have waged a war against the napostovcy, and I declare now that I shall continue waging this war as long as I am alive or until normal relations are created between myself and the *Na postu* comrades. Yet it would be correct to state here that throughout this dispute I have been the passive female side, and the *Na postu* people have been the (active) male (side).[...]. (p.17).

²²⁵ [...]. I have so far not allowed myself the luxury of introducing a foreign section. [...]. (p.19).

[...]. Ja dolžen skazat', što ja ne men'še borolsja s nacional'noj ograničenost'ju čem Pravda. Ja ne vižu statej o judofobstve, kotorye byli by pomeščeny v Pravde. Gde oni?.....Ja sčitaju, što Pravda nedostatočna boretsja, naprimer, s judofobskimi tendencijami, kotorye sejšas svili sebe pročnoe gnezdo, k sožaleniju daže, v rabočich krugach. [...].²²⁶ (p.19).

At this point the stenographic minutes introduce the lecture by Gusev' (pp.23-56), which is longer than Voronskij's speech. In the ensuing debate the following speakers took the floor: Averbach, Nikoforov, Polonskij, Deev-Chomjakovskij, Raskol'nikov, Fadeev, Gorbov, Knorin, Sorin, Zonin, Libedinskij and Sapožnikov as well as the chairman Bumažnyj. Averbach criticized Voronskij and defended Gusev. Polonskij (p.67), acknowledged certain defects in Voronskij and commented on his own role as chairman at the *KN* -jubilee. Deev-Chomjakovskij (p.75) believed that the peasants had found a mouthpiece through *KN*. Raskol'nikov (p.78ff) claimed Voronskij had misunderstood the party resolution of 18 June 1925, which Voronskij thought did not apply to himself, only to VAPP; he added that Voronskij treated *KN* as his personal asset. Fadeev (p.82ff.) whose portrait Voronskij published at this time cf. 5.4.2, was of the opinion that the central issue was winning over the "temporary" writers, the fellow travellers, to proletarian ideology; furthermore, *KN* and VAPP in Fadeev's view were divided on this matter, and there was not room for both views because:

[...]. Krasnaja nov' - éto est' takoe orudie politiki, kotoroe sejšas na vesach mnogo vesit. [...].²²⁷ (p.84).

Towards the end of the meeting it was decided to curtail the discussion and conclude the meeting. Voronskij was allowed a final comment (p.117ff.) where he reaffirmed that the whole meeting had been set up as a Golgatha and a revenge on *KN*. He declared that he could have convened many communists in support of *KN*, but instead he had been misled:

²²⁶ [...] I must say that I have not grappled less with national narrowmindedness than *Pravda* has. I cannot see any articles on judophobia, which would have been fitting in *Pravda*. Where are these? ... I consider that *Pravda* struggles insufficiently, for instance, with judophobic tendencies which presently are ensconcing themselves, regrettably moreover, in workers' circles.[...]. (p.19).

²²⁷ [...] Krasnaja nov' - this is the kind of political instrument which now weighs considerably on the scales [...]. (p.84).

[...]. Èto sobranie sdelano po special'nomu podboru ljudej i čto zdes' proischodit Golgofa i rasprav s "Krasnoj nov'ju" Ja mog by nazvat' celyj rjad kommunistov, ljudej kotorye čitajut "Krasnyju nov'" a razbirajutsja v nej, ne chuže, čem tov. Zonin, i kotorych zdes' vse že net. I pri tom eti ljudi nikakogo otnošenija k oppozicii ne imejut. A esli by oni byli zdes', to razdavalis' by inye golosa, čem te, kotorye slyšalis' i razdavalis' zdes' sejčas. Ja sčitaju, čto sejčas idet raspravka. [...].²²⁸ (p.117).

An obviously agitated Voronskij at this point directed some obscure accusations against Narbut, who was present in the audience and who protested loudly. Voronskij also indirectly referred to the proletarian boycott of the "heretical" Krug (p.120), the publishing house where he was chairman 1921-27, and was adamant in his defence of the quality of *KN*. He denied that he had attempted to exclude proletarian writers from *KN*:

[...] soveršenno nepravil'no zdes' utverždenie odnositel'no togo, čto ja starajus' kak-to ottesnit' proletarskich pisatelej. Ottesnit' proletarskich pisatelej staraetes' vy, vo vsjakom slučae, ne men'se, čem ja, ot "Krasnoj novi. [...].²²⁹ (p.125).

Yet it was clear that Voronskij did not expect any leniency from his critics:

[...] V čem sol' ètogo sobranija zaključaetsja? V tom, čto vy perešagnut' čerez trup Voronskogo živogo ne možete. V ètom zaključaetsja vse delo. [...].²³⁰ (p.125).

His denial of his alleged Trotskyism must have left some doubts in the audience:

[...]. Tov. Gusev, da ja sočuvstvujju oppozicii, kotoraja sejčas imeetsja, no kategoričeski utverždaju, čto raboty po organizovannoj oppozicii trockistskogo tipa, sredi toj massy pisatelej, v kotoroj ja rabotaju, ja ne vel [...] na sčet moej raboty, na sčet moego trockizma, est' ob'ektivnye fakty [...]. A u menja chvataet

²²⁸ [...] This meeting has been convened through a special selection of people and what is taking place here is a Golgotha and revenge on Krasnaja nov'. I could have convened a whole row of communists, people who read Krasnaja nov' and are at least as familiar with it as comrade Zonin, and who nevertheless are not here. And these people moreover have no relations to the opposition. Had they been here, other voices would have been audible than those which have been heard here now. I consider that this is a revenge. [...] (p.117).

²²⁹ [...] The statement that I somehow am attempting to exclude proletarian writers is completely false. It is you who are attempting to exclude proletarian writers from Krasnaja nov', in any case not less than I. [...] (p.125).

²³⁰ [...] What's really the essence of this meeting? That you cannot walk over the living body of Voronskij. That's what this is all about. [...] (p.125).

mužestva skazat', čto da u menja est' raschoždenija po literaturno-
chudožestvennoj linii, no čto ja storonnik oppozicii ja skazat' éтого ne mogu
[...]. Ja ne protiv federacii. Ja za federaciju. No takim metoda i ee stroit' kak
storojut, delat' nel'zja. [...] ²³¹ (pp.126-127).

Voronskij turned to Gusev, the leader of the Press Section, accusing him of
confusing his personal attitudes with the policy of the Press Section as regards *KN*
(p.128). He reminded Gusev of that part of the CK resolution of 18 June 1925 which
in his opinion granted organizational freedom (cf. 7.12, especially point 14):

[...] no nužno pomnit' o drugoj časti rezoljucii CK, gde govoritsja čto v
predelach opredelénnych, sovetskich i.t.d. dopuskaetsja svoboda
chudožestvennyh gruppиров[...]. Éto nužno tverdo pomnit'. [...] ²³² (p.128).

Concluding his remarks, Voronskij reasserted his conviction that:

[...] Vy pytaetes' sejčas raspravit'sja s voronščinoj mehaničeskim sposobom,
vplot' do snjatija iz "Krasnoj novi". Raspravljajtes'. Éto vaše pravo. Ja mogu
skazat' tol'ko, čto delaete ne chorošee delo, ne potomu, čto ja sižu v "Krasnoj
Novi", a potomu, čto éto udar po sovetskoj literature, po proletarskoj v tom čisle
literature potomu, čto delo ne v moich raznoglasijach odnositel'no tech, kotorye
zdes' vychodili, a delo v ustanovke na pisatelja, kak k nemu podchodit'. Est'
specifičeskie osobennosti u každygo pisatelja, kommunista i ne kommunista, vy
éti voprosy ne učityvaete. Na étoj počve u nas vse vremja proisходili
raznoglasija i budut proisходit'. Étim ja mogu ograničit'sja. [...] ²³³ (p.129).

The chairman Bumažnyj rounded up the meeting by accusing Voronskij of

²³¹ [...] Comrade Gusev, yes I sympathize with the opposition, as it presently exists, but I categorically
declare that I have not engaged in organizing a Trotskyite type of opposition in the circle of writers I
work with [...] as regards my work, as regards my Trotskyism, there are objective facts [...]. But I have
enough courage to say that yes, I have a disagreement in terms of literary-artistic policy, but I cannot
state that I am an adherent of the opposition [...] I am not against the federation. I am for the
federation. But the method of building they are employing is unacceptable.[...]. (pp.126-127).

²³² [...] It is necessary to bear in mind another part of the Central Committee resolution, where it is
stated that the freedom to organize artistic groups exists, within defined, soviet etc confines. This must
firmly kept in mind.[...]. (p.128).

²³³ [...]. You are attempting to eliminate voronščina mechanically, to the extreme of removing (me)
from Krasnaja nov'. Finish me off. This is your right. All I can say is that you are not doing anything
beneficial, not because I'm at Krasnaja nov', but because this is a bolt to soviet literature, including
proletarian literature; it is not a question of my disagreements with those who have turned out here;
it is a question of directing the writer, how to relate to him. There are specific particularities in every
writer, the communist and the non-communist; you are disregarding these matters. There are
continuous disagreements in our country on these matters, and they will continue. Let these remarks
be sufficient. [...] (p.129).

having committed formal mistakes in his presentation, that he had not explained his disagreement with VAPP, and he referred to Narbut's complaint about Voronskij's accusations, a complaint which next day would be presented to the CK VKP(b).

Maguire notes that during the meeting Gusev reportedly criticized the jubilee celebrations of having developed into a "solidarity demonstration from non-party writers' side with the anti-party opposition".²³⁴ Gusev criticized Voronskij later in both *Pravda* and *Izvestija*, which in turn unleashed Voronskij's last article in *KN* "Ob užasnoj krokodile, o federacii pisatelej i fal'sivych frazach".²³⁵ Jaroslavskij, member of the *KN* editorial board, also criticized the jubilee celebration in a letter to Voronskij.²³⁶ Seen in the context of the publication in *KN* in early 1927 of the challenging manifesto of Pereval,²³⁷ and Voronskij's article "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej"²³⁸, not to mention his last contribution quoted above, it came as no surprise that Voronskij from 18 April 1927, willingly or not, left the editorial board of *KN*.

3.3 The period after 1927: disgrace and reflection

Voronskij was favourable to the idea of a broader federation of Soviet writers provided there was room for differing views. His reservations concerning FOSP in January 1927, which he had formulated in "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej", were quickly vindicated. Anything else would have been surprising: As shown in 3.2.8-3.2.9 VAPP, which had been identified as Pereval's major opponent in its manifesto, was by far the numerically stronger organization and in a position to impose its views.

Voronskij's problems with *Na postu/Na literaturnom postu* and VAPP, culminating with his defence speech quoted above and departure from *KN* in April 1927, were commented on in the correspondence between Voronskij and Gor'kij,²³⁹

²³⁴ Maguire 1987:178.

²³⁵ *KN* 1927#6(53):238-249, cf. 7.3.

²³⁶ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:273.

²³⁷ *KN* 1927#2(49):233-236, cf. 7.3 and 7.14.

²³⁸ *KN* 1927#4(51):214-221, cf. 7.3 and 4.2.15.

²³⁹ *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:7-79.

and also in Gor'kij's correspondence with writers like Babel', Gladkov, Leonov, Platonov, Prišvin and Čapygin.²⁴⁰ In a letter to Gladkov from Sorrento dated 21. March 1927 Gor'kij i.a. stated:

[...]. Neskol'ko udivlen ja ironičeskim tonom vašim po adresu A.K. Voronskogo, čeloveka talantlivogo i sumevšego sozdat' chorošij literaturnyj žurnal, nesmotrja na tjaželye uslovija raboty. Mne žal', čto Voronskij uchodit iz "Krasnoj novi", očen' žal'. I stranno, čem i komu on ne ponravilsja? Za pjať let raboty on ne sdelal takih ošibok, kak redaktory "Novogo mira", pomestivšie strannyj rasskaz Pil'njaka [...].²⁴¹

As noted in 3.2.7 Gor'kij, when informed of Voronskij's departure from *KN*,²⁴² requested a stop to the printing of *Žizn' Klima Samgina* in *KN*,²⁴³ and threatened to no longer have any dealings with *KN*. Gor'kij had made a similar threat in a letter dated 20 February 1924 to Voronskij, in reaction to rumours printed in *Izvestija* 19 December 1923#290. It would appear that Gor'kij's threat was not meant literally, since in a letter dated 20 January 1928 to Voronskij's successor at *KN*, Vs. Ivanov, he advised Ivanov to attract new writers like Smirnov, Borisov and others to *KN*. The publication of *Žizn' Klima Samgina* in *KN* was in fact resumed in May 1928.²⁴⁴

This coincided with the celebrations during the spring and summer of 1928 of Gor'kij's 60th anniversary in large parts of the SSSR. RAPP headed by L.Averbach

²⁴⁰ Cf. Zil'berštejn, Tager 1963 passim.

²⁴¹ Quoted in Zilberštejn, Tager 1963:91-92 ([...]. I am somewhat perplexed by your ironical tone with respect to A.K.Voronskij, a talented person who has managed to create a good literary journal despite difficult working conditions. I am sorry that Voronskij is leaving *Krasnaja nov'*, very sorry. It's also puzzling what and who has displeased whom? During five years' of work he has not made such mistakes as the editor of *Novyj mir*, having printed the strange story of Pil'njak [...]). Cf. also Gej 1986:247-248.

²⁴² Maguire 1987:185 relates that Gor'kij first knew about Voronskij's departure through a letter dated 21 June 1927 from Krjučkov, while the quoted letter to Gladkov confirms that Gor'kij already was informed in March 1927 of the impending breach. In a letter to Voronskij dated 23 March 1927 Gor'kij mentioned that he had just been informed by Gladkov that Keržencev would replace Voronskij as co-editor (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 2, 1965:50).

²⁴³ The first part of *Žizn' Klima Samgina* was published in Berlin in 1927, and excerpts were published in *KN* 1927#5-7, in *Ogonek* 1927#26-31 and also in *Izvestija*, *Pravda* as well as in the almanac *Krug* (book no.6) (Gor'kij 1974, Vol. 20, p.565; Zilberštejn, Tager 1963:99).

²⁴⁴ *KN* 1928#5-9(65-68).

sought a rapprochement with Gor'kij, who to some extent allowed himself to be courted, and, as stated earlier, in November 1928 he recommended that Averbach and RAPP convene an All-Union Conference of Writers.²⁴⁵ In 1931 Leonov and Fadeev joined Ivanov as co-editors of *KN*.²⁴⁶ Although some may see Gor'kij's actions as inconsequential, there is little doubt that he held Voronskij in high esteem. In a letter to Platonov dated 18 September 1929 concerning Platonov's novel *Čevengur* he wrote:

[...]. Dobavljaju: sredi sovremennyh redaktorov ja ne vižu nikogo, kto mog by ocenit' vaš roman po ego dostoinstvu. Ėto mog by sdelat' A.K.Voronskij, no, kak vy znaete, on "ne u del". [...].²⁴⁷

Voronskij was excluded from the VKP(b) in February 1928 accused of "belonging to the Trotskyite opposition".²⁴⁸ On 7 January 1929 the Politburo decided to deport Trockij from the SSSR, and a few days later 150 Trotskyites were apprehended, among them Voronskij.²⁴⁹ He again sent a letter to Ordžonikidze dated January 1929.²⁵⁰ At the intervention of Jaroslavskij, member of the CKK, who wrote a letter to Stalin and Ordžonikidze stating that though Voronskij shared Trotskij's views he was an "unpolitical" literary person,²⁵¹ the sentence was lenient: exile to Lipetsk, Tambov governate, Voronskij's home district. Compared to his previous exiles to Jarensk (1908-10) and Kem' (1912-15) the 7 months he spent in exile in Lipetsk were relatively agreeable. As mentioned Ordžonikidze facilitated Voronskij's release. In late 1929 he was back in Moscow.²⁵²

Voronskij's two letters to Ordžonikidze suggested that Voronskij attempted to

²⁴⁵ Primočkina 1995:73-74.

²⁴⁶ Zilberštejn, Tager 1963:108,260.

²⁴⁷ Quoted in Zilberštejn, Tager 1963:313 ([...]. Moreover: among contemporary editors I do not see anyone who could evaluate your novel according to its qualities. This could have been done by A.K.Voronskij, but as you know, he is "not in business". [...].)

²⁴⁸ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:273.

²⁴⁹ Žuravlev 1995:134; Voronskaja 1997:90.

²⁵⁰ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:279-280. Cf. also 7.5 and 7.6 fr3-it26.

²⁵¹ *ibid.* pp.280-283.

²⁵² Nurmina 1992:7-8.

appeal to their acquaintance dating back to the Prague 1912 party conference. Possibly Ordžonikidze's common Georgian bond with Stalin may have been part of Voronskij's deliberations.²⁵³ In the mid-1930s Ordžonikidze, who probably committed suicide in 1937,²⁵⁴ apparently was among Voronskij's few remaining colloquitors.²⁵⁵ There are, though, no indications that any other prominent party official assisted Voronskij after Frunze's death, and especially not after Voronskij's departure from *KN* in April 1927. The only prominent persons he could turn to were the non-party member Gor'kij, Lenin's widow Krupskaja and his sister Mar'ja, Jaroslavskij, member of the party's CKK, and Polonskij, editor of *Novyj mir*.²⁵⁶ Yet none of these could replace Frunze.²⁵⁷

In October-November 1929 Stalin received Voronskij and proved forthcoming until Voronskij made it clear that if he were again allowed to work in literature he would resist RAPP and support Pereval. Voronskij's lengthy statement to the CK VKP(b) dated 12 March 1930²⁵⁸ allowed him to be readmitted into the VKP(b) in April 1930.²⁵⁹ Thanks to the mediation of Ordžonikidze and Gor'kij he was given a modest position in Gosizdat where he had been a board member (1922-24), as senior editor of Russian classics.²⁶⁰ Gor'kij gladly agreed to write a preface to Voronskij's planned one-volume edition of prose writers of the 1860s, but Voronskij's plans for a volume on the pre-revolutionary Bolshevik underground movement were abrogated as too controversial. Voronskij's granddaughter in a letter to me dated 10 April 1996 stated that Voronskij continued to be harassed also after his re-acceptance

²⁵³ Figes 1997:716.

²⁵⁴ McCauley 1998:297.

²⁵⁵ Voronskaja 1997:80. Voronskij wrote an article of reminiscences about Ordžonikidze in 1936, cf. 7.6fr4-it44. The article is dated 19 July 1936 but is attributed to *Pečat' i revoljucija* 1921.

²⁵⁶ Belaja 1989:213-223 emphasizes the shared literary views of Polonskij and Voronskij.

²⁵⁷ *ibid.* p. 90ff.

²⁵⁸ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:283-288. Cf. also 7.6 fr3-it26.

²⁵⁹ Voronskaja 1997:96.

²⁶⁰ Voronskij begins his letter dated 24 November 1930 to Gor'kij with "V kačestve staršego redaktora po russkim klassikam v *GIZe* [...]." (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:66) (In the capacity of senior editor of Russian classics at *GIZe* [...]).

to the VKP(b) in 1930. During the first half of the 1930s his health deteriorated; he kept a low profile and wrote fiction and reminiscences. He maintained that after his last exile his "journalistic pen was broken".²⁶¹

Excepting *Bursa* (1933a) Masing-Delic does not rate Voronskij's post-1930 prose very highly.²⁶² Yet Belaja and Akimov both find this period of his authorship very interesting. Akimov maintains that *Glaz Uragana* (1931a) reveals anti-militaristic foresight and has great literary value.²⁶³ In St. Petersburg in September 1996 Akimov also argued to the present author that *Željabov* (1934a) by its focus on the populists (*narodniki*) who in 1881 had assassinated tsar Aleksandr II, by extrapolation expressed an anti-authoritarian and anti-Stalinist attitude. Ovsjannikov believes that *Bursa*, *Glaz Uragana* and *Željabov* are implicit commentaries on Stalinism, and constitute an unresearched area.²⁶⁴ Belaja stresses Voronskij's "aesthetic stubbornness", i.e. that he now sought to convert into prose his own aesthetic prescriptions from the 1920s, especially in *Gogol'* (1934b).²⁶⁵ The manuscript of this novel was confiscated, and only 5 known printed copies of the book are today in existence.²⁶⁶

Recent Western research on the Great Purges 1936-38 has scaled down the planned nature of the terror and the number and types of victims, and has shown that e.g. Old Bolsheviks like Voronskij and members of the intelligentsia were not disproportionately represented.²⁶⁷ Nonetheless, as part of the organized witch hunt following the murder of Kirov in December 1934 Voronskij was again expelled from the VKP(b) 15 March 1935. He denied the accusations levelled against him, but his

²⁶¹ Ovsjannikov 1992:206.

²⁶² Masing-Delic 1976:43.

²⁶³ Akimov 1990:13.

²⁶⁴ Ovsjannikov 1992:203.

²⁶⁵ Belaja 1987:31.

²⁶⁶ Voronskaja 1997:104. The 5 copies are distributed among: 1) Voronskij's family, 2) The Russian State Library in Moscow, 3) A.G.Dement'ev, 4) A.K.Gladkov and 5) J.Vlasov. I have most generously received a copy of the manuscript from Tat'jana I Isaeva, and I am now preparing an article about it.

²⁶⁷ Siegelbaum 1997:312-315.

expulsion was upheld in March 1936.²⁶⁸ During the summer of 1936 he was also expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers. He took part in Gor'kij's funeral parade 20 June 1936 on the Red Square and was in very poor health. In August 1936 when the public show trials against Zinov'ev and Kamenev started in Moscow, Stavskij, the leader of the Union of Soviet Writers, published an article in *Literaturnaja gazeta* implicating Kataev and Voronskij in the financing in 1929 of exiled Trotskyites. In February 1937 when the trial against Radek took place, Stavskij continued his crusade at a plenum meeting of the board of the Union of Soviet Writers where he accused Radek and Voronskij of having motivated Pil'njak's *Povest' nepogašennoj luny* (1926). Voronskij was apprehended by the NKVD on 13 February 1937 accused of participating in an "anti-Soviet Trotskyite terrorist group directed at the party leadership and the Soviet state", cf. 7.15. The terror group was allegedly Pereval, cf. 3.2.9. On 17 May 1937 *Pravda* carried an article blaming Voronskij of having inspired Pil'njak's malicious *Povest' nepogašennoj luny*. He was sent to a camp after his arrest, and Soviet sources right up to 1991 maintained that he died 13 October 1943.²⁶⁹ Yet Voronskij's remaining granddaughter Tat'jana Isaeva - his daughter Galina and eldest granddaughter Valentina Isaeva both died in 1991 - had been informed in March 1989 that he was shot 13 August 1937, cf. 7.15, a date which has since been corroborated.²⁷⁰ The family archive contains a handwritten statement, previously unpublished, dated 20 July 1937 and signed by A.Voronskij. This must have been one of the last documents he ever wrote (only the first of 8½ pages is quoted):

Pokazanie A.K.Voronskogo o trockistskoj dejatel'nosti do 1932 goda

Ja primknul k trockizmu v 1923-m godu podpisav zajavlenie stroka šesti. Zajavlenie éto ja podpisal u L.Serebrjakova. Ja ne vchodil togda ni v odnu trockistskiju organizaciju i ne prinjal učastija v toj bor'be, kotoraja razvernulas' potom v moskovskich rajonach. Proizošlo éto ne potomu, čto ja ne byl dostatočno svjazan s trockistami. Naoborot, načinja s Trockogo ja postojanno vstrečalsja s vidnejšimi trockistami, s Pjatakovym, Preobraženskim i drugimi. No ja byl uvlečen bor'boj s napostovcami, i otdaval vremja étoj moej

²⁶⁸ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:275,288-292.

²⁶⁹ Prochorov 1971 (V):1092-1093.

²⁷⁰ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:276.

dejatelnosti. Odnako, ja pri vstrečah vel trockistskie razgovory i staralsja ubedit' v pravilnosti trockizma. Menja predosteregali. Odnazdy Ordožonikidze (sic, *auth. comm.*), Vorošilov i Frunze javilis' ko mne na kvartiru i dolgo ubeždali menja snjat' podpis' s zavjavenija "46"; ja ne vnjal ich ugovoram. V moej literaturnoj dejatel'nosti ja razvil trockistskij tezis o nevozmožnosti proletarskoj literatury v perehodnyj period diktatury proletariata. V odnoj iz svoich statej ja staralsja dokazat' kak éto dokazyval ran'se menja Trockij, čto v perehodnyj period diktatury proletariata pered partiej i sovetskoj vlast'ju stojat preimuščestvenno boevye zadači, a ne organičeskogo v tom čisle i literaturnogo stroitel'stva (svet zari ne ložitsja na vzvolnovannoe more), kogda že nastupit socializm, to reč' budet itti, ne o proletarskoj t.e. klassovoj literature, a o socialističeskoj, bezklassovoj. V voprose o tak nazyvajemych popuščikach v literature ja tože razvil trockistskie vzgljady, oriěntirujas' na melko-buržuaznyh pisatelej, kak na osnovnoe jadro. Ne pomnju točno, v kakom godu organizovalsja "Pereval", kažetsja v konce 1924 -ogo goda. Organizatorom "Pereval" byl ja. Ja podbiral ljudej, nastroeny protiv napostovcev. Special'nyhcelej sostavit' "Pereval" iz trockistov ili iz sočuvstvjuščich, u menja ne bylo. Ob étom, meždu pročim, sviditel'stvovalpestryj i raznorodnyj sostav "Perevala"; v nego vchodili starje mastery chudožestvennogo slova, naprimer Mich. Mich. Prišvin, i v to že vremja načinajuščie komsomol'skie poėty, Svetlov, Golodnyj, Kuznecov i t.d. Ispol'zoval ja "Pereval" dlja trockistskich celej pozže, glavnom obrazom, s 1927 goda. Do éтого vremeni ja, prodolžaja rabotat' v "Krasnoj Novi", v "Prožektore", v "Kruge", vstrečalsja s vidnejšimi trockistami, no v organizacionnoj rabote učastija ne prinimal. Neredko vstrečalsja s Trockim. [...].²⁷¹

As stated in 3.2.9 the content and accuracy of a statement, which was extracted after 6 months of detention by the NKVD, poses an ethical dilemma and should not

²⁷¹ Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it5. (Statement by A.K.Voronskij regarding Trotskyite activities prior to 1932. I joined the Trotskyites in 1923, having signed a 6-line statement. The statement was signed at L.Serebjakov's. I did not enter at the time any Trotskyite organization, and did not take part in the battle which was unfolding in the Moscow region. This was not because I was not sufficiently tied to the Trotskyites. On the contrary, beginning with Trockij, I regularly met with the leading Trotskyites, with Pjatakov, Preobraženskij and others. However, I was attracted by the struggle with the Napostovcy and spent (instead) my time on this activity. However, during meetings I advanced Trotskyite arguments and attempted to convince (listeners) of the correctness of Trotskyism. I was cautioned. Once Ordožonikidze (sic, *auth. comm.*), Vorošilov and Frunze came to my quarters and at length tried to persuade me to withdraw my signature from the "46"; I did not heed their arguments. In my literary activity I advanced the Trotskyist thesis of the impossibility of a proletarian literature during the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In one of my articles I attempted to show how Trockij had demonstrated this before me, that during the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat the party and soviet power were confronted by primarily military challenges, not organizational such as literary construction (the light of dawn will not settle on a rough sea). And when socialism begins, it will not be a question of proletarian or class literature, but of socialist classless (literature). As regards the so-called fellow travellers in literature, I also advanced Trotskyite views, concentrating on petty-bourgeois writers as the basic kernel. I do not remember exactly in which year "Pereval" was organized, apparently at the end of 1924. I was the organizer. I chose people who were disposed against Napostovcy. My aims were not to compose "Pereval" from Trotskyist or sympathizers. This is borne out by the variegated and diverse composition of "Pereval"; it included old masters of literature, e.g. Mich.Mich. Prišvin, and at the same time emerging Komsomol poets, Svetlov, Golodnyj, Kuznecov and so on. I did use "Pereval" for Trotskyite objectives later, mainly from 1927. Prior to this, while continuing working in "Krasnaja Nov", in "Prožektor", in "Krug", I met regularly with the most profiled Trotskyites, but I did not take part in organizational work. I often met with Trockij [...]).

be exaggerated. In 1988 Chentalinski gained access to the KGB interrogation protocols of Babel', Pil'njak and Mandel'stam. Their contact with the "Trotskyite" Voronskij, who Chentalinski confirms was shot 13 August 1937, apparently weighed heavily against them. Pil'njak was shot 21 April 1938 in Moscow, Mandel'stam died of fatigue 27 December 1937 in a camp in Vladivostok, and Babel' was shot 27 January 1940 in Moscow.²⁷² Further investigation by Voronskij's family has disclosed that he is buried anonymously in a mass grave in Butovo, some 25 miles from the Kremlin, southwards on the road to Podol'sk. A commemorative tombstone in black marble which was erected in 1993 carries the following inscription:

V étoj zone Butovskogo poligona v 1937-1953 NKVD-MGB byla tajno
rasstreljany i zachorony mnogie tysjači žertv političeskich repressij
Večnaja im pamjat' ²⁷³

An important part of Voronskij's rehabilitation in the period of "thaw" from 1956 onwards²⁷⁴ was, as previously stated, his posthumous reinstatement as party member in 1957. In 1959 a play entitled *Polnoč* by Venkstern and Žatkin was produced, based on Voronskij's autobiography; significantly, this was distributed by the theatre department of the RSFSR Ministry of Culture.²⁷⁵ In 1963 his daughter G.A.Voronskaja and A.G.Demen'tev published a selection of his articles and literary silhouettes.²⁷⁶ In 1964 his correspondence with Lenin was published.²⁷⁷ In 1976 and 1982 selections of his articles were published, cf. part 8. The centenary of his birth in 1984 occasioned a conference.²⁷⁸ In his home region of Tambov the first

²⁷² Chentalinski 1993.

²⁷³ In this zone of the Butovskij shooting field many thousands of victims of political repression were secretly shot and buried by the NKVD-MGB in 1937-53. To their eternal memory .

²⁷⁴ Hosking 1992:520ff. A detailed account of Voronskij's rehabilitation until 1986 is found in Choate 1987:317ff. Neživoj (1988:6-8) despaired at the sluggishness of "Voronskij's return to the reader".

²⁷⁵ Cf. 7.6 fr3-it7.

²⁷⁶ Voronskij 1963.

²⁷⁷ Smirnov 1964.

²⁷⁸ Koz'min 1985:78.

bibliography was compiled.²⁷⁹ The local press in Tambov gave extensive coverage to the centenary. *Tambovskaja Pravda* featured a semi-page article by I.Ovsjannikov (member of the committee for the literary heritage of A. K. Voronskij) entitled "Staryj, nadežnejšij, partiec".²⁸⁰ *Rabočij kraj* honoured its onetime editor with an article by Dr.P.Kuprijanovskij with the heading "'Živaja voda' revoljucionera i pisatelja".²⁸¹ Nationally, the *Literaturnaja gazeta* carried an article by E. Sidorov (president of the committee for the literary heritage of A.K.Voronskij) called "Živaja mysl'. K 100-letiju so dnja roždenija A.K.Voronskogo".²⁸² *Literaturnaja Rossija* presented an article by N.Trifonov "Strastnoe slovo kritika".²⁸³ Beyond these few examples, the family archive contains a wealth of newspaper clippings covering the conference, cf. 7.6. In the wake of the centennial conference several collections of his articles appeared in book form.²⁸⁴

In 1.2. I listed some works which illustrate the heightened awareness among Russian, and to some extent also Western, scholars of Voronskij's significance to Soviet letters in the 1920s. The final word on Voronskij is inconceivable before Russian scholars find the opportunity to reassess their literary heritage of the 1920s and before Voronskij receives the authoritative biography he rightly deserves.

²⁷⁹ Efremov 1984.

²⁸⁰ 8 September 1984#207:3.

²⁸¹ 8 September 1984#208:3.

²⁸² 5 September 1984#36:7.

²⁸³ 14 September 1984#37:16.

²⁸⁴ Voronskij 1987a, Voronskij 1987b.

3.4 Voronskij's autobiography: *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj* (1927, 1929) ¹

In this part a few comments are first made on the genre of autobiography in Russia and Soviet Russia. Then 2 aspects of Voronskij's practically unresearched autobiography, ² which covers the years 1905-15, ³ are discussed. While this decade was decisive in his life, it is outside the period 1921-28 of investigation. The two elements in the autobiography which concern me most are its title and the Valentin-character. Presumably these were both devised when Voronskij started writing his autobiography in mid-1926. As I hope to show a hermeneutical reading of the title's folkloristic-mythological and Biblical connotations is potentially rewarding in relation to Voronskij's literary aesthetics. The Valentin character is seen both as a narratorial device and from the viewpoint of hermeneutics as suggestive of Christian symbolism. Lejeune's typology of autobiographies is used to discuss whether author, narrator and principal character are identical.

3.4.1 Autobiography - a preliminary definition

Autobiography can be seen as " a purportedly truthful, retrospective account of one's life in prose, written by the subject and composed as a single whole". ⁴ It can include generically the diary, the travel account, the memoir, reminiscences, confessions and the autobiographical novel. The autobiography has frequently been motivated by the author's desire for self-clarification, justification and even correction regarding the author's historical and social role(s). Gusdorf views autobiography to

¹ Voronskij 1927c (part 1), Voronskij 1929b (part 2). 1½ of the 5 chapters of part 3 appeared in *Novyj mir* 1929#1:169-202, but half of chapter 2 "V rodných krajach", and the 3 next chapters - "V Saratove. Credo Valentina", "Kurort" and "Praga" were omitted. Cf. 3.4.5 for further comments.

² Masing-Delic 1976:43-58 is one of the very few scholars to have discussed the autobiography in some detail. Interpreting the characters as representatives of "good" and "evil" she defined the theme of the memoirs as a "quest for justice and truth which gives meaning to life" (p.44). This is consistent with my own interpretation. She also noted the strong influence of Christianity on Voronskij (p.44), and the role of the Bible (Genesis) in the dreams of Valentin-the narrator (p.54). However, she mistakenly stated (p.44) that the memoirs cover the period 1905-12 when in fact they run until 1915.

³ Whereas Černobaev (1992a:19) states that Voronskij was working on a follow-up, including events through 1921, Voronskaja (1997:100) more explicitly relates that her father on his arrest in January 1937 was working on a sequel entitled *Tetradi osobogo naznačenija*, dealing with events from 1912 to the early 1920s, that the manuscript was confiscated, and has since disappeared.

⁴ Clyman 1985:27-29.

some extent as "posthumous propaganda for posterity" and "revenge on history".⁵ As Olney reminds us in *Autobiography. Essays Theoretical and Critical* (1980), the three elements of autobiography - *auto* (self), *bios* (life) and *graphe* (writing) have historically been characterized by a shift of attention from the *bios* to the *auto*, and I would add the *graphe*, elements, which in turn has opened the autobiographical field to the disciplines of philosophy, psychology and literary science.⁶

3.4.2 Autobiography in Russia and Soviet Russia

In Russia the earliest literature dating from the 12th century chronicles, apocrypha and hagiographies often had autobiographical elements, e.g. the 12th century *Poučen'e Vladimira Monomacha* (*Instructions of Vladimir Monomach*) and *Molenie Danila Zatočnika* (*The Supplication of Daniel in Exile*).⁷ The term "avtobiografija", however, was first used in Russia in 1817 in a letter from A.Turgenev to P.Vjazemskij. In Western Europe the spiritual autobiography modelled on *Confessions* (c.398) by Augustine (354-430) eventually inspired the secular autobiography, e.g. *Confessions* (1760) by Rousseau. Similarly, the West European autobiography emerged as a literary mode (*auto*, *graphe*) out of autobiography as a confessional act (*bios*).⁸ This general pattern was repeated in Russia where the first autobiography proper to appear - *Žitie* by Avvakum (1620-82) - heralded a number of secular autobiographical works by notables in succeeding centuries, e.g. *Memoirs of Catherine II* by Catherine II (1729-96), *Zapiski* by Deržavin (1743-1816), *The Childhood of Bagrov-Grandson* (1858) by S.Aksakov, *Moi vospominanija* (1890) and *Rannie gody moej žizni* (1893) by A.Fet, *Byloe i dumy* (1855-1868) by A.Gercen, and the trilogy *Detstvo* (1852), *Otročestvo* (1854) and *Junost'* (1857) by L.Tolstoj, whose *Ispoved'* (1880) can be considered a spiritual autobiography. Among the autobiographical works that appeared during the first decades of the 20th century, and which Voronskij read and was influenced by, were

⁵ Gusdorf (1956) 1980:36.

⁶ Olney 1980:6,19.

⁷ Lichačev 1981:136ff.; 226ff; Kolesov 1989:125ff.;148ff.

⁸ Olney 1980:13.

his childhood favourite Korolenko's *Istorija moego sovremennika* (1904-18, publ.1922),⁹ Gor'kij's spiritual autobiography *Ispoved'* (1908) and his secular autobiographical trilogy *Detstvo* (1913), *V ljudjach* (1914) and *Moi universitety* (1923), as well as Stanislavskij's *Moja žizn' v iskusstve* (1924).¹⁰ The latter is discussed by Voronskij in 4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927). He may also have appreciated the lyrical poetic autobiography of Mandel'stam's *Šum vremeni* (1925), although he never acknowledged such an influence.

As suggested by Plechanov's negative attitude to Gor'kij's autobiography *Ispoved'* (1908) noted in 2.1, Marxists *a priori* viewed the genre of autobiography as too subjectivist and individualist to be a satisfactory literary vehicle for scientific, dialectic materialism. The spiritual and religious autobiography was of course anathema as a result of the Bolshevik suppression of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox diaspora from November 1920 onwards.¹¹ The Marxist focus on class and the collective, reinforced by the Bolshevik emphasis on the party, saw the heroic individual as an analytical problem. Marxists who despite this did write autobiographies, and succeeded in having them published, were often deviationists, e.g. Trockij whose *Moja žizn'* (1930) was published in Berlin.

Voronskij first asserted a need for autobiographical writing in 4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna" (1925). He saw it as an antidote to insufficient "historicism" among the new generation of post-revolutionary party members and readers regarding the true role of the pre-revolutionary underground Bolshevik movement in which he had taken active part. It is no coincidence that he started writing his autobiography in mid-1926, in the period between the profoundly pessimistic articles 4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925) and 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ" (1927). We may therefore attribute to Voronskij a general motive to justify and even correct the picture of the pre-revolutionary underground Bolshevik movement and his own role in it.

⁹ Voronskij commented on this work in his first appearance in *Pravda*, 11 September 1921, cf. 4.2.1.

¹⁰ Clyman 1985:27-29.

¹¹ Cf. Ware 1964:137;181.

3.4.3 In search of what?

A clue to the cryptic title of Voronskij's autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*. (1927-29)¹² can in my view be posited through a hermeneutical reading, which seeks to clarify a connotational spectre of meanings.¹³ In part 1, chapter 4, the narrator, standing despondently and pensively beside his deceased sister Ljalja's modest grave recalls their common childhood. Anticipating the "return to childhood" theme he later elaborated in 4.2.20 "Iskusstvo videt' mir" (1928) and in his portrait of Proust in 1928, cf. parts 4-5, he yearns to bring back their childhood friends from the fairy tale world they once shared: magicians, marvel-bogatyrs, terrible and fantastic robbers, birds and animals of lore.¹⁴ Realizing this is not possible, he despairs:

[...]. Ja požalel, što net ni meča-kladenca, ni sivki-burki, ni veščego vorona, ni živoj i mertvoj vody - ot nee srostalis' raspadajuščiesja kosti, pokryvalis' svežim i sočnym telom, načinala perelivat'sja rubinami krov', snova podnimalis' merno devič'i netronutye grudi. [...].¹⁵

As a rational, action-oriented Bolshevik the narrator nevertheless looks ahead:

[...]... A možet byt'...možet byt' - nastanut dni, i dobudet čelovek svoju živuju i mertvoju vodoj siloj svoego uma i chotenija... Ne chočet, ne stanet žit' čelovek

¹² In mid-February 1927 Voronskij wrote to Gor'kij i.a. "Na dnjach vypuskaju v *Krugu* tomik svoich vospominanij s vydumkoj *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj*. Babel' odobril [...]" (*Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:46) ("I shall shortly publish at *Krug* a booklet with my reminiscences carrying the fanciful title *In Search of Living and Dead Water*. Babel' has approved [...]"). In a letter dated 23 March 1927 Gor'kij praised part 1 and later complemented Voronskij also on parts 2-3 in a letter dated 3 December 1930. (*ibid.* pp.49-50, 67-69),

¹³ Culler 1997:61ff.

¹⁴ Ovsjannikov (1992:31) recounts that Aleksandr and Ljalja were told Russian fairy tales by their father. In *Bursa* (1933) Voronskij i.a. recalls his early childhood and describes how his ailing father would tell him fairy tales, frequently altering the contents to Voronskij's exasperation (Voronskij 1987b:18-19). Voronskij and his sister were both 4 in 1889 when their father died of tuberculosis, which was eventually also to kill Ljalja in 1905. Being a village priest, it is probable that the father introduced an element of Christianity into the fairy tales he told his small children. Little is known about the influence from Voronskij's maternal grandfather, also a village priest, to whom the widowed mother moved with her two children in 1889, cf. 3.1.

¹⁵ Voronskij 1927c:100 ([...]. I despaired that there was no sword swinger, no magic raven, no living and dead water - her dismembered bones grew together, covered the light and dry body, drops of blood began to trickle, the undisturbed girl bossom again breathed regularly.[...]).

odnim proizrastaniem. On sozdaet, sozdaet svoju skazku na zemle! [...].¹⁶

A central metaphor used by the narrator is "living and dead water",¹⁷ or more poetically "the waters of life and death", as the only English translation is entitled.¹⁸ The central argument is apparently an affirmation of the principle of secular action: the narrator declares as his *credo* that passive and vegetative existence can never be sufficient, nor desirable, to man, who instead must rely on his *ratio* and will power to attain worldly objectives.

Černobaev, who regards Voronskij's autobiography as his most important book, emphasizes that when Voronskij wrote it around the mid-1920s, he was very disconcerted with postrevolutionary bureaucratization and disappointed about the loss of revolutionary ideals. His frank expression of these sentiments in the first edition was censored in all subsequent editions.¹⁹ In this perspective Černobaev interprets the title as expressive of a *Weltschmerz* brought about by emerging Stalinization. In a similar vein Akimov interprets the title as expressive of a universal, humanistic and even anti-military strain in Voronskij's post-1927 prose.²⁰ Such interpretations do not

¹⁶ *ibid.* ([...]... But perhaps...perhaps - there will come a time when man will attain his living and dead water by the strength of his mind and will. Man does not want, will not live by, only growth. He will create, will create his own earthly fairy tale! [...]).

¹⁷ The metaphor is used occasionally in Voronskij's articles, e.g. in his portraits of Arosev (Voronskij 1929a:234) and Pil'njak (Voronskij 1928b:401). As far as I can see it only occurs three times in *Za živoj i mertoj vodoj*. In addition to the citation above we meet the metaphor a second time in part 2 chapter 2 where the narrator trudging in the snow towards exile in Kem' philosophizes about a utopian future (Voronskij 1929b:84), and a third time in part 2 chapter 4, where the narrator philosophizes that only nature itself can disclose the sources of its living and dead water (*ibid.*p.250).

¹⁸ A.Voronsky. *Waters of Life and Death*, Allen & Unwin, London 1936 (abridged edition, translated by L.Zarine). A reprint was published by Hyperion Press, Westport 1975. Voronskaja (1997:100) mentions that the English edition of 1936 was "abbreviated", and that the family subsequently received many positive letters from foreign readers. The English translation only contains an estimated 65% of the text of the Russian 1970 edition. It e.g. commences with the narrator and Valentin's arrival in St.Petersburg in 1905, thus omitting the early key passage I have cited where the narrator ruminates at his sister Ljalja's grave and twice refers to the living and dead water of the title. It is therefore surprising that Choate 1987:38-43 only quotes the English abridged translation, and also omits the 1929 (part 2) edition in his bibliography (*ibid.* p. 361), as he omits Masing-Delic 1976. It should also be noted that Černobaev (1992a:19) claims there are no less than 60 instances of textual censorship in the 1970, 1976 and 1987b editions compared with the original. Voronskaja (1997:101) repeats this claim, although she limits this criticism to the Russian 1970 edition. Clearly this is an inviting area for further research.

¹⁹ Černobaev 1992a:21-23.

²⁰ Akimov 1990:7

in my view conflict with the Biblical connotations I shall present later. But before we turn to interpretations let us look closer at Voronskij's situation.

To get a clearer idea of the connotations Voronskij may have intended in using "living and dead water" it is natural to consult V.Dal' (1801-1872), whose *Tolkovyj slovar' žyvago velikorussskogo jazyka* (1880-82;1996) must have been familiar to Voronskij. Here the term "living water" (*živaja voda*) is defined as:

[...] živaja voda, priglubaja bliz otmeli. Sojti s meli na živuju vodu. Mertvaja voda, skazn. ot kotr. srastajutsja časti izrublennago čeloveka, oživajuščago zatem ot živoj vody. [...] ²¹

Dal' furthermore quotes the saying "Mertvoj-živoj vodu ispit', da živučim koreškom zakusit' ". ²² During the years 1855-63 the Russian compiler of folk tales A.N.Afanas'ev (1826-71) published his collection of Russian folk tales. ²³ His most important theoretical work is *Poétičeskija vozzrenija slavjan" na prirodu*, ²⁴ in which is found the article "Živaja voda i veščee slovo". ²⁵ This article offers a succession of

²¹ Dal' (1880) 1996 (I):218 ([...] living water, a deepening near a sandbank. To go from shallow to living water. Dead water, according to legend, makes the dismembered bodily parts of a man grow out again, and he is subsequently brought to life again by living water).

²² *ibid.* p.219 (To drink living-dead water, is like tasting a little lively root/friend).

²³ A.N.Afanas'ev: *Narodnye russkie skazki*, Vols.I-VIII (1855-63).The most prominent Russian folklorist in this century V. Ja. Propp (1895-1970) e.g. writes that this was the first major publication of Russian folktales and a major event at the time. Very probably this was a major source for Voronskij's father when he read stories to his children in the late 1880s. Afanas'ev wrote only about 10 stories himself and did not engage in field work. He gathered most of his material from the archives of The Russian Geographical Society from 1852 onwards. About 150 of his 640 folktales were taken from the earlier collection of V.I.Dal'. Afanas'ev did not include Biblical stories or the vita of saints (Propp 1958:IX-XII), which may have encouraged Voronskij's father to add this dimension. Afanas'ev did, however, turn to Biblical material in his *Narodnye russkie legendy* (1859). Here nearly half of the 33 stories are taken from V.I.Dal', and several of the 33 stories are inspired by the Bible. Though passed by the secular censorship, the book was stopped by the clerical censorship, and remained forbidden until 1914. Therefore it most likely could not have been used by Voronskij's father prior to his death in 1889, or even by Voronskij's grandfather, also a priest, with whom they lived from 1889. In addition to Afanas'ev's collection, several other collections of folk tales were published during the 1860s, e.g. *Velikoruskie skazki* (1860-62) by I.A.Chudjakov, *Narodnye skazki, sobrannye sel'skimi učiteljami* (1863) by A.A.Ėrlenjeva, *Poslovice russkogo naroda* (1861) by V.I.Dal'. Several of the collections reflected Slavophile sentiments and democratic ideals etc. Afanas'ev's *Narodnye russkie skazki* (1855-63) was criticized for its lack of societal criticism by the radical critic Dobroljubov (Propp 1958:III-IV,XI-XII).

²⁴ A.N.Afanas'ev Vols. I-III (1865-69) 1970.

²⁵ A.N. Afanas'ev Vol.I (1865) 1970:364-431.

fascinating mythological-cultural comparisons, including Nordic, all related to water. It is very likely that this material can offer us insight into the connotations Voronskij may have intended in the title of his autobiography. Afanas'ev initially discusses the thunder god Perun, the foremost god in Slavic mythology, who in spring, equipped with his hammer, liberated nature from winter's grip of ice and death. This generated a belief that rain, in particular spring rain, imparted strength, beauty and health to those who drenched themselves in it. The sick could also drink spring rain as a remedy. Yet these qualities were not attributed to sea (salt) water. In turn this gave rise to a conception about the water of life, which in Afanas'ev's view was common to all Indo-European peoples:

[...] mif, obščij vsem indoevropskim narodam, o živoj vode (u nemcev: das Wasser des Lebens), kotoraja isceljaet rany, nadeljaet krepost'ju, zastavljaet razrublennoe telo srostat'sja i vozvraščaet samuju žizn'; narodnye russkie skazki nazyvajut ee takže sil'nuju ili bogatyrskoju vodoju, ibo ona napitok tex mogučih bogatyrej, kotorye v skazočnom epose zastupajut boga-gromovnika [...].²⁶

Other inherent properties particular to "the waters of life" according to Afanas'ev included:

[...] Živaja voda - tože, [...] bezsmertnyj napitok [...] Vkušaja amritu (ambroziju) i nektar, bogi delalis bezsmertnymi, večno-junyimi, nepričastnymi boleznyam, v bitvach' svetlich duhov s demonkami (asurov s devami) te iz poražennych, kotorych voodooševljala amrita, vozstavali s novymi silami [...].²⁷

In a Slavic context this idea was counterpoised by the conception of "waters of death":

[...] doždja slavjanskija skazki različajut dva otdeľnych predstavlenija: oni govorjat o mertvoj i živoj vode - različie, nevstrečae moe v predanijach drugih

²⁶ A.N.Afanas'ev (1865) 1970, (I):364-365 (A myth, common to all Indo-European peoples, about living water (with the Germans: das Wasser des Lebens), which heals wounds, gives strength, forces the dismembered body to inosculate and restores life itself; Russian folk tales also call it strong or bogatyr water, since it is the beverage of those powerful bogatyrs who in the legendary epos take the place of the thunder god).

²⁷ ibid. p.367 ([...]. Living water - is also [...] an immortalizing beverage [...]. By eating ambrosia and nectar the gods became immortal, forever young, unreceptive to diseases, in the battles between light spirits and demons (azures with maidens) those among the wounded who were invigorated by ambrosia, arose with new force [...]).

rodstvennych narodov. Mertvaja voda nazyvaetsja inogda celjuščeju, i étot poslednij épitet ponjatnee i obščedostupnee vyražaeť soedinjaemoe s neju značenie: mertvaja ili celjuščaja voda zaživljaet nanesennye rany, sroščaeť vmeste razsečennye členy mertvogo tela, no ešče ne voskrešaeť ego; ona isceljaet trup, to est' delaet ego celym, no ostavljaet bezdychannym, mertvym, poka okroplenie živogo (ili živučego) vodoju ne vozvratit emu žizn'...[...] Kto vyp'eť živoj ili bogatyrskoj vody, u togo totčas pribyvaet sila velikaja. [...] Sverch togo, živaja voda isceljaet slepotu, vozvrašaeť zrenie [...].²⁸

"Living" and "dead water" are interpreted here as religious-mythological concepts with a common Indo-European basis. Here I must add that Afanas'ev was an adherent of what Propp terms "the mythological school", which saw as its main objective to prove this mythological-religious, Indo-European hypothesis.²⁹ Many of Afanas'ev's ideas, particularly his delimitation of the Indo-European group, are today considered outdated.³⁰ Still, in the context of the 1920s it is fair to assume that Afanas'ev's material is highly relevant as the type of "contextual" background information available both to Voronskij's father when he read stories to his son and daughter, and later also to Voronskij in the mid-1920s when he wrote his autobiography. This is not to say that I uncritically attribute Afanas'ev's views to Voronskij, who as a Bolshevik and Marxist surely harboured many reservations to Afanas'ev's interpretations.

In the quotations above one recognizes from Voronskij's autobiography e.g. "meč-kladeneć", which one finds e.g. in the fairy tale "Medvedko, Usynja, Gorynja i Dubynja-bogatyri".³¹ Further, "Sivka-burka" frequently occurs in the fairy tale "Burja bogatyr' Ivan Korovij syn".³² Of special relevance in our context is the bogatyr beverage and magic potion "živaja" (or živučaja/celjuščaja/silnaja/

²⁸ *ibid.* p.365-367 ([...] Slav folk tales distinguish between two separate aspects of rain: they speak of dead and living water - a distinction not encountered in other related people's traditions. Dead water is occasionally called curative, and this last epithet more comprehensibly and aptly expresses its meaning: dead or curative water heals inflicted wounds, inoscolates severed parts of the dead body, but does not resuscitate the body; it heals the carcass, makes it whole, but leaves it still unbreathing, dead, until the sprinkling of living or lively water restores it to life[...]. He who drinks living or bogatyr water, immediately acquires great fortitude [...]. In addition, living water heals blindness, restores eyesight [...]).

²⁹ Propp 1958:VI.

³⁰ *ibid.* Cf. also Rudhardt 1987:350-358.

³¹ Afanas'ev (1855-63) 1958 (I):307.

³² *ibid.* pp.270-273.

bogatyrskaja) voda", which is found e.g. in the fairy tales "Letučij korabl' ",³³ and "Skazka o molodce-udal'ce, molodnyh i živoj vode" where we also are told about a well with water of life to restore eyesight.³⁴

In the fairy tale "Mar'ja Morevna" one finds "živaja" and "mertvaja voda" in combination with a raven (*voron*),³⁵ while in "Skazka ob Ivane-careviče, žar-ptice i o serom volke" one finds a grey wolf who makes a raven fly to fetch the waters of life and death so that the wolf can restore to life Ivan-carevič, who had been lying dead for 30 days. The raven returned after 3 days with two phials, one containing the waters of life and the other the waters of death. The wolf sprinkled Ivan-carevič first with the waters of death so that his body healed. Then the wolf applied the waters of life, whereupon Ivan-carevič stood up and talked.³⁶

The sprinkling of waters of death induced the dismembered limbs of the dead bogatyr to grow together again, while the sprinkling - or drinking - of waters of life made the bogatyr immortal and in addition restored his eyesight.³⁷ The only available English translation of Voronskij's autobiography, which as mentioned is substantially shorter than the Russian 1970 edition, in addition ignores the intriguing initial "Za" in the Russian title. This is best translated as "In search of " (but hardly "beyond" or "behind"). We may therefore tentatively interpret the connotations in the title of Voronskij's autobiography as "In search of a magic potion, a magic elixir, to heal the wounded and awaken the dead, possibly also an instrument to attain invulnerability and immortality". Akimov has interpreted the title more abstractly as the expression of a desire for clarification and redemption on a universal level, across class differences and other social barriers.³⁸

Yet is a basically mythological-folkloristic interpretation sufficient when, as

³³ *ibid.* p.317.

³⁴ *ibid.* p.431ff.

³⁵ *ibid.* p.379.

³⁶ *ibid.* pp.422-423

³⁷ In a letter to the author dated 8 July 1996 Voronskij's granddaughter Tat'jana I.Isaeva emphasizes this interpretation.

³⁸ Akimov 1990:6-7.

here, a disillusioned Trotskyite employs a title that also carries Biblical connotations? In part 2 I identified the Bolsheviks in a sense as modern, secular, utopian extensions of Russian messianism dating back to c.1510. Someone as politically dedicated as Voronskij and profoundly disillusioned with this modern secular messianic variety may well have felt a need to reconsider his childhood faith. As I have suggested, the printed secular Russian fairy tales he heard from his father, and possibly also his maternal grandfather, who were both village priests, very likely contained Biblical components.

"Waters of life" has connotations with the Biblical accounts of purification, rebirth, baptism and salvation, which predate Russian fairy tales. Thus in the Old Testament the vision of Eden in Genesis 2:10-14 evokes a river flowing from the garden of Eden and splitting into 4 streams (the Tigris, Euphrates and possibly also the Indus and Nile). Further, the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 47:8-9) in a vision sees a stream of water flowing from the Temple in Jerusalem. The stream becomes a river, its waters are the waters of life, even the salt waters become sweet and living waters by the insurge of the sacred river. In the New Testament there are other, in my view even more, pertinent examples as we shall see below. The Bible, in turn, was influenced by older Babylonian, Sumerian, Ancient Egyptian, Hebrew and Greek mythology and cosmology, which all have elements of water/rain/sea/river that in various ways are invested with positive, procreative ritual properties as well as with often negative aspects associated with death.³⁹ In our context it is sufficient to dwell on the Bible in view of the biographical arguments I have raised.

Biblical interpretations have been anathema in Soviet literary analysis, even within folkloric analysis⁴⁰, and the 4-act play *Polnoč'* (1959) by Venkstern and Žatkin, which is based on Voronskij's autobiography, predictably also falls into this pattern. A Biblical interpretation is also alien to Voronskij's remaining family. In the selection of his articles on literary aesthetics in part 4 he occasionally expresses scepticism to religion, e.g. in 4.2.20 "Iskusstvo videt' mir" (1928), but there are also several positive references, e.g. to Ecclesiastes in 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ"

³⁹ Rudhardt 1987:352ff.; Eliade 1987 (XII):425ff.; Fossum 1996:248-251.

⁴⁰ Cf. Propp 1958.

(1927). His daughter relates that around 1918-20 he was furious on discovering that his mother had been taking his daughter Galina to church.⁴¹ Yet in my view all this can be interpreted as token gestures of obligatory Marxist atheism. It is more significant, I feel, that his autobiography is replete with Biblical references, especially the crucial scene where the narrator and Valentin descend the mountain together.

I believe that Voronskij may well also have had the Biblical, and not only folkloristic connotations in mind (consciously or not) when phrasing the title of his autobiography. In 1927 when part one of the autobiography appeared and when he apparently for the first time commented on the title (in the previously quoted letter dated 16 February 1927 to Gor'kij), Voronskij was expurgated from *KN*. His ideological disillusionment was soon to be expressed in articles like 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928). It would have been logical and natural for him in such a time of personal crisis to seek solace in childhood values as the "back to childhood" theme in his portrait of Marcel Proust would emphasize, cf. 5.7.2. As shown by Masing-Delic Valentin advocates "the childlike surrender to the beautiful essence of nature".⁴² Voronskij's mother was still alive in Tambov, but his father the village priest had died in 1889. In *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* he only mentions his father once, when he has a nightmare. He dreams about his father: that first he prays to God, then that he does not believe in God, stops praying and - significantly - dies.⁴³ He does not refer to his maternal grandfather, who was also a priest and to whom Aleksandr's mother moved with her two children after the death of Aleksandr's father in 1889. Perhaps, in the difficult situation he experienced around 1927, Voronskij simply found solace in his native Orthodox Christianity? One argument against this is that Voronskij in *Bursa* (1933a) evinces antagonism towards his religious schooling. But it is important to notice that the antagonism is more directed against the autocratic religious teachers than the Christian faith. The title of Voronskij's autobiography, in my view, may therefore be a reference as shown to the life-giving rivers and waters in the Old Testament and also in the New Testament (Gospels, St.

⁴¹ Voronskaja 1997:75.

⁴² Masing-Delic 1976:53.

⁴³ Voronskij 1929b:183-184.

John, Revelation of St. John ⁴⁴). The Biblical interpretation primarily rests on the association between "living waters" and "eternal life and salvation". This is most clearly expressed in The Gospels, St. John 4:14 and 7:38, and in The Revelation of St. John 22:1 and 22:17. Yet the contrasting concept "waters of death" does not occur in these locations, or anywhere else in the Bible. ⁴⁵ This metaphor could therefore be understood through logical juxtaposition as "secular existence", "life without belief", "absence of immortality and salvation". Analogous to the healing effect of "waters of death" in a folkloric reading, the identical concept in a Biblical reading may offer some benefits, but on closer inspection it is no substitute for "waters of life".

In a Biblical interpretation the title may express a search for salvation through Christian belief. This is contrasted with a search for worldly-secular goals, like Marxism, which despite some temporary benefits ultimately entails absence of immortality and salvation. If such a reading is relevant, the title of Voronskij's autobiography could arguably conceal an indictment, not only against Marxism but in particular against Leninism and Stalinism. This is consistent with the interpretations of Masing-Delic and Černobaev referred to earlier. Neither is it very different from Akimov's reading quoted earlier, but where Akimov sees a desire for clarification and redemption, a Biblical reading sees these only as developmental stages towards salvation through Christian belief. A Biblical reading of the title could even emphasize The Revelations of St. John with its Apocalypse - often used by various religious sects. ⁴⁶ Bodin views apocalysm as one of several inherent aspects

⁴⁴ *Ot Ioanna (The Gospels, St. John) 4:14* reads: "A kto budet pit' vodu, kotoruju Ja dam emu, tot ne budet žaždat' vovek; no voda, kotoruju Ja dam emu, sdelaetsja v nem istočnikom vody, tekuščej v žizn' večnuju" ("But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life"); *7:38* reads: "Kto veruet v Menja, u togo, kak skazano v Pisanii, iz čreva potekut reki vody živoj" ("He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water"). *Otkrovenie Ioanna Bogoslova (Revelation of St. John) 22:1* reads: "I pokazal mne čistuju reku vody žizni, svetluju, kak kristall, ischodjaščuju ot prestola Boga i Agnca" ("And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb"); *22:17* reads: "I Duch i nevesta govorjat: priidi! I slyšavšij da skažet: priidi! Žažduščij pust' prichodit, i želajuščij pust' beret vodu žizni darom" ("And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely").

⁴⁵ By contrast "rivers of death" is a common concept in e.g. Sumerian, Greek, Hindu, Buddhist and Egyptian cosmology, cf. Eliade 1987(XII):427.

⁴⁶ Cf. an interview on this theme in *Aftenposten*, 13 April 1996, with professor dr.theol. Jakob Jervell.

of Russian culture.⁴⁷ The title could thus be interpreted as an oblique reference to the darker sides of Soviet Russia. If so, do the contents of the autobiography match this interpretation of the title? To answer this question we must consider the character Valentin.

3.4.4 The Valentin-character

In parts of the autobiography the protagonist Valentin occupies a prominent role. He periodically even represents the narrator, as I shall discuss under the next heading. Voronskij's choice of "Valentin" in preference to other pseudonyms he used necessitates some comments on etymology. Derived from the Latin *valeo*⁴⁸ the most relevant Russian lexicographical meanings are *valentnost'* = (chem.) valency⁴⁹ and *valentnyj* = worthy.⁵⁰ A succession of etymological meanings is listed by Dal' under *valit'*, *valjat'*, *val'nut'*, *valivat'*,⁵¹ which could be further explored. Of interest is also Valentin's proximity to Pereval.

The frequent use of undercover aliases among the Bolsheviks prior to the October 1917 revolution served to protect the cell members and cell network against the tsarist police. Ovsjannikov cites the following undercover aliases of the Bolsheviks attending the January 1912 Prague party conference: "Foma" (P.A.Zaluckij), "Stepan" (E.P.Onufriev), "Boris" (F.I.Gološčekin), "Pavel" (A.I.Dogadov), "Timofej" (S.S.Spandarjan), "Leonid" (L.P. Serebrjakov), "Viktor" (D.M.Švartcman), "Matvej" (M.I.Gorovič), "Georgij" (A.S.Romanov), "Jan" (Jakov Zevin) and finally "Valentin" (A.K.Voronskij).⁵² Little is known about who chose these pseudonyms and the criteria according to which they were selected.

"Valentin" was an undercover name that Voronskij assumed from around 1905

⁴⁷ Bodin 1993:88.

⁴⁸ Handford 1966:336. *Valeo* (*ui, ituris*) = 1) to be strong; 2) to be well or in health (cf. *vale!* = farewell); 3) to be powerful, mighty, have weight or influence; 4) to prevail, have efficacy, avail, be effectual; 5) to be able or capable; 6) to be worth, valued at; 7) to mean, signify.

⁴⁹ Howlett 1993:38.

⁵⁰ Berkov 1994:62.

⁵¹ Dal' (1880-82) 1996(I):161-162.

⁵² Ovsjannikov 1992:25, 91, 96.

when he first joined the Bolsheviks.⁵³ We have no indication of why he chose - or was simply given - this rather un-Russian pseudonym. Since both names carry a "V" (Voronskij, Valentin), this may have been a convenient device to facilitate recognition, but the aliases of the other participants above do not substantiate this proposition. I believe that the ex-seminarist Voronskij, the son of a village priest, may have been inspired by one or several of the 3 martyred saints Valentin venerated in the Russian Orthodox Church. Although some do not exclude the possibility that, historically, the 3 Valentins may have been one and the same person, the Russian Orthodox Church maintains that these all suffered martyrdom in the 2nd-3rd centuries: Valentin, Bishop of Terni (Interamna), martyred under emperor Claudius (Gothicus) and venerated on 30 July (12 August); the priest Valentin martyred in 228 and venerated on 24 April (7 May), and finally Valentin martyred in Rome in 269, who is venerated 6 July (19 July).⁵⁴ None of these dates correspond to Voronskij's date of birth 27 August (8 September) 1884 or his date of baptism 2 (15) September,⁵⁵ but the martyrdom of Valentin Bishop of Terni comes closest. The possible link to Valentinian Gnosticism and the adoration of Sophia is therefore a promising field for further inquiry.⁵⁶

Suffice it here to note that according to popular legend Valentin's jailor discovered that the prisoner was a learned man and had him teach his daughter Julia, who was blind. Julia converted to Christianity and by miracle regained her eyesight during Valentin's incarceration. Before being executed Valentin supposedly wrote his beloved Julia a letter of farewell, encouraging her to remain firm in her belief in God, signing it "from your Valentin". Julia next day planted an almond tree on

⁵³ Ovsjannikov 1990:19; 1992:12.

⁵⁴ Cf. e.g. *Pravoslavnyj cerkovnyj kalendar' 1997, s čeniem na každyj den'*, published by "Chram Vseh Svjatyh byvshego Novo-Alekseevskogo monastyra", Moscow 1997. *The Encyclopedia Americana*, Vols. I-XXX, published by Grolier Inc., Danbury Connecticut 1989, in volume 27:860 suggests, however, that the Valentin martyred in 269 was identical with Valentin Bishop of Terni. Cf. also Attwater, John 1995:348 and Cumming 1993:315. In the Roman Catholic Church 14 February is St. Valentine's day (not celebrated in the Orthodox Church) and in England and Scotland it has since the 1600s been the day when lovers are celebrated.

⁵⁵ Cf. 7.1.

⁵⁶ Thomassen 1992; Bychkov 1997; Gilhus 1998.

Valentin's grave, and the almond tree has since become a symbol of love and eternal friendship.

Valentin's role in restoring Julia's eyesight assumes a particular meaning when seen against the background of "waters of life", which as I noted were believed to render the bogatyr immortal and restore his eyesight. The centrality of visual imagery in Voronskij's aesthetics has been noted by Maguire.⁵⁷ I believe the double reference to the restoration of eyesight is not coincidental and plays a central connotational and interpretational role in the autobiography.

The Valentin hagiography and legend must have been known to Voronskij as a former seminarist, and it is possible that he saw himself as a modern Valentin, making the blind see. Several other Bolshevik pseudonyms had connotations with the Bible and/or with Russian Orthodox saints (Matvej, Pavel, Boris, Timofej, Georgij/Grigorij, Viktor). This would be an interesting point to pursue, but it is beyond the dissertation's scope.

Later Voronskij also availed himself of other pseudonyms, e.g. the Finnish-sounding "Nurmin", with which he signed e.g. several of his contributions to *Jasnaja zarja* in 1911 and *KN* 1921-22. Ovsjannikov ascribes "Nurmin" to Voronskij's stay in the Finnish village of Nurmijärvi at Helsingfors, where he sought refuge from the tsarist police following the failed Sveaborg uprising in December 1905.⁵⁸ Further, when he was exiled in Kem' in 1914 he used the pseudonym "A.Klimskij" in 2 articles he sent Gor'kij for publication. Yet it was Valentin (and not Nurmin) that Voronskij in the mid 1920s chose for the protagonist in his autobiography, whom in many ways is portrayed as an idol. In doing so, it is in my view relevant to assume that Voronskij chose the pseudonym Valentin for its hagiographic connotations with restoring eyesight to the blind. In this perspective he may have felt that the lives of the 3 martyred Valentins and the undercover Bolsheviks had some similarities, centering around their common will to make sacrifices for their faith. He may also have felt it appropriate to use Valentin, since this also had connotations with Pereval.

⁵⁷ Maguire 1987:203,26. Belaja 1989:121 ascribes this phenomenon to influence from Zoščenko.

⁵⁸ Ovsjannikov 1992:74-74. Voronskij's granddaughter ascribes the alias to the Finnish athlete Paavo Nurmi (1897-1973).

One could of course dismiss Valentin altogether as a convenient fictional device designed to introduce an element of dialogue to broaden the narrator's character. More cynically viewed, a double narrator could be intended to deflect possible criticism of subjectivism, megalomania, exaggeration of his own role, etc. from *Na postu* against Voronskij. To the extent that Valentin is idolized - which he definitely is - this seems a valid argument. Some scholars have pointed to the possibility that Valentin was devised by Voronskij to deflect undue attention from himself. In view of my initial comments on the Marxist scepticism to the genre of autobiography it is perhaps not coincidental that these scholars are Soviet and Russian. Yet the same authors do not explain the choice of the name Valentin and its possible connotations, or why it was chosen in preference e.g. to Nurmin.⁵⁹

Possibly Valentin was introduced to dilute Voronskij's own role, although I am not convinced of this. First, it was known to veteran Bolsheviks, and presumably also to others, that "Valentin" was Voronskij's underground cover name, and that the dedication to "Galina Valentin's daughter" was a reference to Voronskij's own daughter. Secondly, although we may not fully agree with Gusdorf's view of autobiography as "posthumous propaganda for posterity" and "revenge on history", it must be conceded that Voronskij to some extent risked obfuscating his message by partly fictionalizing the narrator. Since he was so direct and did not conceal his views in his literary aesthetics and literary portraits, cf. parts 4-5, why should he be less direct in his autobiography? Masing-Delic considered Valentin the narrator's Brandian *alter ego* with the narrator performing the part of Peer Gynt.⁶⁰

As I shall argue below, I believe Valentin was introduced primarily to allow Voronskij to reconcile Marxism with Christianity and thereby resolve an increasing dilemma he felt, particularly from around 1925 onwards. Voronskij's writings of the mid-1920s reflect his growing awareness of the merciless nature of the revolution and the possible human cost. He was now well-placed to reflect on this. Rather than reject Marxism (as distinct from Leninism and Stalinism which he did reject) Voronskij, in my reading, alternatively sought to amalgamate his own understanding

⁵⁹ Ćernobaev 1992a:21; Levin 1970:9.

⁶⁰ Masing-Delic 1976:49.

of Marxism with his childhood Christianity. This partial affirmation of "untainted" Marxism was indirectly also a criticism of its offshoots Leninism and Stalinism.

3.4.5 Autobiography - relevance and interpretation

Olney dates the beginning of literary criticism about autobiography to G.Gusdorf's essay *Conditions et limites de l'autobiographie* (1956).⁶¹ Gusdorf sees autobiography as a genre typical of the Western hemisphere in the Christian era and he distinguishes between two major versions of autobiography: the "confession" and "the artist's entire work". He believes that the prerogative of autobiography lies in showing not the objective stages of a career (the historian's task), but in revealing the effort of a creator to give the meaning of his own mythic tale.⁶²

Irrespective of the generic differences between the biography and the autobiography⁶³ we can assume through analogy that the arguments concerning the relevance of literary biography to literary analysis made in 1.2.3 are no less valid in the case of the literary autobiography: An author's reminiscences, however trivial and subjective, may throw some light on the authorship, provided one finds biographical information relevant.⁶⁴ Inaccuracies, distortions and even lies cannot be excluded as potentially inherent elements in autobiographies, but their possible presence does not diminish the relevance of the autobiography as a statement of the self, as we see e.g. in Chateaubriand's semi-fabricated *Voyage en Amerique*.⁶⁵ Returning to the preliminary definition of Clyman quoted in 3.4.1, we can therefore now conclude that the requirement of "purported truthfulness" is far from absolute. The often problematic relationship between autobiographical fiction and reality were certainly among the considerations of Eakin in selecting the title for his *Touching the World. Reference in Autobiography* (1992). The distinction between fiction and reality is

⁶¹ Olney 1980:9.

⁶² Gusdorf (1956) 1980:46-48.

⁶³ Lejeune (1989:23-25) rejects the idea that autobiography is merely a sub-group of biography, and notes that what he defines as resemblance and identity are different in the two genres: in biography it is resemblance that must ground identity; in autobiography it is identity that grounds resemblance.

⁶⁴ Vaagan 1996a:19-20.

⁶⁵ Gusdorf (1956)1980:44-45.

highly relevant in the case of Voronskij's autobiography, whose "semi-fictional" character has troubled some critics,⁶⁶ and whose "autobiographical prose" has been noted by others.⁶⁷ The generic complexities of the autobiography are evident when Olney states that the

[...] definition of autobiography as a literary genre seems to me virtually impossible because the definition must either include so much as to be no definition, or exclude so much as to deprive us of the most relevant texts. [...].⁶⁸

Whereas this is not particularly helpful in our context, Lejeune, in contrast, determinedly defines autobiography as:

[...]. *Retrospective prose narrative, written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is on his individual life, in particular the story of his personality* . [...].⁶⁹

Lejeune's definition (which omits "truthfulness" and only requires that the author be a "real" person) contains several requirements which a text has to meet in order to qualify as autobiographical:

1. Form of language
 - a. narrative
 - b. in prose
2. Subject treated: individual life, story of a personality
3. Situation of the author: the author (whose name refers to a real person) and the narrator are identical.
4. Position of the narrator
 - a. the narrator and the principal character are identical
 - b. retrospective point of view of the narrative.

Among these requirements 3 and 4a are seen as absolute, while the rest must be fulfilled in varying degrees to comply with Lejeune's definition. The text can be written in the 1st person singular (which is the more usual), but not all 1st person

⁶⁶ Levin 1970:89.

⁶⁷ Kasack 1992:1408-1409.

⁶⁸ Olney 1972:38.

⁶⁹ Lejeune 1989:4.

narrative accounts need be autobiographies, cf. the nameless narrator in Dostoevskij's *Zapiski iz podpol'ja* (1864). The text can also be written in the 2nd person singular (less frequent) or 3rd person singular (which is rarer than both the preceding variants and gives an exalted style), or even be based on combinations of these, since "I", "you" and "he" can be aspects of the same person,⁷⁰ but the author, the narrator and the principal character (protagonist) must be the same person. This is what Genette, in his classification of "narrative voices" in works of fiction, terms "autodiegetic narrative" (narrator = principal character; narrative in 1st person) as distinct from what he labels "homodiegetic narrative" (narrator is not principal character; narrative in 1st person) and "heterodiegetic narrative" (narrator is not principal character; narrative in 3rd person).⁷¹ The use of the 3rd person, which we find e.g. in *Zapiski* by Deržavin (1743-1816), may seem awkward in an autobiography, but Lejeune points out that it has been usual:

[...] (it) was common in historical memoirs like those of Caesar, in religious autobiographies (where the author calls himself "the servant of God") and in aristocratic memoirs.[...]. It is still used today in some related genres, brief genres, very strongly coded, and related to publishing strategies, like the preface, the publisher's blurb, and the biographical notice written by the author. [...].⁷²

A clear case of a literary autobiography written in the 1st person singular would be *Byloe i dumy* (1861-68) by A.I.Gercen (1812-1870). Ovsjannikov relates that in 1927, when part 1 of Voronskij's autobiography was published, many of his contemporaries compared it to *Byloe i dumy*.⁷³ Such a comparison is, however, in my view misleading: The monumental 8-volume autobiography of A.I. Gercen amounted to 1200 pages and covered his entire life span.⁷⁴ Voronskij's autobiography consists of some 400 pages and only deals with a decade of the narrator's life (1905-

⁷⁰ Lejeune 1989:34.

⁷¹ *ibid.* pp.5-6.

⁷² *ibid.* p.31.

⁷³ Ovsjannikov 1990:72.

⁷⁴ An amusing contrast would be the one-page *Autobiography in Miniature* by Cardinal John Newman covering the period 1812-84 (Olney 1972:28).

15). The length of the unpublished and confiscated follow-up *Tetradí osobogo naznačenija*, covering the period from 1912 until the early 1920s, remains unknown. Voronskij's evasiveness about his family contrasted with Gercen's frankness which extended to describing his wife's love affair with the German revolutionary poet Herwegh.⁷⁵ The socialist Gercen's autobiography nevertheless inspired Voronskij, and is referred to when the narrator reads from it aloud to the dying Novosel'cev, and it is also quoted in 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928).

Voronskij's *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* is written in the 1st person singular. The author, the narrator, and in most of the book also the principal character are identical. The text was published in Voronskij's own name with the subtitle "Vospominanija" ("Reminiscences").⁷⁶ The principal character is eventually identified in part 2, chapter 2 as Voronskij the author-narrator.⁷⁷ Thus what Lejeune calls "the autobiographical pact" is present: the affirmation in the text of the identity author-narrator-principal character, which in the final analysis refers back to the name of the author on the cover.⁷⁸ As is shown in diagram 3.4.5, by using the classification scheme and terminology of Lejeune Voronskij's autobiography can be seen as a transitional type "2c/3b" autobiography. This corresponds to a hybrid of Gusdorf's "confession" and "artist's entire work", and to a mixture of "autodiegetic" and "homodiegetic narrative" in Genette's terminology,⁷⁹ or to a border case between "simplex (single metaphor)" and duplex (double metaphor) in Olney's paradigm.⁸⁰ By contrast, Gercen's autobiography would be classified in Gusdorf's terminology as an "artist's entire work", or as "type 3b autobiography" (Lejeune), "autodiegetic" (Genette), and "simplex (single metaphor)" (Olney).

⁷⁵ Gercen (1861-68) 1962(II):79ff.

⁷⁶ Part 1 of *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* (Voronskij 1927c) carried the subtitle *Vospominanija*, as did part 2 in Voronskij 1929b. In *Novyj mir* 1928#9:154 part 2 is again subtitled *Vospominanija*. While this subtitle was not used in Voronskij 1970 or in Voronskij 1987b, it is clearly misleading when Akimov states that after 1927 Voronskij removed the subtitle (Akimov 1990:5).

⁷⁷ Voronskij 1929b:65

⁷⁸ Lejeune 1975:13-29. Cf. also Lejeune 1989:14.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* p.5, 16-17.

⁸⁰ Olney 1972:39.

Lejeune's taxonomy of autobiographies

Protagonist's name is: Fact is:	not author's name	unknown	author's name
fictional	1a Novel	2a Novel	
absent	1b Novel	2b Indeterminate	3a Autobiography
autobiographical		2c Autobiography	3b Autobiography

Diagram 3.4.5

At this point I might interpolate that Olney reminds us of GUSDORF's opposition to Lejeune (1975): GUSDORF sees Lejeune's paradigm as a narrow generic approach to autobiography and equates it with a flood of graphs, arrows and schematic rigidities amounting to "critical *hubris*" and "murdering to dissect".⁸¹ Despite these objections, I find Lejeune's paradigm instructive in the context of VORONSKIJ's autobiography because it allows a better understanding of the double narrator, which is not included in the broad definition by CLYMAN quoted above.

The most interesting deviation in VORONSKIJ's autobiography, which is not found in GERGEN's autobiography, is the use of a "split" narrator or "split" main protagonist. An interesting analogy would be GERTRUDE STEIN's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), which is Stein's own autobiography purportedly seen through the eyes of Miss Toklas. But in contrast with the very real Miss Toklas, who was Gertrude Stein's consort,⁸² Valentin is a fictitious character. Moreover, Valentin is described in the 3rd person, the narrator maintains a kind of apprentice-master relationship with him: he regularly reappears in the text and he becomes in these parts *de facto* the principal character. This is apparently a departure from Lejeune's requirement that author, narrator and principal character (protagonist) must be identical. Yet on closer examination this problem evaporates. We know that Valentin is in fact VORONSKIJ, the narrator.

Here I need only add in relation to 3.4.4 that the apprentice-master relationship between the narrator and the protagonist Valentin adds stature, distance and perhaps

⁸¹ Olney 1980:17-18.

⁸² Cunliffe 1971:247.

even credibility to Valentin and his views, combined with a flavour of humbleness to the narrator. I have already stated why I doubt that the invention of Valentin reflected a wish to deflect possible accusations of subjectivism and megalomania. I believe Voronskij conceived the Valentin character primarily in order to solve an acute personal problem at this time: the reconciliation of Marxism with Christianity. Of particular relevance here are the scenes featuring both narrator and Valentin, especially in part 3, chapter 3 "V Saratove. Credo Valentina".⁸³ But as noted initially *Novyj mir* 1929#1:169-203 only published 1½ chapters - "Strada" and half of "V rodných krajach". Despite a reassuring "prodolženie sleduet" (p.202) the missing half of chapter 2 and the 3 following chapters - "V Saratove. Credo Valentina", "Kurort" and "Praga" were excluded from subsequent editions of *Novyj mir*. As we have seen Voronskij, who had been excluded from the party in February 1928, was arrested in January 1929 by the OGPU and exiled to Lipetsk. He only reappeared in *Novyj mir* after he had been readmitted into the party in April 1930.⁸⁴ The missing chapters were not included in the material he published in the early 1930s, cf. part 8. According to Voronskij's bibliography the autobiography was not republished until Voronskij 1970, a point that has not been commented on by Russian or Western scholars.⁸⁵

In the missing chapter 3 "V Saratove. Credo Valentina" to which I shall limit my comments,⁸⁶ the narrator and Valentin are in Saratov, on the Sokolov mountain

⁸³ Voronskij 1987b:544-551.

⁸⁴ His bibliography cites as his last appearances in *Novyj mir* the stories *Geroičeskie novelly* (1931#2), *Bursa* (1932#1-5), and *Tri povesti: Na pereput'jach, Budni, Ol'ga* (1934#9-10), cf. Efremov 1984:30.

⁸⁵ Levin 1970:6 states that "V 1927-1934 kniga neskol'ko raz vychodila otdel'nym izdaniem", which must be a reference to the autobiography's partial appearances in Voronskij 1927c, 1929b, 1928c, 1929c, 1931b. Levin may also have been referring to components like "Iz rasskazov Valentina" in Voronskij 1932, 1933b. These, however, although dealing with Valentin, are not part of the autobiography as it is printed in Voronskij 1987b. However the autobiographical *Bursa* (1933a) was republished in 1966, cf. Efremov 1984:11. While Masing-Delic 1976:44 refers to an unspecified 1934 edition, Voronskij's bibliography states that the autobiography was not published in the USSR before 1970. Akimov is silent on this issue, thereby confirming the need he sees for further research in Voronskij's post-1927 prose (Akimov 1987, 1990:14). Also silent on this point are Belaja 1987, Maguire 1987 and Choate 1987, 1998. Clearly, these questions deserve further research.

⁸⁶ It is of course also intriguing that in the missing half of chapter 2, as shown in 3.1, the narrator quotes the Bible and thinks of the Apocalypse. Equally interesting is that in the third missing chapter "Praga" Voronskij describes his meeting with Lenin at the 1912 Bolshevik conference in Prague. Publicizing Voronskij's contact with Lenin would in 1929 have of course have greatly assisted

overlooking the Volga: Valentin delivers his rather pessimistic *credo* in the 1st person, with several direct and indirect references to the Bible, e.g. to the crucifixion of Christ, he describes a quarrel with his landlord "Moses", he cites from the Revelation of St. John, the coming of the third angel, and he refers to the lost paradise.⁸⁷ Valentin, however, on the whole seems to support Marxism (though not Leninism or Stalinism). Interesting is the narrator's interruption of Valentin's long monologue and the narrator's quotation of the prophets as an antidote to Valentin's quotation of Marx. Valentin praises this quotation. That the narrator propounds the prophets and Valentin defends Marxism when we know they are one and the same person gives a remarkable juxtaposition and fusion of Marxism and Christianity. This may also explain why the name Valentin was chosen in preference to e.g. Nurmin: Like the martyred Valentin who through a miracle restored the sight of Julia, Valentin restores the eyesight of the narrator. As the title of Voronskij's final volume of literary aesthetics suggests - *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928), and as Maguire has rightly observed, visual imagery do play a key role in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. In parts 4 and 5 I shall revert to this image and relate it to Voronskij's perception of beauty and truth.

Voronskij's autobiography in this sense acquires the dimension of Gurdorf's "confession" type of autobiography. Such a fusion was nothing new and was reminiscent of Bogdanov, Lunačarskij and Gor'kij's *bogostroitel'stvo* from 1908 (cf. 2.1). Thereafter the narrator and Valentin descend the mountain together. The Biblical parallel to Exodus 19ff. when Moses received the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai is striking and serves to elevate Valentin and his Marxist-Christian message. Had not the author-narrator invented Valentin, this type of dialogue, and the seeming resolution of the ideological conflict between Marxism and Christianity, would have had to be replaced by a probably less convincing inner monologue by the narrator-principal character.

The split narrator is fully possible and not unusual. Lejeune thus describes "the

Voronskij.

⁸⁷ Voronskij 1987b:544-551.

elasticity of the 'I',⁸⁸ noting that "the 1st person always conceals [...] a secret person, and in this sense all autobiography is by definition indirect",⁸⁹ that "We do not really know how to get out of the self; that is to say, to represent, equally with our own, a point of view different from our own",⁹⁰ that "the 3rd person is almost always used in contrastive and local manner in texts that also use the 1st person",⁹¹ and regarding "transposition" notes that "the autobiographer [...] steps back a little and in reality splits himself as a narrator".⁹²

3.5 Summary and conclusions

In the absence of an authoritative biography I discussed in part 3, including the appendices 7.1-7.15, the life and career of Voronskij. In 3.1 the ex-seminarist Voronskij's early years of underground revolutionary work, exile and imprisonment, and his journalistic and literary interests from 1911 until at *Rabočij kraj* 1918-20 were noted. In 3.2. we saw that Voronskij was promoted by Lenin to national prominence at *Krasnaja nov'* from early 1921. In 3.2.1-3.2.2 I noted that post-revolutionary publishing favoured *KN* and Voronskij quickly sought to realize his vision of literary aesthetics to improve Soviet literature. In 3.2.3- 3.2.4 we saw that Voronskij and *KN* from 1923 came under increasing attack from proletarian critics due to his preferential treatment of fellow travellers and what Maguire has termed "the cognition theory". The RKP(b) policy of "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres* and his 3 major mentors Trockij, Frunze and Gor'kij each in their way set their mark on his career and destiny (3.2.5-3.2.7). From 1923-24 Voronskij inspired the Pereval writers (3.2.9) and from 1925 he involved himself in the VSP (3.2.8). Ousted from *KN* in April 1927 (3.2.10) in the wake of Trockij's downfall, he nonetheless completed some of his major literary aesthetical articles which appeared in 1928. It seemed that artistry had assumed equal importance to ideology in his literary

⁸⁸ Lejeune 1989:44.

⁸⁹ *ibid.* p.35.

⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.45.

⁹¹ *ibid.* p.42.

⁹² *ibid.* pp.38-39.

esthetics. In 3.4 I noted that little research has been done on Voronskij's autobiography. Discussing the genre of autobiography in Russia (3.4.1-3.4.5) I employed a hermeneutical reading of the title of the autobiography and the Valentin character which revealed certain Christian connotations. I also ventured that he wrote his autobiography from mid-1926 in a state of utter disillusionment in order to clarify, justify and correct the picture of pre-revolutionary Bolshevism and his own involvement in this. At the same time the autobiography presaged the "return to childhood" theme to be explored later in 4.2.20 "Iskusstvo videt' mir" (1928).

In 3.4.4-3.4.5 I found further that the author-narrator-principal character draws on the protagonist Valentin in parts of the autobiography primarily to render the text more credible and to emphasize Valentin's *credo* or "confession": that Marxism and Christianity are two aspects of the same value system. I concluded that this is Voronskij's and Valentin's message, a need to restore vision through the waters of life and death. A fusion of Christianity with untainted Marxism (as opposed to Marxism-Leninism and Stalinism) would ensure vision and guidance ahead. As would become apparent in Voronskij's dispute with Gor'kij over the nature of reality and beauty, cf. 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennom pravde" (1928), an amalgamation of Christian and Marxist values was closely linked with Voronskij's equation of beauty and truth and can further be seen as a response to Voronskij's political misfortunes. It is e.g. very significant that in this same article he made truth contingent on a measure of personal freedom. This confirms the close relationship between the course and development of Voronskij's life and career and his literary aesthetics. Yet it is difficult to ascertain to what extent Voronskij consciously developed the Christian analogy. As Voronskij himself repeatedly stressed, the subconscious and intuition play decisive roles in artistic creation.

In parts 4-5 I shall therefore also attempt to clarify whether his articles on literary aesthetics and his literary portraits show any tendency from around 1926 to amalgamate or equate Marxism with Christianity.

PART 4: TOWARDS A THEORY OF LITERARY AESTHETICS?

As stated in 1.1.1 in part 4 I seek to analyze Voronskij's literary aesthetics, a term defined in part 2, from the perspective of qualitative (interpretative) content analysis. This approach, adapted from media research and communication theory, is not customarily included in textbooks in the humanities on literary theory.¹ Nevertheless, it seems both appropriate and rewarding here (and in part 5) where the focus is on Voronskij's many and diverse statements (communications) on art and literature.² Whereas *quantitative* content analysis typically relies on frequency counts of key concepts and terms in a text, *qualitative* (interpretative) content analysis as I employ it³ will offer a fairly detailed presentation of Voronskij's views measured against 8 key ideological and artistic parameters (or criteria) constituting in my view his definition of literary aesthetics. The text basis will be a selection of 20 of his key articles on literature 1921-28. For each article I note which of the 8 parameters are dominant and which are not. In 4.3 - 4.5 some conclusions are drawn, including an assessment of the extent to which his writings amount to a theory of literary aesthetics.

4.1 The troubled marriage of ideology and artistry

For reasons stated in 2.0-2.1, Voronskij could only draw on a limited heritage of aesthetic thought, both pre-Marxist and Marxist, on assuming his new responsibilities at *KN* in 1921. He was not fully aware of the age-old dichotomy between the socio-political utility of art and literature versus their beauty *per se*. This

¹ Cf. e.g. Jefferson, Robey 1985, Baldick 1990, Culler 1997. For the distinction content versus form cf. Baldick 1990:44.

² Neživoj 1988:10-13 defended his many quotations of Voronskij by noting the greater objectivity of such a procedure (in preference to only advancing his own interpretations) and the complex, multidirectional (*raznonapravlennost'*) nature of Voronskij's articles.

³ Morris 1975:288 defines "content analysis" as: "The systematic analysis of the content rather than the structure of a communication; especially the determination for psychological study of the frequency of occurrence of thematic and symbolic elements, including ideas, feelings, assertions, and personal references, in response to a test or in a communication." Larsen 1991:67ff. distinguishes further between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. The present approach is an adaptation of qualitative (interpretative) content analysis which avoids the stringent and statistically defined frequency counts involved in quantitative content analysis.

dilemma came to embody his writing on literary aesthetics which throughout became a balancing act between ideology and artistry. As editor of *KN*, a position of national prominence, he was for the first time in a position to influence RKP(b) policy in *belles-lettres*, which he did, as shown in parts 2-3. What was the nucleus of his literary aesthetics, and how did his thinking on literary aesthetics develop as editor of *KN* ?

Voronskij has been attributed the following: "The aesthetic requirement of literary works that they should in fact be good was Voronskij's favourite theme".⁴ The same source affirms that during the debate 9-10 May 1924 at the meeting of the Press Section of the CK RKP(b) a number of communist speakers - Voronskij, Bucharin, Jakovlev and in particular Trockij - expressed aesthetic arguments influenced by Pil'njak's work focussing on the primacy in Soviet literature of the "writer's talent" and "consonance with the epoch".⁵ It would be fallacious, though, as we have seen, to infer that Voronskij was a unilateral spokesman of the artistic elements of aesthetics. Ideology throughout played a key role in his conception of art and literature, but it was moderated by artistic considerations. This explains why I have entitled this chapter "the troubled marriage of ideology and artistry".

In his early articles 1921-22 ideology prevailed over artistry. In *Pravda* in September 1921 he e.g. argued that *belles-lettres* were ignored and newspapers were preoccupied with famine and taxation. Readers were "spiritually starved" and craved *belles-lettres*. Accordingly he advocated improved conditions for writing and publishing in Soviet Russia.⁶ In *Pravda* in June 1922 where he coined the term "Soviet literature", he declared that the civil war 1918-20 had been replaced by a civil war of ideologies in the era of NEP.⁷ Writers must choose sides, there was no apolitical literature. Yet the uncompromising ideological tone was not borne out in his articles from 1923 onwards, in which his growing preoccupation with a variety

⁴ Alberg Jensen 1979:84.

⁵ *ibid.* p.87. Cf also 4.2.8. For a more detailed version of the May 1924 debate referred to in part 3, cf. Choate 1987:157-162.

⁶ *Pravda* 11 September 1921#202:1, cf. 4.2.1 and 7.2.

⁷ *Pravda* 28 June 1922#141:2; cf. 4.2.3 and 7.2, 7.4.

of artistic considerations diminished the relative importance of ideology in his aesthetics.

The first explicit formulation of Voronskij's literary aesthetics occurred in 1923 in "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost"⁸ and "Na perevale".⁹ In the former article he saw art as cognition of life as opposed to the crude view of art as agitation, which he ascribed to *Na postu* and futurists alike. Marxist criticism in his opinion should not only strive to find the Plechanovite "sociological equivalent" of the object of art but must also evaluate aesthetically the object of art. Believing literature to be at a crossroads in 1923, he exhorted writers to strive for "neo-realism" by fusing everyday realism with artistic fantasy and experimentation. His criticism was levelled not only at proletarian writers and critics grouped in Oktjabr' and VAPP and around the journals *Na postu* and *Molodaja gvardija*, but also at LEF whose elitist and utilitarian understanding of art in his view reduced art and the artist to insignificance. This unacceptable denigration of art and the artist also entailed a rejection of all former - and all other - art forms and literature as obsolete, a conception reminiscent of Pisarev's "razrušenie éstetiki" mentioned in 2.0. A central area of contention was whether there existed a perceptible, cognizable reality. Voronskij propounded a comprehensive and holistic view of art and literature with the artist in the centre, without any *a priori* contradiction between logic and form. The artist's mission was to translate his perception of reality in the most artistically satisfactory way. In this he departed from Plechanov who had rejected the artist's personality as a determinant.

Voronskij soon turned to the genesis of art. 1925 proved a decisive year in his career. In "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" while rejecting Freudian psychoanalysis as a method in literary science and warning Russian literary critics against interpreting literature as expressive of sexual aberrations, he nevertheless acknowledged the utility of the "dynamic subconscious". This, though, he saw as little more than a Freudian latter-

⁸ KN 1923#5 (15):347-384, cf. 4.2.4 and 7.2-7.4.

⁹ KN 1923#6(16):312-322, cf. 4.2.5 and 7.2-7.4.

day appropriation of Tolstoj's technique of "snjatje pokrovov".¹⁰

By late 1925, in an article with the desultory title "O tom, čego u nas net"¹¹ where he defined his literary aesthetical *credo*, in which beauty played a decisive role, he resignedly concluded that there was no understanding in Soviet Russia of literary aesthetics and beauty. In the second half of the 1920s Voronskij became, in the eyes of many, obsessed with the inner life of the artist. The final stage in the development of his literary aesthetics in the period under examination took place after he left *KN* in April 1927. In 1928 he published the article "O chudožestvennoj pravde",¹² under a pseudonym, since by now he was disgraced, having been expelled from the VKP(b) in February 1928.¹³ By dedicating one of his final public statements on literature to the concept of truth, he revealed that aesthetics had become ultimately a matter of truth. As noted in the introduction 1.1. this echoed Dostoevskij's views from *Dnevnik pisatelej* 55 years earlier on the widespread Russian propensity for lying. From his early optimism in 1921 he had by 1928 come full circle, ousted from *KN*, expelled from the VKP(b), an adherent of the lost cause of Trotskyism, left with few options other than retirement and reminiscences.

4.1.1 Eight parameters that summarize Voronskij's literary aesthetics

The more I read Voronskij, the more I was struck by the balancing of ideology and artistry which typify his literary aesthetics. I shall argue on the basis of a selection of 20 of Voronskij's articles that his literary aesthetics 1921-28 can be aptly summarized in 8 parameters. These coincide with and are expressive of the major criteria in his literary aesthetics that he invoked in the period under examination. No strict ranking or causality among these parameters is intended on my part, or is

¹⁰ *KN* 1925#7(32):241-262, cf. 4.2.12 and 7.2-7.4. Maguire 1987:205ff. does not in my view clearly enough state that Voronskij actually rejected Freudian psychoanalysis. This aspect is brought out very well in Choate 1987:200ff. who also gives an enlightening account of Freud's reception in Soviet Russia.

¹¹ *KN* 1925#19(35): 254-265, cf. 4.2.13 and 7.2-7.4.

¹² Published under the pseudonym "Anisimov" in *Sibirskie ogni* 1928#1:176-198, cf. 4.2.18 and 7.4.

¹³ Voronskaja (1996:87) relates that Zarubin, the editor of *Sibirskie ogni*, who knew the author's real identity, experienced considerable problems when the true identity of Anisimov became known. The article had been approved by Syrcov, the secretary of the Siberian *krajkom*.

arguably even feasible; they should be conceived as simply interrelated.¹⁴ They measure, on the one hand, Voronskij's assessment in my reading of the importance accorded explicitly or implicitly by an author in a literary text to ideology defined as attitudes to: 1) the October Revolution, 2) the RKP(b)/VKP(b), 3) Soviet society, and 4) Slavophilism. In addition I shall employ 4 parameters more related to what I view as artistic considerations. These measure Voronskij's appraisal of the importance accorded explicitly or implicitly by an author in a literary text to artistic qualities defined as attitudes to/abilities in terms of: 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism, 7) Psychological character portrayal, and finally 8) Language mastery. Seen in conjunction these 8 parameters embrace Voronskij's definition of literary aesthetics in my reading. Their optimum interaction would produce beauty which by 1928 had become a question of truth.

I must hasten to add that of course other indices could be conceived, e.g. the importance or relevance of persons such as Marx, Lenin, Plechanov, or of themes such as Russian emigrants, the Bible, or of a variety of textual criteria such as intertextual references, citations, loan words, neologisms, etc. Also Maguire's dichotomy "universals/particulars" could be employed.¹⁵ Ultimately this would depend on the theoretical approach elected, as shown in 1.2.3. I believe the set of 8 parameters, which are broadly conceived and in some instances also overlap, are sufficiently distinct analytically to generate a meaningful picture of Voronskij's literary aesthetics.

4.1.2 Four ideological parameters

Throughout Voronskij's career his assessment of the importance accorded explicitly or implicitly by the writer, speaker or artist to 1) the October Revolution, 2) the RKP(b)/VKP(b), 3) Soviet society and 4) Slavophilism, played a decisive, but not exclusive, role in his literary aesthetics. As suggested in 1.1, acknowledging and expressing the necessity and inevitability of the October Revolution was perhaps the

¹⁴ This is, needless to say, fundamentally alien to the Marxist view of basis and superstructure, cf. 1.2.3.

¹⁵ Maguire 1972.

single most important criteria in all Soviet Marxist aesthetics. Repeatedly Voronskij argued that although the fellow travellers were not Communists "they are on our side" and their literary qualities should be acknowledged and emulated by the much less talented Communist writers. As the vanguard role of the RKP(b)/VKP(b) was reinforced and its membership numbers increased under Stalin, expressing a positive attitude to the party became a major concern for the proletarian writers, particularly since VAPP from 1920 sought to become the party's executive branch in *belles-lettres*, as I discussed in 1.1. To Trotskyites such as Voronskij the importance of this parameter conversely lessened as the 1920s unfolded. The writer's attitude towards post-revolutionary Soviet society in general was a more evasive criterium, largely because Soviet reality could be interpreted differently. There was a marked difference between "stressing the black sides of Soviet existence" as Zamjatin was perceived as doing, frankly acknowledging difficulties in the countryside as Sejfullina and the Pereval writers did, and idylizing Soviet industrialization in the manner of Gladkov's *Cement* (1925). As noted in part 2, Slavophilism was seen to contradict the gains of both the October 1917 Revolution and the RKP(b)/VKP(b) as well as to reject Soviet contemporary society. Slavophilism can be defined broadly as a rejection of Western values and influence in favour of perceived traditional Slavic and Russian values.¹⁶ As expressed in parts of Pil'njak's *Golj god* (1921), *Tret'ja stolica* (1923) and *Volki* (1925), it was seen as a retrograde, nostalgic hankering back to a decadent, pre-industrial, peasant past. To Soviet Marxists it meant an ideological rejection of the progress initialled by the October Revolution. Its occurrence in a literary text could from a Marxist point of view only be viewed positively if it was meant ironically or typified someone decadent.

4.1.3 Four artistic parameters

In my view the most important artistic criteria Voronskij advanced 1921-28 were his assessment of the importance accorded explicitly or implicitly by the writer in a literary text to artistic qualities defined as attitudes or abilities in terms of: 5) The

¹⁶ Krag (1932)1990; Bodin 1993. Quite distinct terms are "Scythianism", exemplified in Blok's poem "Skify" (1918), and "Eurasianism", cf. Vernadsky 1969:21; Terras 1985:394;132.

classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism, 7) Psychological character portrayal, and finally 8) Language mastery. As shown in part 3, his background predisposed him to stress the importance of studying the Russian and European classics, especially the realists Gogol' and Tolstoj. As a Marxist, Voronskij *sui generis* adhered to literary realism. Yet while he rejected symbolism, as we shall see in his portrait of Belyj in part 5, as well as romanticism, he was not unreceptive to some of the psychologism of Dostoevskij or to the subdued character depth of his favourite writer - Čechov. It was increasingly the writer's ability to penetrate into his protagonists and give a realistic rendering of the complicated human psychology that in many ways became a pet theme to Voronskij as the 1920s progressed. I shall also argue that parameter 7, which is absent in his early articles on his literary aesthetics, makes its permanent entry from around 1925. While Maguire faulted Voronskij for mixing the unconscious (*nesoznatel'nyj*) with the subconscious (*podsoznatel'nyj*) and described Voronskij's art of cognition theory as "banal and perfunctory",¹⁷ both Belaja, Choate and Neživoj later found that Voronskij's views on artistic intuition were remarkably prescient and far ahead of his time.¹⁸ However, today's Western primers in cognitive psychology do not index "intuition"¹⁹ and the state-of-the arts in Western cognition theory,²⁰ would deem Voronskij's ideas on artistic imagery and cognition simplistic. Yet as Choate argued, his views on artistic intuition were advanced for Soviet Russia in the early/mid-1920s.²¹ Fadeev indirectly acceded as much at the opening of the first All-Union Congress of Proletarian Writers in 1928 when he stated that the main problem in the literary disputes 1927/28 was the interpretation of "living man".²² The appropriation by RAPP of several of

¹⁷ Maguire 1987:206,223.

¹⁸ Belaja 1987:27; Choate 1987:337; Neživoj 1988:354.

¹⁹ Cf. Best 1995.

²⁰ Cf. proceedings from "The Sixth European Workshop on Imagery and Cognition", arranged 9-13 August 1997 at The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, e.g. the papers on "Individual differences in visual memory, discovery and creativity" by R.E.Anderson and E.W. Balsom, "Coding and maintenance of locational information in visuo-spatial working memory" by C.Sanfelieu and R.H.Logie.

²¹ Choate 187:200ff.

²² Fadeev 1957:13.

Voronskij's ideas noted in part 3, e.g. "living man", was indicative of the superiority of his literary aesthetics compared to RAPP's.

As we shall see in this part Voronskij despaired over the shallow schematism of communist character portrayal, e.g. in Gladkov's *Cement* (1925). By contrast he praised Tolstoj's technique of "snjatje pokrovov", exemplifying this through Tolstoj's ingenuous one-line reference to Karenin's protruding ears in *Anna Karenina*. In Voronskij's view this deceptively simple detail revealed more than scores of pages of character analysis. Yet Voronskij omitted mentioning Tolstoj's single most penetrating and detailed "psychological portrait" - *Smert' Ivana Il'iča* (1886), which in many ways anthropomorphizes the entire parameter 7. Finally, language mastery was a persistent concern of Voronskij's, even in relation to authors he only read in translation like Hamsun and Proust. Language mastery (including e.g. prose lyricism, use of vernacular, regionalisms) could even be a mitigating circumstance with ideological misfits, as we shall revert to in his appraisal of Aleksej Tolstoj in part 5.

These 8 parameters were of course not static quantities. Their relative importance and interaction changed as Voronskij's literary aesthetics developed and matured. In general it could be expected that an article in which all or many parameters are present would be more expressive of Voronskij's developed or mature literary aesthetics than an article in which only a few parameters are present. Yet this is not necessarily the case, since an article centering on only a few parameters could simply be more deliberately focussed and limited in scope. The selection of 20 articles has several such examples, as we shall see. I hope to show that ideological criteria remained decisive to the Marxist Voronskij, but that he became increasingly aware of the importance of artistic criteria. In my estimate artistic criteria played only a minor role in his aesthetics in the early 1920s, but were upgraded from 1923-34 onwards; by 1928 there is a case for arguing that they seemed to count as much as ideological criteria in his literary aesthetics. This is at the same time a reflection of his increasing political disillusionment and estrangement, and downgrading of parameters 1-3 described in part 3.

4.2 A selection of Voronskij's major articles on literary aesthetics

In presenting what I shall argue are 20 of the most central of Voronskij's published general articles on literary aesthetics 1921-28 (excluding for the time being his literary portraits which are dealt with in part 5) a primary consideration has been to choose among the articles Voronskij republished in book form in *Na styke* (1923), *Iskusstvo i žžn'* (1924b), *Ob iskusstve* (1925a), *Literaturnye tipy* (1925b), *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926), *Mister Briiling p'et čašu do dna* (1927b) and, partly, *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a), cf. 7.4 and part 8. As I shall note later, only one article among the 20 selected was not republished by Voronskij in book form during his own lifetime, viz. 4.2.1 "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni".²³ Of the remaining books specified in 7.4 (Voronskij 1924a, 1927a and 1928b-29a), the first is in fact a book version of article 4.2.4 below, while the rest are devoted to literary portraits discussed in part 5.

The 7 books listed are collections of articles and contain approximately 90 articles (excluding portraits, cf. part 5) of various length and scope, ranging from reflections on literary aesthetics, reviews of books, essays, polemics, to admonitions and political statements. Again excluding for the time being his literary portraits (cf. part 5), it is fair to conclude that these 90 articles were reprinted in book form presumably for their representativity and for posterity. As such they must be seen to embrace what he considered as his most important theoretical statements on art and literature, his literary aesthetic *credo*; there is no reason to believe that Voronskij did not personally select and edit all articles reprinted in his books. Although I have all reason to believe that the 20 articles in conjunction fully express Voronskij's views, I do not imply that articles excluded are negligible. On the contrary, it would be methodically desirable to corroborate my conclusions against the roughly 70 articles (again excluding portraits) not included. However, this is beyond the scope of this dissertation and must await further research.

It should perhaps also be mentioned that only one of the 20 articles - 4.2.9 "Zametki ob iskusstve" - was reprinted more than once (in fact twice) in book form

²³ This article was probably not reprinted in *Na styke* (1923) partly due to the complaints about famine receiving all the media coverage while *belles-lettres* was being ignored. Given *KN*'s early success such complaints were inappropriate in 1923, cf. 3.2.2.

by Voronskij 1923-28. In all other cases the article in question had been printed once, either in *KN* or in another journal or newspaper, and reprinted once in book form by Voronskij 1923-28. I am not here concerned with reprints after 1928. Having left *KN* in April 1927 and being unable to publish there, Voronskij was later disgraced through his expulsion from the VKP(b) in February 1928 and arrest in January 1929, cf. part 3. In this situation it must be assumed that from 1928 onwards he was no longer free to decide the contents and form of his articles. As far as possible I have therefore used the original texts as these appeared in *KN*, *Pravda*, *Prožektor*, *Naši dni* and/or in books 1921-27/28, since one cannot exclude the possibility of text revisions after 1928. A case in point is 4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost' (K voprosu o našich literaturnych raznoglasijach" where as I shall show 6 pages were deleted without comment in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a as compared with the original version in *KN* 1923#5(15):347-384 and the reprinted version in Voronskij 1924b.²⁴ As will be noted later several of the other articles have also been revised, though less drastically. Further, as noted earlier, it is e.g. peculiar that no mention is made of Trockij in the parts of his autobiography dealing with Nikolaev and Odessa where Trockij grew up. Although Voronskij after 1928 was "circumscribed" and could no longer decide if and how his work should appear, this does not mean that his post-1928 production is insignificant. On the contrary I have argued previously that several Russian scholars believe his works from the 1930 onwards are interesting and constitute an untapped source of research.

9 of the articles first appeared in *KN*, 2 in *Pravda*, 2 in *Prožektor*, 2 in *Naši dni*, 1 in *Novij mir*, 2 in other journals and 2 in books. Together with the 24 individual literary portraits, cf. part 5, this confirms that *KN* was the main vehicle 1921-27 of Voronskij's literary criticism and aesthetics.

Articles marked * are included in either Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a or 1987b. Those marked ** were not included there, and their texts have been taken from either *KN*, *Pravda*, *Prožektor* or *Naši dni* 1921-27 and/or from Voronskij 1923, 1924b, 1925b, 1927b or 1928a. It is a measure of Voronskij's limited

²⁴ Several deletions in Voronskij 1982 were detected by Choate 1987:342 who quite rightly stated that "This shameless falsification of texts obstructs the scientific evaluation of Voronskij's works". That deletions were repeated in Voronskij 1987a speaks for itself.

rehabilitation that the 7 articles marked ** were not included in Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b. This indicates that the selection of articles in these works is not fully representative. Their inclusion here hopefully rectifies this to some extent. As the family archive (cf. 7.6) suggests, the 1984 centennial conference, of which Voronskij 1987a was a result, tended towards illuminating the less controversial aspects of Voronskij's literary career and output. I therefore feel justified in the following discussion to go into more detail with the articles marked ** than with the others. Only the first reprinting in book form is noted in brackets, and further details are given below and in 7.3-7.4.

- 4.2.1** "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni", *Pravda*, 1921#202:1, (11 September) . Not reprinted.
- 4.2.2** "Literaturnye otkliki". First published in *KN* 1922#2(6):258-275. Reprinted in *Na styke* (1923).
- 4.2.3* "Iz sovremennykh literaturnykh nastroenij". First published in *Pravda* 1922#141:2, (28 June). Reprinted in *Na styke* (1923).
- 4.2.4* "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'" (K voprosu o našich literaturnykh raznoglasijach). First published in *KN* 1923#5(15):347-384. Reprinted in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b).
- 4.2.5* "Na perevale (Dela literaturnye)". First published in *KN* 1923#6(16):312-322. Reprinted in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b).
- 4.2.6* "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach (K voprosu o našich literaturnykh raznoglasijach)". First published in *Prožektor* 1923#12:14-21. Reprinted in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b).
- 4.2.7** "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (First published in *KN* 1923#7(17):257-276. Reprinted in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b).
- 4.2.8** "O 'tekuščem momente' i zadačach RKP v chudožestvennoj literature" First published in *Prožektor* 1924#5:23-27. Reprinted in *Literaturny tipy* (1925b).
- 4.2.9* "Zametki ob iskusstve". First published in *KN* 1925#6(31):260-276.

Reprinted in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a) and in *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926).²⁵

- 4.2.10* "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna". First published in *Naši dni* 1925#5:297-304. Reprinted in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a).
- 4.2.11* "O mudroj točke". First printed in *Naši dni* 1925#5:309-314. Reprinted in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a).
- 4.2.12* "Frejdizm i iskusstvo". First published in *KN* 1925#7(32):241-262. Reprinted in *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926).
- 4.2.13** "O tom, čego u nas net". First published in *KN* 1925#10(35):254-265. Reprinted in *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926).
- 4.2.14** "Pisatel', kniga, čitatel' (Chudožestvennaja proza za istekšij god)". First published in *KN* 1927#1(48):226-239. Reprinted in *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna* (1927b).
- 4.2.15** "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej". First published in *KN* 1927#4(51):214-221. Reprinted in *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna* (1927b).
- 4.2.16* "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve". First published in *Novyj mir* 1927#8:160-168 and #9:177-185. Reprinted in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a).
- 4.2.17* "Desjatiletie Oktjabrja i sovetskaja literatura". First published in *Učitel'skaja gazeta* 1927#11:6-7). Reprinted in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a).
- 4.2.18* "O chudožestvennoj pravde". First published under the pseudonym "Anisimov" in *Sibirskie ogni* 1928#1:176-198 as "Voprosy chudožestvennogo tvorčestva". Reprinted in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a).
- 4.2.19* "Ob industrializacii i ob iskusstve". First published in the book *Iskusstvo videt' mir*, (1928a:162-169).
- 4.2.20* "Iskusstvo videt' mir (O novom realizme)". First published in the book *Iskusstvo videt' mir*, (1928a:81-114).

It will be noticed that the 20 articles were originally published in the following years: 1921:1; 1922:2; 1923:4; 1924:1; 1925:5; 1926:0; 1927:4 and 1928:3. The lack of an article from 1926 is partly compensated for by the fact that article 4.2.14 covers

²⁵ Reprinted as "Ob iskusstve" in the book *Ob iskusstve* (Voronskij 1925a) and in Voronskij (1926), and as "Ob iskusstve pisatelja" in Voronskij (1982,1987a), cf. 7.4.

the year 1926, as its subtitle indicates.

In the following discussion of these 20 articles I shall first briefly recapitulate the salient points, in my reading, of each article. This facilitates the task of the reader unfamiliar with Voronskij's work.²⁶ Then I discuss which of the 8 parameters are most accentuated. The repetition of this approach for each article may appear tedious but has the more important methodological advantage of allowing comparability.

4.2.1 "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni"²⁷

Spread over 4 columns on the lower front page of *Pravda* on 11 September 1921, this brief article was the first major literary statement on a national scale by the newly appointed editor of *KN*. It has not been reprinted in later books by or about Voronskij, cf. 7.4, and warrants some comments.

Voronskij availed himself of this occasion essentially to argue for improved conditions for *belles-lettres*. The recent publication of parts 3-5 of *Istorija moego sovremennikaby* V.G. Korolenko had past unnoticed, not only because of the small edition of 10.000 copies, but because there were no journals to write reviews in, he lamented. Moreover, newspapers printed in pitifully small editions were too preoccupied with famine and taxation to care about *belles-lettres*. He reminded readers that it had barely been possible over the last 6 months to print the new journal *Pečat' i revoljucija*, whereas *Krasnaja nov'* was awaiting the publication of its second edition. This impasse was not due to lack of paper, because endless resolutions, orders, protocols and surveys were being churned out. Yet three quarters of this material, in Voronskij's estimate, passed unread. *Belles-lettres* had no chance of competing with this material because the centres publishing them had at their disposal money, goods and power. While a "survey" took two weeks to print, excellent manuscripts by first class writers, scientists and philosophers lay months on end unpublished. Voronskij disparagingly referred to so-called responsible soviet

²⁶ This task should today be less cumbersome in that 9 of the 20 articles have recently been translated, some also with a brief commentary, cf. Choate 1998. Several of the 20 articles were also discussed in some detail in Choate 1987, which I refer to. However, my choice of articles and my approach is quite distinct from Choate, as discussed earlier.

²⁷ "On Contemporary Belles-Lettres". Cf. Maguire 1987:386-387.

officials who equated *belles-lettres* with entertainment and amusement.

[...]. Dlja chudožestvennyh proizvedenij suščestvuet kakaja-to ne to tret'ja, ne to četvertaja očered'. Èto - ved', "belletristika", - tak sebe, ne delo, pochože na razvlečenie i zabavu. Vzgljad ètot vešma rasprostranen sredi izvestnogo kadra tak nazyvaemyh otvetsvennyh sovetskich rabotnikov, rasprostranen ne na slovach - slova u nas chorošie, vernye - a v delovom, praktičeskom podchode.[...].²⁸

He reminded readers of their common obligations to the great heritage conferred on them by classics such as Puškin, Tolstoj, Čadaev, Saltykov, Ostrovskij. Even from a narrow agitational-propagandistic point of view the prevailing indifference from above to *belles-lettres* was incomprehensible. Instead of wasting valuable print on those currently being purged by the party, excellent manuscripts like *Boljašči* by Pod"jačev should be printed. Voronskij expressed his conviction that the ongoing party purge would be better and more sincere if excellent material like the stories of Pod"jačev could catch the attention of Gosizdat. The paucity of *belles-lettres* publications was not caused by a lack of writers, in Voronskij's judgement, because e.g. many young and new talented writers like Vs. Ivanov, Nikitin and Lunc had grouped around comrade Gor'kij and were in possession of many manuscripts. In the countryside many young and talented poets were emerging. Should these remain unknown and inaccessible to the readers? The reader, the proletarian reader, was currently accessible for the party through *belles-lettres* much more than through proclamations. The reader, Voronskij affirmed, is spiritually famished while the writer has stacks of concealed manuscripts. His conclusion was that it was time to stop publishing unnecessary protocols and proclamations "designed for posterity" and instead award a proper place to artistic literature; it was necessary to oppose the view of artistic literature as something second-rate; it was essential to cultivate at least one literary journal (by implication *KN*) and some newspapers; the salaries of literary officials had to be improved; it was necessary to accommodate the yearning of the

²⁸ *Pravda*, Sunday 11 September 1921#202:1 ([...]). For works of art there exists some sort of third, if not fourth echelon. This is of course *belles-lettres*, something similar to amusement and fun. This view is quite common among the illustrious cadres of so-called responsible soviet workers. It is not expressed verbally, since we phrase ourselves positively, genuinely, but it is expressed in a business-like, practical approach. [...]).

reader for the writer.

In terms of parameters, the ideological parameters 2) The RKP(b) and 3) Soviet society are at the forefront in this article, and to some extent also the artistic parameter 5) The classical Russian literary heritage. On the whole, I view this as an ideological article, largely advocating improved conditions for artistic literature. To summarize: parameters 2,3 and 5 dominate while 1,4,6,7 and 8 are absent. Finally, there are no explicit references to the Bible, although some would read a concealed religious reference in the term "Čítatel' duchovno golodaet" (The reader is spiritually starving).

4.2.2 "Literaturnye otkliki"²⁹

This long article was, as noted, first published in *KN* 1922#2(6):258-275, cf. 7.3. It was republished as the first article in Voronskij's first book of collected articles, *Na styke* (1923),³⁰ but was nonetheless omitted from Voronskij 1963,1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b, cf. 7.4. It is subdivided into 4 numbered, untitled chapters and, as its evocative title suggests, it is concerned with the politics of *belles-lettres*. In *KN*, it had a final paragraph (which was naturally dropped from *Na styke* (1923)) to the effect that the author would revert to many of his comments in ensuing articles in *KN* on individual writers. This was Voronskij's first promise to launch a series of literary silhouettes, cf. part 5.

In chapter I of the article Voronskij gives a longish appraisal of the ideological situation in Soviet-Russia and among the emigré circles in the aftermath of the revolution and civil war. Noting the existence of two basic literary camps in the era of NEP - the Soviet press versus the private publishing houses - he observes that the former enemies of the republic have not lain down their arms, that the bourgeois West is backing them, and that they are exploiting the famine and other internal crises. This part confirms the pre-eminence he accords to a positive view of the

²⁹ "Literary Response".

³⁰ In *Na styke* it is dated "November 1921", but on p.9 it has a reference to *Vestnik literatury* 1922#1, which suggests that if written in November 1921, it was subsequently revised for publication in *Na styke*. My comparison of the two versions in *KN* 1922#(2)6 and *Na styke* (1923), however, confirms that there are only minor revisions.

October Revolution and the RKP(b). In chapters II-III, he diagnoses a paralysis in pre-revolutionary literature but also takes a bleak view of contemporary literature, especially prose, which he asserts lacks purpose and themes.³¹ He identifies as the main obstacles to (literary) progress the continuing influence of religious mysticism (Blok, Belyj, Berdjaev) as well as post-war fatigue which has led to philistinism (*obyvatel'sčina*), e.g. in Zamjatin's *Peščera*, cf. 5.6.1. This reflects a genuinely reactionary feeling, he claims, which must be fought at all cost, and he calls in effect for a continuation of revolutionary war against the class enemy. In chapter IV, he states that the new generation of writers has to engage in "a war of ideas" against bourgeois philistinism and religious mysticism.³² New poets like Kazin, Kirillov, Gerasimov and new prose writers like Pil'njak, Vs.Ivanov, Nikitin, Fedin, Zoščenko, Semenov, Arosev, Ljaško, Volkov and Kasatkin are identified as the most promising new talents over the last months. Despite their differences they have much in common: they have lived through the revolution and are trying to reflect it; they are attracted to life, to contemporary issues. Their realism sometimes is wonderfully mixed with Hoffman, because Soviet life contains so much terrible, fantastic and improbable. In style and language they are very different from pre-revolutionary writers. He substantiates his comments on Pil'njak (*Golyj god*) - "the ideologue of peasant anarcho-bolshevism" who describes the countryside in 1918, and Vs.Ivanov (*Partizany*) who deals with the Siberian peasants' partisan warfare 1918-19. Other writers like Nikitin and Zoščenko are seen to be exponents of artistic satire, and Voronskij comments that satire directed at the darker sides of Soviet existence should not be feared, that such fear can only be detrimental to Soviet power itself.³³ In conclusion he reminds his readers of the international threats facing Soviet Russia, and that writers cannot hide away in ivory towers:

[...]. Nam predstoit ožestočennaja idejnaja bor'ba, esli tol'ko novyj natisk Antanty ne položit konec "peredyške". I v étom boju nel'zja budet dolgo skryvat' svoego lica, sidet' na dvuch stol'jach, otmachivat'sja teorijkami odnositel'no

³¹ Voronskij 1923:17-18.

³² *ibid.* p.25.

³³ *ibid.* p.30.

At first glance it would seem that the article evokes mainly ideological criteria. Thus Voronskij's appraisal of the ideological situation in Soviet Russia, his comments on the literary paralysis in tsarist Russia, the negative effect of religious mysticism, and his call for a continuation of revolutionary war against the class enemy all underline the axiomatic primacy attributed to 1) The October Revolution, 2) The RKP(b) and 3) Soviet society, with a corresponding negative appraisal of 4) Slavophilism. In contrast few considerations are given in this early article to artistic parameters, with the possible exception of 6) Realism. The reference to Hoffman is an implicit but frank acknowledgement that contemporary Soviet life is so difficult that realism occasionally may need to be seasoned by romanticism. On the whole I see this as a typically "ideological" article and as such representative of the early Voronskij. Parameters 1,2,3, 4 and 6 are in evidence, but not 5,7 or 8. No traces of religious or Biblical references are in evidence apart from the pejorative reference to the religious mysticism of Blok, Belyj and Berdjaev.

4.2.3 "Iz sovremennykh literaturnykh nastroenij"³⁵

The display of this article in *Pravda* (28 June 1922#141) on page 2 occupying no less than 8 columns - almost the whole bottom half of the page - doubtlessly conferred official sanction on Voronskij's views. It was selected by Voronskij for republication in *Na styke* (1923), and was included in Voronskij 1963, 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. Briefly, the article largely reflects his concern with the emigrant press, the emergence of a new Soviet grassroots writer, the new literature's stylistic innovations as contrasted with pre-revolutionary literature, many new writers' undefined position regarding communists and communism, the wealth of material available to the new Soviet writer, the new literature's rejection of pre-revolutionary psychologism in favour of a positive, externalist, realistic prose, some writers'

³⁴ *ibid.* p.31 ([...]. We are confronted by a fierce war of ideas, provided the new onslaught of the Entente will not put an end to our "respite". In this battle one cannot conceal for any length of time one's countenance, sit on two chairs, brandishing petty theories of spontaneous creativity and pure art [...]).

³⁵ "From Contemporary Literary Moods".

penchant for primitivism, and the detrimental effects of Slavophilism. In describing the emergence of a new grassroots writer, Voronskij coined the term "Soviet literature":

[...]. Èto ne proletarskaja literatura, ne kommunističeskaja. V osnove, v glavnom rusle svoem ona idet ot mužika, ot derevni, libo ot tak nazyvaemych demokratičeskich gorodskih sloev. "Priličnye", "kul'turnye" ljudi v vorotničkach, s utončennymi nervami - ne ich geroi. V celom èta literatura - sovetskaja, vraždebnaja i èmigracii, i poslednim "vlastiteljam dum" v literature [...].³⁶

Voronskij reiterates that a "civil war of ideologies" has started. Writers must now choose sides; there is no apolitical literature, and great demands will be made on writers in this respect. Here we see a manifestation, in various degrees, of parameters 1-6, though as in the preceding article, the ideological parameters take precedence: The pre-eminence of 1) The October Revolution underlies the whole article, e.g. "the civil war of ideologies" argument, the emphasis on the post-revolutionary "new generation" of writers, the assertion of a new "Soviet literature", and the laconic recognition of many new writers' unclarified attitude to communists and communism. The importance of 2) The RKP(b) is stated explicitly when Voronskij reflects on the "genuine war of ideas" in order to solidify Soviet power and the position of the party among the young. Inner party life has been dealt with thematically by communists such as Arosev, Libedinskij (*Nedelja*) and Tarasov-Rodionov (*Šokolad*). 3) Soviet society: The new literature deals with everyday life (*byt'*), it is seen as affirmative and positive, not retrograde and sentimental. Voronskij finds that some writers (Pil'njak, Zoščenko, Nikitin) touch on the darker sides of Soviet existence like labour brigades, the transgressions of commissars, communist arrogance and corruption, but this is not a major feature. A prevailing theme is the countryside and the peasantry, especially in connection with the partisans and the civil war, as in the Vs.Ivanov's *Partizany*. The perceived detrimental effects and irrelevancy of 4) Slavophilism is ridiculed when Voronskij contrasts the idea of a Russian Asia opposed to Europe with its machines and International. The relevance

³⁶ Voronskij 1923:40 ([...]. This is not proletarian literature, not communist. Basically, in its main thrust, it emanates from the peasant, from the countryside, or from so-called democratic urban layers. "Proper", "cultured" well-dressed people with subtle nerves are not their protagonists [...]). Akimov 1995:128 states that Voronskij in this passage was the first to employ the term "Soviet literature".

of 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, which was later to become a cornerstone in Voronskij's literary aesthetics, is not discussed, possibly because Voronskij is too busy castigating what he perceived as the pre-revolutionary literature's religious mysticism and philistinism. However 6) Realism is very much present since this is the genre that new Soviet prose writers - Vs.Ivanov, B.Pil'njak, N.Nikitin, V.Lidin, A.Jakovlev, N.Ljaško, S.Semenov, M.Zoščenko, A.Neverov, N.Tichonov, K.Fedin, M.Volkov, P.Nizovoj, A.Arosev, Ju. Libedinskij, L.Sejfullina, F.Gladkov - employ in their depictions of "Soviet reality". He does add, though, that the new chaotic style is a breach with the modulated and regular forms of the past. 7) Psychological character portrayal plays no part at this stage; in fact the rejection of "introvert" pre-revolutionary literature - as opposed to the new Soviet "extrovert" literature - temporarily precluded this parameter from occupying the central role it later came to play in Voronskij's aesthetics. 8) Language mastery is hardly an important parameter at this early stage, although Voronskij does mention that many new grassroots writers employ vernacular language and provincialisms, to which he is favourable. All in all I see this article as predominantly ideological, though a development is noticeable from *Literaturnye otkliki* in that several artistic considerations seem to be coming alive. To summarize, parameters 1,2,3,4 and 6 make their presence felt, but not yet 5, 7 or 8. There are, finally, no references to the Bible.

4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost' (K voprosu o našich literaturnych raznoglasijach)" ³⁷

This long article, Voronskij's longest, first appeared in *KN* 1923#5(15):347-384, cf. 7.3, and Voronskij had it reprinted separately ³⁸ and also included in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b). It was later included - with omissions ³⁹ - in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. Whereas the 3 foregoing articles reflect Voronskij's concern with the politics and ideology of *belles-lettres*, the present and next article also

³⁷ "Art as the Cognition of Life, and Contemporariness (Towards the Question of our Literary Differences)". Cf. the translation by Choate 1988.95-145 and the discussion in Choate 1987:113-133.

³⁸ Voronskij 1924a. I have unfortunately been unable to procure a copy of this volume.

³⁹ Cf. a later footnote for details.

outline some of the artistic sides of his early literary aesthetics.⁴⁰

This article's salient points are in my view the following: In chapter I of the article's 6 numbered, untitled, chapters, Voronskij takes issue with the editors of *Na postu*, whose proclaimed aim Voronskij ironically describes as saving the socialist homeland and its citizens from the influx of fellow travellers into journals and editing houses. Thus Glavlit leniency allegedly was to blame for LEF, Kuznica, Serapion brethren, Krug, Pil'njak, Ęrenburg, Gosizdat, *KN*, *Sibirskie ogni*, the classics and Gor'kij, together assuming an unmerited and dangerous presence in literary life. Voronskij drily observes that, according to *Na postu*, only the Oktjabr' group of proletarian writers, incidentally headed by the *Na postu* editors Leleviĉ and Rodov, are fit to provide the guiding light needed in Soviet literature. Though he doubts that all members of the *Na postu* editorial staff support the journal's uncompromising stance, he accedes the existence of serious disagreement among communists on literary issues. He wants to address this problem in the article. The causes of this literary disagreement follow, in his view, from fundamentally opposed concepts of art and the artist. In chapter II, basing his approach on Belinskij, Āernyševskij and Plechanov, Voronskij defines art as a method - similar to science - for the cognition of (*poznanie Źzni*). By contrast *Na postu* and futurists are purveyors of a crude view of art as mere agitation. Voronskij stresses that while science analyzes, art synthesizes; while science is deductive, art is concrete. Further he finds that science relates to man's ratio, whereas art relates to man's emotional nature. Thus science analyzes life through rationality, whereas art perceives life through images (*obraz*), as living emotional contemplation (*socerzanie*).⁴¹ Voronskij acknowledges that his understanding of art as a particular method for the cognition of life is not new; it has

⁴⁰ Maguire 1987:188ff. asserts that Voronskij in the former article launched a theory of cognition, while Choate 1987:113-114 and 132-133 more measuredly sees the article as "programmatic" in its use of "principles" and "literary concepts". I prefer Choate's prudence, and find that Voronskij, rather than develop an alternative theory to Marxism (a point I shall elaborate in 4.5) worked within what he saw as a Marxist theoretical framework. He did, though, try to broaden and enrich this framework by adopting some elements from the psychology of artistic creation. Neither would I go so far as NeŹivoj (1983:72-73), who seems to argue that Voronskij's turn of attention from 1923 meant that he moved away altogether from political and social issues to purely artistic, psychological considerations. As I have indicated and hope to document, Voronskij on the contrary sought to accommodate both types of considerations.

⁴¹ Voronskij 1924b:10.

been prevalent since Belinskij and Černyševskij. It has been accepted by Marxism, primarily Plechanov, whom he credits with being the foremost Marxist theoretician and philosopher of art.⁴²

He dismisses, in some detail (13 pages) in chapter III, the futurists and their main theorist Čuzak, claiming their utilitarianism in art exceeds even that of Pisarev, and that their interpretation of dialectic materialism is erroneous.⁴³ He moves on in chapter IV to *Na postu*, expending 7 pages to reject their narrowly defined, class-based concept of art as an absurd vulgarization of the theory of class struggle.⁴⁴ The class struggle, to *Na postu*, has in Voronskij's view ceased to become a means to progressively develop society and has instead become a self-serving end in itself. The futurists and *Na postu* critics are equally subjective, with skewed perspectives of life, and therefore unable to fathom the implications of art as contemplation of life. Deploring the *Na postu* exhortation to liberate art from the ideology and form of the classics, Voronskij invokes Plechanov to emphasize that Marxist criticism should not only strive to find the Plechanovite "sociological equivalent" of the object of art but must simultaneously evaluate the object of art aesthetically.⁴⁵ In doing so, emphasis must be placed on aesthetic beauty and truth.

[...]. Estetičeskaja ocenka v iskusstve sootvetsvuet logičeskoj ocenke v nauke. Estetičeskaja ocenka v našem ponimanii ne javljaetsja ekvilibristikoj, smakovanijem krasoty radi krasoty, ljubovanijem vo imja ljubovanija. Estetičeski ocenit' proizvedenie značit opredelit', naskol'ko soderžanie sootvetsvuet forme; govornja inymi slovami, naskol'ko soderžanie sootvetsvuet ob'ektivnoj chudožestvennoj pravde, ibo chudožnik myslit obrazami: obraz dolžen byt' chudožestvenno pravdiv, t.e. sootvetsvovat' prirode izobražajemogo. V étom - soveršennost', prekrasnoe v proizvedenii chudožnika. *Ložnaja ideja, ložnoe soderžanie ne možet najti soveršennej formy*, t.e. ne možet gluboko estetičeski zachvatit' [...].⁴⁶

⁴² ibid. p.14.

⁴³ ibid. pp.14-27.

⁴⁴ ibid. pp.27-33.

⁴⁵ Voronskij thus claims he is working within a Marxist-Plechanovite framework, but nowhere does he suggest that he is advancing an alternative theory to Marxism, as Maguire 1987:188ff maintains.

⁴⁶ Voronskij 1924b:31-32 ([...]). Aesthetic judgement in art corresponds to logical judgement in science. Aesthetical judgement in our understanding is not equilibristics, relishing beauty for the sake of beauty, admiration in the name of admiration. Aesthetic appraisal of a work means to define the extent to which the contents correspond to the form, i.e. the extent to which the contents correspond

Voronskij then dedicates no less than 17 pages in chapter V to defend the fellow travellers - on ideological reasons - against the *Na postu* attacks. He cites *Na postu* allegations that fellow travellers slander the revolution and attempt to constitute an "aesthetical bridge" between the past and present. Affirming that 95% of the Russian population are *de facto* fellow travellers in relation to the 5% party members, and that it is therefore natural that fellow travellers dominate literature, he i.a. rejects the accusation that all fellow travellers conceive of the October Revolution as an anarchic, blind peasant riot.⁴⁷ To substantiate his claim he distinguishes among 2 types of fellow travellers. The older generation, i.e. Gor'kij and writers such as Pil'njak who emerged during the revolution, is seen to include talented, refined artists of great accomplishment. Yet in Soviet Russia Voronskij believes they are "lost" and have no other option than serve the revolution. The second segment, the younger generation - e.g. Vs. Ivanov, Sejfullina, Tichonov, Ognev and others are products of the revolution. Though not party members they are seen to have fought for the good cause. A common trait uniting the 2 segments of fellow travellers, he believes, is their aversion to mysticism and their preference for realism, which he finds very encouraging. Voronskij affirms that the fellow travellers attempt to reflect contemporary life, they despise bourgeois civilization and hate the obsolete tsarist way of life, the confusion and languor of the intelligentsia. In comparison with communist artists like Arosev and Libedinskij the fellow travellers are somewhat amiss, but he insists that they support both the party and the revolution.⁴⁸

to objective artistic truth, for the artist thinks in images: the shape must be artistically true, i.e. correspond to the nature of what is portrayed. In this lies perfection, the beauty in the artist's works. A false idea, false contents cannot find a perfect shape, i.e. cannot profoundly grip [...] (us).

⁴⁷ *ibid.* p.41.

⁴⁸ *ibid.* pp.33-50. It should be noted that pp.45-50 which correspond to *KN* 1923#5(15):375-379, have been deleted without comment in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a. In these 5-6 pages Voronskij rhetorises against the *Na postu* critics Volin, Rodov and Lelevič and their attacks on fellow travellers. He confronts Volin's diatribe against Ėrenburg's sober appraisal of Lenin, Trockij and Bucharin; he defends Nikitin's *Rvotnyj fort* against Volin's accusations; he rejects Rodov's criticism of Vs.Ivanov's *Bronepoezd* (in *KN* 1922#1(5):75-124); he accuses *Na postu* of chasing the fellow travellers i.a. through quota limitations away from soviet authorities into the hands of private NEP printers; he states that *Na postu* and *Oktjabr'* if unchecked will instigate "literary death" not only for fellow travellers but also for young promising communist writers like Libedinskij and Veselyj. He accedes that while he is certainly not infallible, the highest party circles sustain his policy in *belles-lettres*; he emphatically states that the arguments of *Na postu* and *Oktjabr'* are analogous to those who argued (in vain) against the Bolshevik employment of bourgeois specialists during the civil war 1918-20.

Towards the end of this long article, in chapter VI, Voronskij reverts to polemics against the *Na postu* critics' definition of reality and literary realism. These in his view have a too narrow perspective on reality. He adduces that communist critics advocate the primacy of content over form, and reject making form *per se* into an objective as the formalists do with their musicality of language and "verbal equilibristics". As a corollary, communist critics do not speak of reality in general, he points out, but only of that reality effected by the proletariat. In consequence the task of the proletariat is circumscribed, in his view, because capitalism is not yet defeated in the leading capitalist states and the capitalists continue to make much of reality. Voronskij concludes that the writer's major task is to address reality, and he notes a dearth of neglected realistic themes, e.g. honest and sober depictions of the countryside, the worker's daily life at the factory, as well as the worker's family life. He therefore wishes to cultivate, through *KN* and *Krug*, literature that contemplates life:

[...]. I žurnal "Krasnaja nov", i artel' pisatelej "Krug" postavili svoej zadačej chudožestvennoe *poznanie* žizni. V étom ich osobennost' i otličie i ot "Lefa", i ot žurnala "Na postu", i ot mnogich drugih izdanij [...].⁴⁹

Turning to which of the 8 parameters dominate in this article, I believe although many issues are raised, most revolve around the central theme: the fundamentally opposed concepts of art and the artist which cause the literary disagreement between Voronskij and *Na postu*. Voronskij's analysis of these conflicting concepts develops mainly from ideological premises, but a growing awareness of artistic elements is evident when he warns that should his opponents' view prevail, the result would be detrimental for Soviet art and literature. In rejecting the simplistic "art as agitation" view of *Na postu* and futurists, and by defending the fellow travellers, Voronskij is also saying that the *Na postu* understanding of 1) The October Revolution, 2) The RKP(b) and 3) Soviet society is ideologically misguided. Hence their demands on writers' attitudes to these 3 elements must also be erroneous and distorted. Indeed, the final line of the article is an appeal to the RKP(b) not to

⁴⁹ *ibid.* p.57 ([...]. Both the journal *Krasnaja nov'* and the writers' co-operative *Krug* have made their task the artistic cognition of life. This is their particularity and difference from *LEF* and from the journal *Na postu*, and from many other publications [...]).

follow the advice of the *Na postu* critics. 4) Slavophilism is not present in Voronskij's argumentation, which is logical since *Na postu*, the futurists and Voronskij were all negative to Slavophilism.

As for artistic considerations, which only play a secondary role as argumentative premises, it is mainly the relevance of 5) The classical Russian heritage and 6) Realism which mark the discussion. Both parameters are central in his attack on *Na postu* and in his defence of the fellow travellers, as shown above. Voronskij is also highly ironical of the call by Rodovič and Lelevič in *Na postu* for a break with the ideology and form of the classics. But since they have declared war on the "monuments" of European and Russian classicist literature, it follows that they want to expand this warfare against the fellow travellers who represent an "aesthetic bridge" between the past and the present. I might add that as regards 7) Psychological character portrayal this type of consideration is only dormant at this early stage: Voronskij chides the *Na postu* critics for attempting to organize the psychology of the reader and for ignoring the understanding of how the artist achieves this goal. With respect to 8) Language mastery, it is true that he mentions futurist verbal artistry, and he also notes the importance of consciously developing a new language. But he calls for prudence, citing Anatole France's comments on Esperanto, and his comment is merely a fleeting reflection, not a major argument. Furthermore, he refers indirectly and negatively to the formalist school's immersion into verbal and linguistic phenomena. In conclusion, I would say that although I see also this article - as the two preceding ones - as basically "ideological" in its argumentation, I find here a strengthened awareness of several important artistic considerations, which were only seminal in the foregoing article. Parameters 1,2,3,5 and 6 typify this article, but not 4,7 or 8.

There are two ironical references to the Old Testament's Jehova who supposedly created spirit out of nothing, who made the world out of nothing.⁵⁰ There is also a reference to the lack of coverage of church affairs in contemporary literature.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Voronskij 1924b:22, 51.

⁵¹ *ibid.* p.55.

4.2.5 "Na perevale (Dela literaturnye)"⁵²

This article, only half the length of the preceding one, was first printed in *KN* 1923#6(16):312-322, cf. 7.3, and Voronskij republished it in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b). It was subsequently reprinted in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. Maguire sees it as Voronskij's "programme" for *KN*,⁵³ i.e. the type of prose and poetry he wanted to attract to and publish in *KN* in order to materialize his literary goals and thereby counteract the malaise he saw in Soviet literature. In my reading the article displays Voronskij's heightened sensitivity to many artistic considerations, including the artist's psychology. His less than sacrosanct view of developments in the RKP(b), where Stalin as noted in parts 1 and 3 had become Secretary General in April 1922, is noticable in his sarcastic reference to those who believe party membership sufficient to be considered a great writer.

The major points in my reading are the following: In chapter I of 5 numbered, untitled chapters, Voronskij, while noting the abundance of all sorts of manuscripts received by *KN*, still deploras the paucity of outstanding manuscripts. Soviet literature over the last 3 years has been consumed with "politicking" (*politikanstvo*).

In chapter II indirectly referring to Lenin's 1905-article "Partijnaja organizacija i partijnaja literatura") mentioned in part 2, he makes the observation that the period of agitational literature (*agitpisanie*) is over. Soviet literature has not evolved beyond the stage of collecting material, in his view. The regional focus (*oblastničestvo*) of most works, although interesting ethnographically, stops short of the grand literary synthesis, or neorealism, that he propounded: an amalgamation of romanticism, symbolism and realism. He introduces a suggestive metaphor when observing that contemporary art has reached a mountain pass ("Na perevale") but has not yet decided its future course. At this juncture he therefore encourages writers (chapter III), to learn from the classics like Gogol' and be as inventive and sincere as Majakovskij in some of his work ("Pro èto"), in order to shape the new literature, neorealism. He comments that he is well aware that he will attract accusations of counter-revolutionary activity, of attempting a literary restoration from *Na postu*. In

⁵² "At the Cross-Roads (Literary Matters)".

⁵³ Maguire 1987:260ff.

chapters IV and V, Voronskij ironically refers to those who believe that party membership is a sufficient qualification to become a great writer. He finds that writers - including fellow travellers, LEF, Serapion brothers and proletarians alike - too often are "working on" or "producing" instead of *creating*, works of art. The 2 greatest dangers ahead for literature, in his opinion, are schematism (generated by empty agitation) and planless accumulation of raw material. Anticipating his emerging concern with psychology and intuition he deplored in particular the lack in Soviet literature of the tormented, creative spirit of the classics:

[...]. Da, vse delo v étom: u velikich chudožnikov "nyla duša" ne beschrebetnoj, nudnoj, besdejstvennoj toskoj, a toj, što preobražae žizn'. Imenno *zdes'* sleduet iskat' osnovnoj steržen', istoki, pobuditel'nye motivy, tajnye, nezrimye pružiny ich tvorčestva. To, što nazyvalos' vdochnoveniem, tvorčeskim osemeniem i intuiciej, nužno iskat' prežde vsego v étič bol'sich čelovečeskich čuvstvach [...].⁵⁴

Among the ideological parameters 1) The October Revolution and 2) The RKP(b) only play indirect roles, e.g. when Voronskij adds that (despite his criticism) the revolution does reverberate in contemporary Soviet literature. Yet he is adamant that this literature lacks pathos, has no passion, no great thoughts, no penetrating message and content; he scoffs at those who believe party membership to be a sufficient literary qualification. It is perhaps 3) Soviet society, i.e. selective and insufficient coverage of contemporary Soviet life, which underlies most of Voronskij's argumentation relating to a literary crisis, the scarcity of outstanding manuscripts, the prevalence of *oblastničestvo* and the lack of literary synthesis. Again, 4) Slavophilism is absent. It could, however, be argued that the shortcomings listed under parameter No.3 above also have a bearing on the artistic parameter 6) Realism, i.e. the relevance of realistic rendering of Soviet life in its totality. It is, though, the artistic parameter 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, that could be said to be the most important parameter of all in this article. The solution Voronskij

⁵⁴ Voronskij 1924b:80-81 ([...]. Yes, this is the issue: the tormented souls of great writers were not due to weak, tedious, indolent melancholy, but due to the transfiguration of life. *This* is where one must look for the true core, the source, the stimulating motives, secrets, invisible springs of their art. What was termed inspiration, creative insemination and intuition, must be sought primarily in these great human sentiments [...]).

proposes, the route ahead beyond the mountain pass, consists of learning from Gogol', Tolstoj, Ščedrin as well as European classics. The new Soviet writer must, he claims, learn how the classics succeeded in fusing artistic fantasy and experimentation with their ability to forge a totality, a synthesis. Translated into a post-revolutionary setting, this would generate the neorealism Voronskij envisaged beyond the mountain pass. In addition, I would argue that Voronskij also touches on, though still in embryonic form, the artistic parameter 7) Psychological character portrayal. Although he is mostly concerned with the artist's psychology, much of his argumentation also bears on the wider issue of the complexity of the writer's protagonists. Citing Gogol' Voronskij states that the core feature of great writers was their ability to be spiritually affected by events they observed and hence sought to depict. True creation and inspiration, he maintains, presuppose the artist's ability to completely immerse himself in the feelings, sufferings of others, and to transform this reality into art. 8) Language mastery is barely touched upon in this article. In conclusion, this article as compared to the 3 foregoing articles, is noteworthy in several respects: First, an artistic parameter for the first time comes into prominence and even may be said to play a slightly more prominent role than any of the ideological parameters. In a sense, therefore, we could characterize this as the first "artistic" article in our selection. Secondly, the article sets out in Maguire's terminology - a "literary programme" for *KN*. To summarize, I believe that the paramount parameters here are 3 and 5, while 1,2,4,6,7 and 8 are either absent or subdued. As for 7 it is so unexpressed here, compared to what comes later, that I have not rated it as dominant.

There are no references to the Bible although some would see an oblique reference to Christianity in the last quotation's "tormented souls". As I shall return to, Voronskij's increasing sensitivity to artistic considerations were to be elaborated in ensuing articles. At this stage what is striking is Voronskij's epistemological concern with the complexities of artistic cognition and creation.

4.2.6 "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach (K voprosu o našich literaturnych raznoglasijach)"⁵⁵

This article was first published in *Prožektor* 1923#12:14-22, and was selected by Voronskij for reprint in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b). It reappeared in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. Voronskij's familiarity with the classics of Russian and European literature, which we glimpsed in 3.1 and 3.4, is particularly evident in this article, which unlike many others is not chapterized. Voronskij initially deplores that the new journal *Na postu* edited by Volin, Lelevič and Rodov, in its attempt to achieve a unified communist policy in literature, has called for a final rejection of, and liberation from, the influence of the past, both in terms of ideology and form, thereby threatening the fellow travellers. He judges such indiscriminate posturing and acrid phrasing (*chlestkaja fraza*) of *Na postu* and *Oktjabr'* towards all former bourgeois literature as very harmful, and he states that the main point of his article is to clarify what should be the (correct) communist policy towards bourgeois art.

In summary form, the article explicitly advocates incorporating the best features of the classical Russian and European literary heritage into Soviet literature. The main thrust of Voronskij's argumentation centres on 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, the artistic parameter we found most prominent in the preceding article.

Briefly, Voronskij (again) bases his views on Belinskij, Plechanov, Luxemburg and he counsels all new aspiring Soviet writers - many of them with only a rudimentary education - to study and emulate European and Russian classics in order to write better. He offers some evolutionary perspectives of European literature, culture and science, noting i.a. the relevance of writers and philosophers like Bergson, Spengler, Feuerbach, Darwin, Molière, Heine, Goethe, Cervantes, Shakespeare and others to Russian communism. Of Russian literature he refutes the claim by *Na postu* and *Oktjabr'* that all Old Russian literature only reflected the habits and preferences of princes, bojars and the rich. From the mid-1800s the non-aristocratic intellectuals (*raznočncy*) generated the larger part of Russian literature: Nekrasov, Uspenskij, Korolenko, Černyševskij, Dobroljubov, Pisarev and others. He

⁵⁵ "On Acrid Phrasing and the Classics. (Towards the Question of our Literary Differences)". Cf. the translation and commentary by Choate 1998:77-93.

argues that even after the failed 1905 revolution when the intellectuals were diminished, Gor'kij, Veresaev, Vol'nov and Serafimovič represented a bridge with the best from the 1860s and 1870s. All this is known to the editors of *Na postu*, in Voronskij's view, but he sees them as captivated by "acrid phrasing" and accordingly they commit many errors of judgement. Their stance threatens also those writers of the "bourgeois decadence" who are favourable to Soviet Russia, e.g. H.G.Wells and Anatole France.

Voronskij then differentiates between the objective and subjective aspects of literature, asserting that although Griboedov, Puškin, Lermontov, Gogol', Tolstoj and Turgenev were all aristocrats, from a Marxist class perspective their literature still holds considerable objective value. Citing Belinskij and Plechanov, he defines real art as thinking in images ("myšlenie pri pomošči obrazov").⁵⁶ The continuing appeal of e.g. Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Othello*, Tagore, Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, he maintains, is due to the universal characteristics of the protagonists who resemble the average mass reader. If the comrades in *Na postu* had cared more about the objective, and less about the subjective, value of literature the disagreement regarding the fellow travellers would disappear.

He argues that if one were to heed the proletarian call to reject all bourgeois literature, then by extension one ought also to reject all bourgeois physics, biology, psychology, chemistry. Since this is clearly preposterous, what is needed is a balanced view of the literary heritage and that one adopts the best elements from the past.

[...]. Neobchodimo ešče raz podčerknut': poskol'ku sleduet vsemi silami rekomendovat' buržuaznych klassikov, postol'ku že nužno vesti samuju neščadnuju bor'bu protiv buržuaznoj literatury épochi upadka [...].⁵⁷

Thus Voronskij acknowledges that his advocacy of an eclectic approach to bourgeois classics must be tempered by a refutation of e.g. symbolism, metaphysics.

⁵⁶ Voronskij 1924b:62.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* pp.67-68 ([...]). It is essential to stress once again: while bourgeois classics must be recommended by all means, it is necessary to fight mercilessly against bourgeois decadent literature [...]).

This makes his later choice of the 2 foreign writers he portrayed interesting, especially his choice of Marcel Proust and not Anatole France, cf. 5.7.2. He argues that new communist art has much to learn from the classics and, although the classics have little to say about the worker and his psyche, they depict customs and emotions which form part of the new man's psychology. It is therefore no coincidence that 5/6 of Gosizdat publications are classics. In a sense, Voronskij states, the classics are the primary fellow travellers. Finally, Voronskij adds some comments on genre, stating his profound conviction that the basic genre of contemporary art will be realism, the genre which was so incomparably perfected by the classical bourgeois landowner aristocracy. Criticizing i.a. proletarian experimentation in poetry with irregular meter and rhyme, he sees realism as the form that doubtlessly best corresponds to the dialectic materialism of Marx and Engels. Contemporary art, in his judgement, is developing a particular synthesis of realism and romanticism in which realism prevails.

This is the second "artistic" article in which the primary role is played by the artistic parameter 5) The classical Russian literary heritage and secondly 6) Realism. This is not to say that ideology is absent: Voronskij's reference at the beginning of the article to the *Na postu* attempt to reach a unified communist policy in literature which would eliminate the fellow travellers, the custodians of the classical heritage, shows what is really at stake here: the future direction of RKP(b) policy in the field of *belles-lettres*. In this sense it could even be argued that the ideological parameter 2) The RKP(b) is implicitly the primary parameter in this article. As to the other parameters, they remain in the background. In terms of the Bible there is only reference, pejorative, to Adam, as an impediment to the development of a new literature.

4.2.7 "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii"⁵⁸

This long article was first printed in *KN1923#7(17):257-276*, cf. 7.3, and Voronskij had it reprinted in *Iskusstvo i žizn'* (1924b). Yet it was excluded from

⁵⁸ "On Proletarian Art and The Policy of Our Party regarding The Arts". Cf. the German translation by Eimermacher 1972:151-168 and the English translation by Choate 1998:147-171.

Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b, cf. 7.4. For this reason alone our detailed commentary below seems justified. As the title indicates, Voronskij in this article substantiates what RKP(b) policy in the field of *belles-lettres* ought to be.

In chapter I of 5 numbered, untitled chapters, Voronskij reflects on the class structure. He rejects as simplistic the notion that since the Soviet republic has three main classes - the proletariat, temporary layers of *petite bourgeoisie* and remnants of the once powerful bourgeois and landowner class - one also has 3 types of corresponding literature. The leading role of the proletariat, he argues, does not imply that it is yet capable of engendering great literature on its own. On the contrary, the proletariat will depend on the scientists, engineers and artists of the old bourgeois system for a long time to come. Reorganizing society presupposes mastering the cultural heritage in science, art and in other fields, in his view.

In chapter II he addresses proletarian writers and literature, and he asks bluntly whether these really exist. He accedes that there are definitely communist writers and writers of worker descentance, but he finds it peculiar that writers who could justifiably claim to be proletarian - Lunačarskij, Serafimovič, Pod"jačev, Arosev, Kasatkin - do not fit this pretentious-sounding epithet. The proletarian writer is a recent phenomenon, abstract and artificial, whose most characteristic trait, Voronskij believes, is his conviction of being summoned primarily to supercede the art of previous ages. The tension this causes is exacerbated by the NEP policy which provides the basis for a renaissant bourgeois ideology. The real danger, though, which Voronskij admonishes his readers against is that instead of a critical review of the cultural heritage there is a tendency to create a new culture as a counterweight against the past, but without any serious comprehension of neither past nor present. Voronskij enlists the support of both Lenin and Trockij, and repeated statements of the party and the leading organs in his assertion that to advance the masses culturally a primary requirement is to acquaint them with bourgeois culture. There is no direct shortcut to a "proletarian" culture, in his view. Claiming that there is not much Marxism in contemporary proletarian writing, Voronskij adds that among proletarian writers there are many who are indistinguishable from fellow travellers; they merely call themselves proletarian because they happen to belong to proletarian groups: Neverov, Nizovoj, Novikov-Priboj, Volkov, Poletaev, Artamanov and others.

Voronskij makes the observation that the proletarian writers' dependence on the more gifted fellow travellers is also reflected formally in their search for new forms, language, rhythm and style. These are often exaggerated, and this leads to affected, planless and vague "verbal equilibristics" and "poetical summersaults". LEF in particular, claiming a monopoly on communist art, is guilty here, but also the fellow travellers indulge in this and proletarian writers follow after.

In chapter III Voronskij legitimizes his rejection of proletarian literature by citing Trockij's *Literatura i revoljucija*, according to which there is no room in the future classless society for proletarian culture. Trockij repeatedly stresses, he notes, that the task of the RKP(b) in the transitional society is to develop in the worker and peasant the martial qualities which are indispensable for the final victory over the bourgeoisie. Integral to this is the mastering by the masses of the old culture. Voronskij refutes the allegations by some proletarian writers that this is merely Trockij's personal opinion: Lenin in his article "Lučše men'še, da lučše"⁵⁹ has made the same point, and Voronskij further quotes Jakolev's articles in *Pravda* against the Proletkul't, which had been approved by Lenin.⁶⁰ He dismisses as nonsense that the proletariat can develop a classless society, culture and art by extending its own ideology and outlook to the rest of society. This argument maintains that by creating proletarian science and art now, the proletariat is also creating a classless literature for the future society. Reiterating Trockij's position, Voronskij affirms that the fundamental task in the transitional society is to forge a warrior of the worker, peasant and intellectual. The warrior must love his friends and hate his enemies. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blood for blood.⁶¹

Attempts to freshen, modernize and expand the meaning of proletarian literature in the manner of *Oktjabr'* are of no avail, in his opinion. Historically, the proletariat was marginalized under the bourgeoisie and had no access to bourgeois culture. Having come to power and having established the dictatorship of the

⁵⁹ *Pravda*, 4 March 1923. The article attacked Stalin's bureaucratization of the party apparatus, cf. Choate 1987:130-131.

⁶⁰ Voronskij 1924b:96.

⁶¹ *ibid.* pp. 96-97.

proletariat, Voronskij writes, the proletariat's primary task must be to acquire and master the cultural bourgeois heritage:

[...]. Govorja inymi slovami: *proletarskogo iskusstva sejčas net i ne mozet byt'*, *poka pred nami stoit zadača usvoenija staroj kul'tury i starogo iskusstva* [...].⁶²

All there is, in fact, is bourgeois art and culture, which the worker now for the first time has an opportunity to master. And this is not so bad, Voronskij implies, since the proletarian writer already avails himself of old methods in his artistic work, and presupposes on the part of the reader the same cultural habits, level and knowledge as in a bourgeois reader. New energetic word constructions, dynamics, accents, compressed phraseology, etc. have all been attempted before. As regards contents, Voronskij states that urbanism, industrialism and cosmism, which the proletarian writer is trying to invigorate, are merely biproducts of urban bourgeois culture. Contemporary proletarian writers and poets, he holds, eliminate from their works all diabolic elements such as trolls, servants, angels, gods, churches etc. Voronskij refers to H.G.Wells and concludes that what is being hotly debated in Soviet Russian *belles-lettres* has already been done by Wells with his dynamoes, planes, chemistry and physics. The American O.Henry has written about cinemas, street crowds and noise. If one compares the themes in the writing of Whitman and Wilde with proletarian writers it is easy to see how derivative contemporary proletarian writing is. What then, Voronskij adds rhetorically, with new sentiments, new atmospheres, new ideology which are maturing in the worker, which are found only in him and not in the philistines and adherents of serfdom? What about collective solidarity, the spirit of discipline, worker solidarity, internationalism, Marxist worldview, etc? All this exists, Voronskij accedes, but these are only prerequisites for a new culture and for the new art; they are not in themselves this new culture. This is still a far way off.

Voronskij then justifies his editorial policy at *KN* by stating that the Soviet authorities are right in administering, especially to the young workers and peasants,

⁶² Voronskij 1924b:99 ([...]. Put differently, there is no proletarian art now, and there cannot be as long as we face the task of mastering the old culture and old art [...]).

a suitable selection and criticism of bourgeois science and art, on which all knowledge is based.⁶³ Having thus stated his case against proletarian literature and justified his own position and editorial policy at *KN*, Voronskij magnanimously adds that communist and worker writers like Kazin, Obradovič, Aleksandrovskij, Arosev, Libedinskij, Neverov, Bezymenskij, Svetlov, Malachov and others doubtlessly have made positive contributions in the transitional society, something even Zamjatin acknowledges. He concludes this chapter by reiterating that the development of new and independent art today and for years ahead entails first and foremost mastering the heritage from which the proletariat in bourgeois society had been excluded.

In chapter IV Voronskij identifies 2 branches of proletarian art, one more idealistic than the other. He describes both as influenced by the idealism of Proletkul't and Kuznica in that they indulge in planetary revolutions instead of portaying the October Revolution, in abstract and artificial schematic symbols instead of portraying living people. With them, he claims, rural Russia is transformed into a gigantic factory, a dynamo, a power plant. Instead of dialectic materialism cosmism is extolled, leading to retrograde anthropomorphism. Divesting the October Revolution of its most living material, Voronskij argues, proletarian writers cannot expect rationally or psychologically to fathom the complexities of revolutionary reality. If art is equated with ideology, the assessment of works of art will proceed exclusively from ideological criteria.⁶⁴ In this perspective Gogol' and Tolstoj would have to be declared as harmful since one was an adherent of serfdom and the other a count.

Voronskij at this point delivers an ardent defence of the fellow travellers: Although many of these are unhappy with communism and are not members of the RKP(b), this remains the artistically strongest "wing" in contemporary *belles-lettres*. These include Majakovskij, Esenin, Aseev, Pasternak, Tichonov, Oprešin and Inber among the poets; Pil'njak, Vs.Ivanov, Sejfullina, Nikitin, Budancev, Malyškin, Babel', Kreptjukov, Jakovlev, Zozulja, Zoščenko, Kozyrev among the prose writers, and among the pre-revolutionary writers: Gor'kij, A.Tolstoj, Prišvin, Nikandrov, Šaginjan and Ėrenburg. In his view, the proletarian writers have still not matured

⁶³ *ibid.* p.102.

⁶⁴ Here Voronskij contradicts himself to some extent, cf. his portrait of Zamjatin in 5.6.1.

beyond the level of apprenticeship as compared to these masters.

The demand by the proletarian writers that proletarian literature be in the centre of attention has resulted, according to Voronskij, in a literary campaign against the fellow travellers which has assumed the character of regular persecution, not only of non-party writers but also of communists who are considered guilty of condescension and protection of fellow travellers (i.a. Voronskij). In Soviet Russian *belles-lettres* petty politicking has been introduced; a conspiracy is unfolding, exclusions, excommunications and obscurantism are frequent, and an anti-literary, asphyxiating atmosphere has developed. The leadership of the RKP(b) must now, in Voronskij's view, set a stop to this and reject the attempts to build walls between the Soviet power, party leadership, proletarian writers and these groups. ⁶⁵

In chapter V Voronskij emphasizes that what is at stake is the recognition by the RKP(b) of the leading role of literary groups who believe they have been summoned to build the basis of the new socialist, proletarian art as a counterweight to the old art. Since veterans like Gor'kij and A.Tolstoj and the fellow travellers have not set themselves such objectives, and since they constitute a living bond with the past, it is comprehensible that the proletarian writers want to severely circumscribe their influence. Voronskij reiterates his conviction that the RKP(b) should refrain from such a policy and not accommodate these semi-enlightened and always simplistic promises and verbose floods about proletarian culture and art, as long as there is no corresponding material and "spiritual basis" for such culture and art. The party must persevere in its struggle and repulse such forces, especially among the young. The party has done this so far, and therefore it is only suitable that the party retains a distance in relation to such groups. ⁶⁶

There is no basis for the claim by proletarian writers, he notes, that they are being discriminated against, they have received the material and spiritual support they deserve. In relation to the fellow travellers, the party has adopted a generally correct policy. Despite their weaknesses they are artistically the most numerous and talented group. The party has not accorded a prerogative to either side in *belles-lettres*. The

⁶⁵ *ibid.* p.106.

⁶⁶ *ibid.* p.108.

proletarian demand for a percentage norm for fellow travellers (i.e. a percentage ceiling on their appearances, publications etc.) is unjustified in Voronskij's view. While one must adjust their ideas, one cannot demand a communist ideology of non-party writers, far less one that is accurate and consistent.⁶⁷ Since the party has definitely discarded such sentiments, the demands by the simplifiers and vulgarizers will lead them into conflict with comrades like Trockij, Lunačarskij, Bucharin, Meščerjakov, Steklov and others. To put proletarian literature in the centre simply means to cede control to peculiar literary executioners.

Voronskij then refers to organizational remedies to correct the misbehaviour of proletarian writers and critics, *Na postu*, LEF and Kuznica. Presaging FOSP, cf. 4.2.15, he recommends setting up a federative, comprehensive structure of independent literary groups, which would serve to rectify the heated, asphyxiating atmosphere in *belles-lettres*.

Turning to political censorship, Voronskij admits that all is not well in Soviet Russia but does not reject political censorship in *belles-lettres*, which he states is a complicated, demanding task that requires sternness, but also elasticity, restraint and circumspection. Avoiding comments on sternness, Voronskij nevertheless states that as far as elasticity is concerned the situation is deplorable. He calls on his comrade censors to stop interfering in purely artistic assessment, and to understand that one cannot demand communist ideology from non-party transitional writers. The censors should limit their task to one demand: that the work of art should not be counter-revolutionary. Counter-revolutionariness should not be equated with singular statements and with the depiction of darker sides of Soviet everyday life.⁶⁸

As a post-script Voronskij comments on allegations that proletarian writers are discriminated against while fellow travellers are flourishing. The frequent appearances of Gor'kij, Vs.Ivanov, Tichonov, Prišvin and others in *KN* is due to their being great literary masters transmitting a great cultural heritage. The best proletarian works according to Voronskij include *Nedelja* by Libedinskij, *Ognennyj kon'* by Gladkov, *Taškent-gorod chlebnyj* by Neverov, *Podvodniki* by Novikov-Priboj,

⁶⁷ *ibid.* p.109.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* p.111.

Arosev's stories, and the poems of Bezymenskij, most of them published by ignobles like himself, Voronskij wryly adds. Compared to what *Molodaja gvardija* has published over the same period one understands why quality writers like Gor'kij, Prišvin, Vs.Ivanov and Pil'njak appear in *KN*.

Voronskij finally comments on his publishing policy (*KN*, *Krug*, *Naši dni* and *Prožektor*). He expresses a hope that more proletarian manuscripts are printed. Many publishing houses belonging to proletarian writers and poets remain antagonistic to fellow traveller manuscripts, which he believes explains why many fellow traveller manuscripts remain unpublished. There are practically no private publishing houses, he notes, and the few that exist lead miserable lives.

As noted in parts 2-3 Voronskij developed the arguments in this article in a speech to the Press Section of the CK RKP(b) in May 1924, which upheld the party's prevailing policy of "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres*. McLean with considerable justification saw this as the pinnacle of Voronskij's career,⁶⁹ an assessment Choate later shared.⁷⁰ This policy was reconfirmed both at the 13th Party Congress in 1924 and at the 14th Party Congress in 1925. While Voronskij certainly was not alone in thwarting VAPP by advocating a party policy of "neutral vigilance" in *belles-lettres*, he was among the important voices that shaped party policy in this respect.

The article is remarkable in several respects. Repeatedly echoing Trockij, Voronskij rejects the concept of "proletarian literature". Although Voronskij was less categorical than Trockij in his rejection of proletarian literature in the transitional society,⁷¹ this became a cornerstone in the RAPP criticism against him.⁷² Another remarkable feature is Voronskij's frank comments on the detrimental effects of political censorship in *belles-lettres*. Seen in conjunction these factors explain the article's non-appearance from 1924. As its title suggests, the article spells out Voronskij's vision of what RKP(b) policy ought to be in the field of *belles-lettres*. As

⁶⁹ McLean 1949:186.

⁷⁰ Choate 1987:162-163.

⁷¹ Voronskij did not preclude the later development of proletarian culture and literature, as the "sejčas" in the given quotation by Voronskij suggests; cf. also McLean 1949:193-194.

⁷² Friče 1929 (II):315.

such it is a manifestation of the interaction in Voronskij's aesthetics between the ideological parameter 2) The RKP(b) and the artistic parameter 5) The classical Russian literary heritage. The remaining 6 parameters are less evident, although 3) Soviet society and 6) Realism arguably could be said to be manifest in parts of the article. This also applies to 8) Language mastery which is marginally touched upon in the negative reference to LEF's verbal equilibristics. Whereas the preceding articles have been labelled either as "ideological" or "artistic" according to the dominant set of parameters, this article has both; in my view the ideological parameter 2) RKP(b) plays a more decisive role than the artistic parameter 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, as in fact the article title reminds us. In summary the parameters 2 and 5 are very much present, whereas 1,3,4,6,7 and 8 are not directly in evidence.

There is one reference to the Old Testament's Exodus 21:24: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blood for blood."⁷³ There is even an oblique anti-religious reference to the proletarian writers who do well when they remove everything devilish from their work, e.g. trolls, servants, angels, gods, churches.⁷⁴

4.2.8 "O tekuščem momente' i zadačach RKP v chudožestvennoj literature"⁷⁵

This article, which first appeared in *Prožektor* 1924#5:23-27, was based on an address Voronskij had given in March to the Agitprop of the CK RKP(b).⁷⁶ The article was republished in *Literaturnye tipy* (1925b), but excluded from all later collections of Voronskij's articles in book form, cf. 7.4. It is the only speech among this part's 20 selected articles.⁷⁷ It is organized into 12 numbered, untitled, points.

Many of Voronskij's arguments are recognizable from 4.2.7. In point 1 he rejects the entire pre-revolutionary Russian literature 1905-1917, stating i.a. that

⁷³ *ibid.* pp.96-97.

⁷⁴ *ibid.* p.100.

⁷⁵ "On the 'Current Moment' and the Tasks of the RKP(b) in Belles-Lettres".

⁷⁶ Cf. Eimermacher 1972:189-19; Choate 1987:155. An undated 8-page draft in Voronskij's handwriting is located at RGALI, cf.7.10, item 8.

⁷⁷ The style is more declamatory than in most of the articles and was evidently designed to influence listeners. The arguments are organized into 12 points, also unusual compared to the other articles. As noted in 2.2 and 3.2.5, the speech was backed by Trockij, Bucharin, Radek, Lunačarskij and others.

during the "imperialist war" from 1914 Russian literature merely served the interests of the tsar. The October 1917 revolution thwarted this decadent literature; the strongest and most pre-revolutionary visible writers now fell silent or emigrated. In point 2 he states that literature during the civil war 1918-20 in Soviet Russia was designed to help win the war against the Entente and white generals. It therefore became dominated by agitational communist literature or by non-party workers sympathetic to communism. A prime example is Demjan Bednyj, whereas Blok was an exception with his "Dvenadcat'". Since Soviet Russia continues to be a beleaguered camp surrounded by hostile states, agitational literature in Voronskij's view has not, and will, not lose its relevance. In point 3 Voronskij states that the more normal situation following the conclusion of the civil war poses new cultural challenges. Literature is now faced with the task of reflecting more profoundly the surrounding revolutionary reality, because simple agitation and propaganda are no longer adequate. Literature, especially prose, must now serve artistic cognition of life's positive and negative aspects, synthesize the new elements of Soviet reality which the revolution has made possible. The writers best equipped to do this are the fellow travellers. Voronskij defines these as the off-spring from the petty bourgeois, peasant and intellectual layers, grown up during the revolutionary epoch, who recognize the supremacy of the October Revolution. To this category was later added the older generation of writers. Fellow traveller literature, despite its disparate nature, contradictions, the instability of its ideas, and its occasionally dubious ideology, has nevertheless in Voronskij's estimate accomplished significant artistic gains in being the first to portray living revolutionary man, the new Soviet existence, and has secured primacy. This prose was thematically dedicated to the peasantry, the partisans, the commissars, the provinces, and was hostile to the old bourgeois-landowner way of life. It was realistic and at the same often time infused with romanticism in dealing with the heroics of the civil war. It did not, however, deal thematically with the factory worker. In point 4 Voronskij states that NEP has given false illusions to the remnants of bourgeois intellectuals who envisaged a literary renaissance of their obsolete ideals, e.g. religious superstition, obscurantism, poisonous mysticism, and of their view of the revolution as an absurd and meaningless riot. In point 5 he notes that the literary blossoming has also led to an

increase in the number of groups and associations of proletarian writers. However, the Proletkul't has had a seriously negative effect on their development, especially as a result of their rebuttal of the literary heritage. Proletarian writers have been misled into a particular "factory scholasticism", propounding excesses of concrete and iron, abstract cosmism etc. Yet they have in Voronskij's opinion liberated themselves from factory romanticism and are now addressing real life. As indications of this transposition Voronskij cites a) the presence of significant, and mainly peasant-oriented, prose writers among the proletarians in Kuznica e.g. Ljaško, Neverov, Gladkov, Nizovoj; b) that proletarian poets like Aleksandrovskij and Obradovič have switched to more concrete themes; c) the arrival on the literary scene over the last 1½ year of Komsomol and party youths like Veselij, Bezymenskij, Libedinskij, Svetlov, Golodnyj. In point 6 he emphasizes that the party has rejected attempts to use NEP as the springboard for a literary restoration, that the party has eradicated religious superstition, mysticism and slander against the revolution. The party has co-operated actively with the most progressive and talented wing of the fellow travellers - Majakovskij, Pil'njak, Ivanov, Sejfullina, Tichonov, Malyškin, Inber, Orešin - and among the older generation - Gor'kij, A.Tolstoj, Vol'nov, Šaginjan, Šiškov, and others. The weakest feature of this group's writing is their tendency to view the October Revolution as a victory of peasant chaos, thereby inadequately reflecting the leading role of the proletariat. Furthermore, the fellow travellers have, in Voronskij's view, although they do not view the revolution negatively, insufficient understanding of its international implications. Moreover, the party has given proletarian and communist writers unfettered artistic freedom of expression and has helped their publishing associations and printed their material in Soviet printing houses and journals. In point 7 Voronskij assails *Na postu* and their attempts to erect a unified party line in *belles-lettres* in response to the alleged disarray in party policy. The *Na postu* require that proletarian literature be put squarely in the centre of contemporary literature; hence they are negative to fellow travellers, Kuznica, LEF and even towards several communist writers. The only writers to escape criticism are those grouped around *Oktjabr'*, while fellow travellers are dismissed as useless in terms of forwarding proletarian class consciousness. Voronskij takes issue with this view, arguing that fellow travellers maintain a dominating literary role due to their

persisting quality. The *Na postu* argument, he reminds his audience, has not won party approval, and their demands for percentage quotas on fellow traveller literature have been rejected. As a result of this the ranks of the proletarians are in disarray, and MAPP membership figures have been decimated. Among those who have abandoned MAPP are writers like Veselij, Goldnyj, Jasnyj, Svetlov, Kasterin. Even fellow travellers who have tried to co-operate with MAPP, e.g. Sejfullina, have given up. The reason for this fragmentation must be sought in the sectarianism of Oktjabr' and MAPP and their biased approach to writers which has been encouraged by *Na postu*.

In point 8, Voronskij attributes the considerable progress in prose and poetry 1922-24 to the party's careful policy of subjecting proletarian and non-proletarian literature to its intellectual hegemony, to making literature serve the interest of the revolution. The decision of intellectuals to co-operate with the proletariat and Soviet authorities is seen to have been decisive. The most obvious example in literature, he states, is the development of VSP (The All-Russian Union of Writers), where the communist Kasatkin is currently president. Fellow travellers, e.g. Pil'njak, have now also changed their attitudes, and among communist writers there is now evidence of more concrete and life-like themes. Despite this progress Voronskij notes a recent dismay in literary life, confusion, and respite which he tentatively calls a crisis or a particular style. This applies to fellow travellers and to proletarians alike.

[...]. Naskol'ko možno sudit' po nekotorym literaturnym faktam, *štil' ili krizis sovremennoj literatury ob'jasnjaetsja obmeleniem i oskudeniem revoljucionno-romantičeskich nastroenij, čto v svoju očered' nužno postavit' v svjaz' s zaderžkoj social'noj revoljucii na Zapade i s naličiem neprigljadnych storon NEP'a*. [...].⁷⁸

The inability to find new literary ways of development explains the crisis in Kuznica, the unsatisfactory attempts of fellow travellers like Ivanov, Pil'njak and Tichonov to find new ways of expression. Grey daily life even suppresses rebels like Majakovskij. *Na postu* writers have ended up with wooden red icons, not living

⁷⁸ Voronskij 1925b:240 ([...]. As far as can be ascertained on the basis of some literary facts, *the lull or crisis of contemporary literature is due to a shallowing and impoverishment of revolutionary-romantic fervour. This is caused by the delay of social revolutions in the West, and by the presence of the negative sides of NEP.*

revolutionary people. Hence *Zavtra* of Libedinskij is completely inadequate. Voronskij is particularly concerned that Esenin, exposed to bohemianism and one of the best and most talented poets, is dying before the eyes of the literary community.

In Voronskij's view the party must urgently address this crisis, or particular literary style, that has developed. He stresses that this has nothing to do with the quarrel between fellow travellers and proletarians. The party in Voronskij's opinion must assist in the difficult task of finding a new step forward for literature in revolutionary development. Reaffirming the literary pre-eminence of the fellow travellers, he states that party policy should continue to be designed to attract the fellow travellers and allow them to identify with the revolution and the proletariat. The elasticity and care Voronskij advised in relation to the fellow travellers was, however, not meant to preclude party criticism of their ideological and artistic weaknesses. In point 2 with regard to proletarian and communist writers Voronskij acknowledged the utility of their many groupings and stated that the party was committed to support them in the future. Particular emphasis ought to be directed at younger writers in the Komsomol, worker correspondents, students from the worker faculties. Yet he claimed that the "stuffy greenhouse atmosphere" surrounding the proletarian writers was the main obstacle to their literary progress. Voronskij also complained about the negative results of endless expulsions, inclusions, reorganizations and regroupings and petty politicking among the proletarian writers. This is caused by their lack of larger perspectives, the narrow focus on sectarian issues - especially by MAPP and Oktjabr' - and their erection of a proletarian form of art and literature opposed to older forms.

Without attacking the freedom of existing literary groups and circles, the party should encourage the development of a more comprehensive literary organization, embracing both fellow travellers and proletarian writers. He deplored the absence of such an organization and claimed it was of immense importance, both to protect writers' professional interests and to counteract the secluded and negative atmosphere of the circle opposing the entry of communist writers into the established world of *belles-lettres*.

Voronskij in point 10 saw the need for a more exact delimitation of the powers

and functions of literary censorship, which was too often dictated by the personal sympathies and antipathies of the individual censors. Exposing the Gogolian, Ščedrinian and Čechovian aspects of Soviet society should not be equated with counter-revolutionary activity. Voronskij called for a special commission to be appointed by the CK in order to work out clearer and more precise rules for censorship, directed particularly at the intermediate level of censorship staff. In point 11, he called for improvements in the material conditions of writers, especially living quarters. Finally, in point 12, Voronskij underlined the primacy of realism in art and literature, which in his view did not conflict with party tolerance of unfettered artistic expression and experimentation.

In terms of the 8 parameters this article revolves primarily around 1) The October Revolution, especially 2) The RKP(b), but also 5) The classical Russian literary heritage and 6) Realism. Despite its title and the seemingly uncompromising phrasing in points 1-2 which might lead one to believe it is only concerned with ideology, the article from point 3 onwards also addresses several artistic issues. I therefore consider it, like the foregoing article, as a mixed ideological-artistical article. There are a few negative references to religion, e.g. that the party has eradicated religious superstition, which is an obsolete ideal of the pre-revolutionary bourgeois intellectuals.

4.2.9 "Zametki ob iskusstve"⁷⁹

This article was first published in *KN* 1925#6(31):260-276, cf. 7.3. It was included by Voronskij in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a) and *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926), and later appeared in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a.⁸⁰ Though several of Voronskij's views on psychology strike us today as simplistic, even erroneous, when measured against the state-of-the arts in cognitive psychology,⁸¹ we must bear in mind that the work

⁷⁹ "Notes on Art". Cf. the translation and brief commentary by Choate 1998:203-225. Choate has translated the title as "On Art" since his text is from Voronskij 1925a.

⁸⁰ The article was republished under the title "Ob iskusstve" in Voronskij (1925a,1926), and later as "Ob iskusstve pisatelja" (Voronskij 1982, 1987a), cf. 7.4.

⁸¹ An indication of this is that Best 1995, in his widely used manual on cognitive psychology, e.g. does not list the terms "intuition" and "subconscious", which figure prominently in Voronskij's vocabulary.

of Freud had been published in tsarist Russia but only became known in Soviet Russia in 1923-25, cf. 4.2.12. Rather than treat Voronskij's views with condescension, he should be credited, in my view, for being willing to try to enrich the Marxist paradigm by bringing in from psychology elements related to the individual psyche and artistic cognition which he thought were relevant to the advancement of Soviet Russian *belles-lettres*.

The article is organized in 2 subtitled chapters, which is more formal than the usual numbering in the preceding articles: "I. Intuicija i tehnika" and "II. Snjatje pokrovov". In chapter I Voronskij explores the properties of artistic intuition. He draws the attention of young artists to what he sees as a very instructive point regarding the process of artistic creation in Tolstoj's *Anna Karenina*. Referring to the scene where Vronskij and Anna visit the atelier of the painter Michajlov, he describes Michajlov's technique of "snjatje pokrovov", which allows the painter to portray the most characteristic traits in Anna's face. LEF and also the formalists, he notes, view "creation", "intuition" and "inspiration" as bourgeois, negative and unscientific quantities, preferring terms like "energetic word-making", "technique", "to produce things" etc. In Voronskij's view this contradicts not only psychological and artistic facts but also Tolstoj's description of Michajlov. Tolstoj's repeated use of "vdruz" (suddenly) in describing Michajlov illustrates the suddenness of artistic creation, Voronskij comments; he finds Tolstoj most convincing in relating how the painter "vdruz" felt, knew, understood that his portrait of Anna's face was complete.

The artist's intuition, Voronskij states, begins working at a very early stage in the artistic creative process, with the perception and collation of impressions. While Michajlov's mind was busy assessing how his visitors reacted to his painting, his artistic sentiment, unknown to his conscious mind and imperceptible to him, perceived and collated impressions. This collation was not random since Michajlov only selected what was useful. Voronskij argues that each and every one of us makes similar selections, just as the artist subconsciously selects. Man's ideas of the world are composed of external impressions which depend on the disposition and the character of the person involved. Man only perceives that to which his attention is directed at, and man's attention is delimited by his class interests.

What distinguishes the artist is merely that he subconsciously notices the typical which is always concrete, with an image or shape. In Voronskij's view, Lenin's scientific foresight was doubtlessly intuitive,⁸² as are many scientific discoveries, and the axioms of mathematicians have an intuitive basis. Intuition, though, can prove to be true or false. In art intuitive truths can be supported or rejected through analytical judgement. The epigraph in *Anna Karenina*⁸³ contradicts, in his view, the novel; hence the artist Tolstoj is seen to be continuously at odds with the prophet and thinker Tolstoj. Criticism, in Voronskij's view, is therefore nothing else than the translation from the language of intuition into the language of logic. Intuition characterizes both the artist and the scientist; with the scientist intuition plays a subordinate role, whereas with the artist it plays a superior role.⁸⁴

Voronskij sees the ideal artist as someone who is generously gifted with intuition and who simultaneously has profound analytical qualities. He mentions Goethe and Anatole France. Voronskij here equates intuition with truth, revealed at some point in time to previous generations through the sensibility of experience, which has transformed itself into the subconscious realm. (Later, in 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928), I shall return to his definition of "truth" in art).

At this point Voronskij finds it necessary to qualify his statements on intuition by acknowledging that one-sided dependence on intuition leads to impotency and is typical of tendentious art. Contemporary technism and rationalism in art, he notes, seek to replace inspiration, creation and intuition with the determined construction of things, with technique. Referring to formalism, Voronskij comments that for some form and technique have become objectives in their own right, because they are estranged in Soviet reality. Others who advocate a Gosplan in literature are all too ready to produce things on social command, a tendency of which Voronskij is contemptuous. His recommendation to contemporary artists is to not just study politics, not just develop their analytic and critical senses, but to enhance all their

⁸² KN 1925#6(31):262.

⁸³ "Mne otmsčenie, i az vozdam" (Vengeance is mine, I will repay"). The epigraph is taken from The Bible, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, 12:19: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord".

⁸⁴ KN 1925#6(31):263.

intuitive and instinctive abilities in order to penetrate the spirit of the epoch. He concedes the truth in Tolstoj's observation that the most gifted and accomplished artist becomes powerless if his eyes are closed to the contents and to the limits of the contents; but the artist who has wise eyes and is lacking in technique is not without power. The artist Michajlov, Voronskij states, saw no distinction between technique and content. Similarly the process of aesthetic perception of any work of art is not fragmentary:

[...]. Točno tak že estetičeskij process vosprijatija ljubogo chudožestvennogo proizvedenija ne imeet dela s takim rasščepeniem. Estetičeski my vospriimaem i ocenivaem chudožestvennoe proizvedenie edinyim i celostnym, tak kak vospriimaem ego konkretno. No my možem, kak éto možet sdelat' i chudožnik, perevesti proizvedenie s jazyka obrazov na jazyk logiki [...].⁸⁵

In transforming the object of art from the language of imagery into the language of logic, we cease to assess the object of art concretely and observe it reflectively, judgngly. We now find it useful to distinguish between the contents and form of the object of art. This fragmentation assists us in appraising the object of art from different points of view. In a footnote Voronskij sees a parallell in the dichotomy matter/spirit: what we objectively view as matter may seem subjectively to be spirit. Concluding this chapter, Voronskij disagrees with those who see no purpose in translating an object of art from the language of imagery into the language of logic. He elicits the support of Plechanov to state that this translation clarifies which type of class-consciousness is expressed in the work of art, and this is seen to be of immense importance in the social struggle.

In chapter II "Snjatje pokrovov" (literally, "the removal of covers") Voronskij comes close to identifying the writer with a theurg, a visionary with special insight into his time. This view was more expressive of symbolism and romanticism than realism, not to speak of Marxist realism. He notes that Tolstoj believed that the artist's vocation depended on the benign gift of clearightedness, rather than on

⁸⁵ *ibid.* p. 266 ([...]. Exactly in the same manner the process of aesthetic perception of any work of art has nothing to do with disintegration. Aesthetically we perceive and assess works of art in a unitary and holistic manner, since we perceive of them concretely. Yet we can, as can the artist, transform the works of art from the language of imagery into the language of logic [...]).

technical excellence. Thus, only the true artist perceives the unique in his environment. The artist-realist does not invent, does not fabricate, does not create fantastic worlds or indulge in phantasms, does not seek embellishment for its own sake, but in a way decodes the secrets of objects, people and events. The artistic engagement of Tolstoj's Michajlov is thus not a unique occurrence, in Voronskij's view, but occurs frequently, and therefore Tolstoj is seen to be correct in his analysis. As the scientist discovers the laws of nature, the genuine artist detects the laws of art: Michajlov discovered Anna's new face, while her consort Vronskij saw nothing new. (Later he adds that when Vronskij took up drawing and painting in exile he only copied; therefore Michajlov rated him as a dilettant, not an artist). Just as Darwin discovered the origin and development of the species, Tolstoj discovered his protagonists. Both the scientist and the artist, in Voronskij's opinion, can be genuine innovators, but where the scientist proves (*dokazyvaet*), the artist shows (*pokazyvaet*). The genuine artist, similar to the genuine scientist, always adds a surplus value. If not, he is just someone who describes, repeats, or copies, as Vronskij did in *Anna Karenina*. The notion that the artist adds a surplus value was central to Voronskij's aesthetics, and I shall return to this point in 4.2.13 "O tom čego u nas net"(1925).

In a passage on individualism, Voronskij brushes aside attempts by a group of writers to argue in favour of collective art, which they see as an antithesis to aristocratic-bourgeois individualism. This is rubbish, in Voronskij's view, because artistic creation by definition is individualistic. Not even the proletarian writers can disclaim this fact, he states, adding that Tolstoj employed "healthy individualism" in creating Michajlov.⁸⁶

Turning to Tolstoj's technique of "snjatje pokrovov", he assures that nothing mystical is involved: the artist only discloses what is already there. The artist's task is to eliminate everything that prevents him from perceiving clearly. In this perspective realistic art almost becomes naively realistic. He admits that this view of the artistic process has metaphysical elements. Yet he is adamant that "snjatje pokrovov" is an appropriate metaphor, not chosen at random. Without elaborating on Tolstoj's art, he nonetheless concludes that "snjatje pokrovov" in all its Tolstoyan

⁸⁶ *ibid.* p.269.

naive realism pervades all his work. Tolstoj is seen to have always moved from the complicated, the fragmented, towards the simple and unitary, e.g. in the rendering of Nikolaj Levin's death. In a token reference to Lenin, Voronskij adds that Lenin did the same in the field of social politics. In order to better grasp Tolstoj's naive realism Voronskij quotes Belinskij:

[...] nauka i iskusstvo očiščajut zoloto dejstvitel'nosti, peretopljajut ego v izjaščnye formy [...].⁸⁷

Voronskij finds Belinskij's quotation an appropriate parallel to Tolstoj's naive realism. It is also seen to be expressive of Tolstoj's technique of "snjatje pokrovov", but with one important qualification: Class is the prism through which reality is perceived, Voronskij affirms, adding that neither Belinskij nor Tolstoj took class adequately into consideration. Turning to Turgenev, Voronskij notes that he complained about critics who criticized writers for emphasizing ideas in their work. In Turgenev's view, according to Voronskij, the writer should confine himself to an exact reflection of the truth. Voronskij only partly agrees with this, since although each artist subjectively strives to reflect the realities of life, this is subconsciously coloured by the artist's objective class affiliation. He adds that the clearest and most succinct rendering of reality usually takes place when the artist reflects thoughts and sentiments that flourish under, or reflect the ruling class, i.e. the class which at a given time in history most adequately expresses the entirety of society. Voronskij concludes, regarding the class aspect, that the artist must clarify which class interests he is advancing, since art is not beyond politics. If the artist's sentiments and thoughts are with the proletariat, he must clarify how he best can "snimat' pokrovy" from reality in order to purvey the interests of this class. This is not a superficial point, Voronskij adds, and states that many contemporary writers would benefit from such a clarification. The critic, on the other hand, must ascertain how objectively art reflects reality since it may be false due to class subjectivism. Voronskij is obviously sensitive to *Na postu* allegations that he has neglected the class aspect in art and

⁸⁷ *ibid.* p.271 ([...]art and science cleanse the gold of reality, forge it into elegant forms [...]). (The quotation is from Vissarion G.Belinskij's article "Stichotvorenija M. Lermontova").

terminates the article with a resounding denial, instead claiming that *Na postu* has a skewed view of the class struggle.

As to objectivity and exactitude in art, he notes that some maintain that art is not contingent on class; rather it is seen as universal and eternal. Voronskij comments that not only aristocrats like Turgenev and Tolstoj but also the foremost Marxist art theoretician, Plechanov, e.g. in "Iskusstvo i obščestvennaja žizn'" wrote about objectivity in art. Here Plechanov i.a. states that although there are no absolute criteria for beauty, this does not mean that we are without any objective possibility of assessing whether a given artistic thought has been fulfilled: the more the form of the object of art corresponds to its idea, the better. The *Na postu* critics, on the other hand, claim that all art is coloured by class interests, and on this basis they reject the possibility of objective criteria in art. In Plechanov's view, Voronskij states, this is tantamount to committing the sin of extreme subjectivity.⁸⁸

Tolstoj's thoughts about "snjatje pokrovov" are relevant today, Voronskij informs his readers, not least in view of the flood of manuscripts received at *KN*, both prose and poetry. Never before in Russian history has such a number of stories and poems been written, he states, and this is a very positive development. Yet the majority of these manuscripts reveal that the authors have not learned that the genuine artist must "snjat' pokrovov" from life, must add a surplus value, must state something substantial. Battle scenes from the civil war abound - incredible events are related; rifle reports thunder; there are endless White guards and generals, kulaks and the Čeka - Voronskij laments, but they forget that describing episodes and events is not synonymous with art. He insists that art is only attained when a surplus value is added, when there is a universality, as for instance in *Anna Karenina* with the scene involving the divorce lawyer and the mill, or in *Portret by Gogol'*.

Voronskij at this point deplores the abundance of contending literary schools and groups; this only serves to divert the attention of writers from what he has commented on earlier. Presaging the troubles he was to experience at *KN* from late 1924, he states that these groups and organizations thrive on taking over the editorial offices of newspapers and journals. One needs only look around to see what

⁸⁸ *KN* 1925#6(31):273.

deplorable results this course of action has, in Voronskij's view.

In order to further substantiate his remarks on Tolstoj, Voronskij refers to *Čto takoe iskusstvo?*, in which Tolstoj is seen to denigrate the role of art to become a mere instrument for communicating emotions between and among people. In Voronskij's view Plechanov in *Pis'ma bez adresa* quite rightly reacted to this, objecting that art does not only reflect emotions but also thoughts, not as mirror reflections, but as living images. It follows, in Voronskij's opinion, that Goethe's *Faust* not only expresses his sentiments, but his whole philosophy. Plechanov believed that Tolstoj's understanding was limited (*otsele i dosele*) The artist Tolstoj is much closer to "us communists" Voronskij adds, than the prophet and thinker Tolstoj. *Anna Karenina*, not *Čto takoe iskusstvo?* is emblematic of Plechanov's definition of art. True realistic art which "removes the layers" from living reality does this, in contrast with science, through imagery. In contrast with religion these images are not of a fantastic, random character. This is the uniqueness of art, Voronskij states, claiming that Tolstoj deliberately circumscribed his definition of art to fit his broader religious and metaphysical views.

The particularity of art is that it cognizes, expresses the reality of life, man's sentiments and thoughts, not as mirror reflections but as images. Voronskij, in summarizing the article, adds that the principal organ through which art functions is our intuition: thus artistic cognition is intuitive:

[...] glavnym organom, čez kotoryj funkcioniruet iskusstvo, javljaetsja intucija; chudožestvennoe poznanie intuitivno.[...].⁸⁹

Here we see an illustration of Voronskij's increasing concern with artistic cognition, the inner, psychological constituents of individual artistic creation, an interest which led Voronskij to explore the work of Freud and its relevance to literature.

Since the article records the vital role Voronskij accorded to intuition and psychology in literature, largely exemplified through L.Tolstoj's *Anna Karenina*, one

⁸⁹ KN 1925#6(31):276 ([...] the main organ through which art functions, is the intuition; artistic cognition is intuitive [...]).

could justifiably argue that it is first and foremost an "artistic" article, in our definition of 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism and 7) Psychological character portrayal. His thoughts on aesthetic perception, e.g. in the quotation given above, are also indicative of his preoccupation with artistic considerations in this article. One could, however, also argue persuasively that the article can be read as an "ideological" article. It undeniably has a strong ideological element linked to 1) The October Revolution, 2) The RKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. Voronskij initially stresses, and repeats at the end of the article, that his views are a necessary antidote to so-called Marxist literary "discoveries", and he therefore finds it necessary to remind his readers of what he terms "elementary Marxist positions".

There are some references to the New Testament: to Michajilov's painting of Pilatus' speech of warning (St.Luke 23:1-25),⁹⁰ and to religion in his reassurance that there is nothing divine in intuition,⁹¹ and his rejection of Tolstoj's mystical-religious conception of art.⁹²

4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna"⁹³

This article was first published in *Naši dni* 1925#5:297-304 as the first of three articles under the heading "Na raznye temy".⁹⁴ It was included by Voronskij in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a) but was not reprinted until Voronskij 1987a, cf. 7.4.

This and the following article were not published in *KN*, probably in view of Voronskij's problems with the editorial board of *KN* from late 1924 to late February 1925, described in 3.2.3-3.2.4. The title ("The Story of the Midianites is Dark and Incomprehensible") is a quotation from a volume by Ilovajskij. Voronskij uses it sarcastically to deride what he sees as a prevalent lack of "historicism" among both fellow travellers and communist writers:

⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.265.

⁹¹ *ibid.* p.261.

⁹² *ibid.* pp.275-276.

⁹³ "The History of the Midjan is Dark and Incomprehensible".

⁹⁴ The second article, entitled "O marksizme i plochich stichach", gave a negative review of Esenin's "Marxist" poem "Stansy" (pp.304-309). The third article is discussed in 4.2.11.

[...]. *Chudožestvennyj metod, s pomoščju ktorogo sovremennye pisateli proletarskie i neproletarskie sozdajut svoi proizvedenija o bol'shevikach, javljaetsja obyčno ograničennym, uzkim, nedostatočnym, nepolnym i potomu nepravil'nym. V nem - nedostaet istorizma [...].*⁹⁵

Their ignorance of the past is reflected in their stereotype of the Bolshevik . He is active, purposeful; he gives priority to social work; he puts the revolution before his private life. He is relentless with the enemy and devoted to the worker. He is direct in an American way and like Americans devoid of psychologism (sic). He is fully devoted to the cause, he is rational and tactical; he can manoeuvre and deflect attacks without losing sight of his objectives. By nature he is not spontaneous (*stichijnyj*); he is thoroughly disciplined mentally and physically and calculates everything carefully. He is a fabrication, and he himself makes life, makes people. He does not think of himself in terms of an individual; he only recognizes classes, conditions, the masses. He is cold, rational, wise; a fabrication reminiscent of a machine, not unlike Pil'njak's "leather jackets" (*kožannye kurtki*). As examples Voronskij cites i.a. Nikitin in *Cvetnye vetra* by Vs.Ivanov.

Voronskij comments that ordinary people regard the Bolsheviks as modern versions of the "varjagi", the Scandinavian (Swedish) vikings, who had been invited to rule the unruly indigenous tribes.⁹⁶ He concedes that all these epithets are not unfounded, although Bolsheviks (including Voronskij) find such descriptions superficial. It is especially in fellow traveller fiction, he notes, that the Bolsheviks are treated in this way. In communist fiction, he states, efforts are made to penetrate the minds of the heroes of our time, and the Bolsheviks are here described more sympathetically. Yet far from all these attempts are successful: the communists of

⁹⁵ *Naši dni* 1925#5:300 ([...]. *The artistic method of contemporary proletarian and non-proletarian writers in creating their works about Bolsheviks is usually circumscribed, narrow, insufficient, incomplete and therefore untrue. It lacks historicism [...].*) It could be mentioned that the original text is italicized, as indicated. Yet in Voronskij 1987a:481 only the last sentence is italicized, with no commentary - again an example of unexplained text revision.

⁹⁶ *Naši dni* 1925#5:298. Intended or not, the analogy between the Bolsheviks and the "varjagi" is pertinent. Russian historians date the founding of the Russian state to the rule of the varjag Rurik (862-879) in Novgorod. Rurik's two brothers Sineus and Truvor ruled in Beloozero and Izborsk, respectively. Although the Nestor chronicle records that the varjagi were invited by the novgorod, krivič, ves' and čud' peoples to govern them, this point remains controversial (Paškov 1997:24). Probably only Soviet Marxists would have interpreted the Bolshevik coup in October 1917 and their later rule as a response to an *invitation* by the people of Russia.

Libedinskij are an introvert, heroic caste all by themselves. With Arosev, the communists tragically fight each other. He notes that volumes have been produced on Lenin, but with few exceptions the living, lively Lenin he knew is missing. Voronskij finds that there is a lack of dynamism, of dialectics, in contemporary literature on Bolsheviks. Even the artists who are most congenial to communism fail to render a real Bolshevik atmosphere in their work, he deplures.

Voronskij, who had joined the "Society of old Bolsheviks" in November 1922, cf. 7.1, reminds his readers that he is talking about the core membership of the RKP(b), i.e. Bolsheviks who represent the old underground movement. His mixed feelings with the greatly increased membership figures of the RKP(b) surface when he describes the transition from an elitist to a mass party, cf. parts 1 and 3. He regrets to observe that the party is now flooded with thousands of members from the *petite bourgeoisie*, intelligentsia and peasantry, and these now constitute the average members, often unfamiliar with Marxism.

The works of Babel', Pil'njak, Vs.Ivanov and Sejfullina, he adds, are often dedicated to these exponents of spontaneous semi-Bolshevism, youths 18-19-years old. These are closer to the writers in age, and are therefore easier to identify with than veteran Bolsheviks like himself. He finds that the superficial approach to the older generation of veteran Bolsheviks is a problem which is underestimated by critics and writers, and this is a basic weakness in contemporary art. He ascribes it to a lack of the artistic method of historicism on the part of fellow travellers and proletarian writers alike. With few exceptions, e.g. Gor'kij's *Mar'*, there is no literature about the pre-revolutionary Social Democratic, and particularly the Bolshevik, underground movement.

In Voronskij's view it is therefore essential to expend more literary effort on portraying the revolutionary underground, not in order to write historical novels but in order to establish a truer and more complete picture. Communists are too often depicted as if everything started in 1917, he deplures. At best reference is made to some vague past where the protagonist was imprisoned or in exile. Here Voronskij introduces "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna" to demonstrate lack of historicism,

explaining why Bolsheviks can be depicted as 20th century *varjagi*.⁹⁷

Having diagnosed the ill, Voronskij prescribes memoirs, diaries, and reports from e.g. *Proletarskaja revoljucija*, *Krasnaja letopis'* and *Byloe* as the best medicine. Voronskij believes that reminiscences can counteract the widespread lack of historicism among fellow travellers and especially among proletarian writers. Accordingly, journals should devote more space to suitable memoirs. Referring to the Marxist scepticism to subjectivist and "unscientific" memoirs, Voronskij accedes that reminiscences always evince subjective aspects. Therefore the historian must be selective. Yet the artist not only sees reminiscences as excellent material, in Voronskij's view, but even finds the subjective aspects most interesting. The study of the glorious revolutionary past, so abundant in themes, has the added advantage of correcting the readers' view of the present, which is often distorted through pulp fiction, e.g. the detective stories of Conan Doyle. In conclusion, Voronskij finds that Soviet society and *belles-lettres* are in the process of leaving behind a nervous, excited stage characterized by thematic regionalism and material-collection. A new stage is now commencing, typified by the organic, calmer, reflected work of art. The time is therefore ripe for a transition from the poem and short story or sketch to the epic novel. Symptomatic is the epic tone in *Babel'* and *Leonov*, Voronskij argues. The epic novel presupposes a wider historical perspective and may in addition thwart the lack of historicism. As a result Bolsheviks will no longer be portrayed as visitors from Mars but as ordinary Russians.

Turning to the question of which parameters are most in focus here, I believe it is evident that Voronskij's concern with what he perceived as post-revolutionary misrepresentation of Bolsheviks is an integral part of the ideological parameters 2) The RKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. As a veteran Bolshevik he was estranged by the transition from an elitist to a mass party caused by the large influx of new members. This served Stalin's purposes but *de facto* inflated the value of veterans like Voronskij. We may assume that it was at this time Voronskij started writing his own semi-fictional autobiography covering the pre-revolutionary period 1905-1915. Akimov i.a. interprets this article as a timely warning against the growing deification

⁹⁷ *ibid.* p.301.

of the Bolshevik hero which came to characterize later socialist realism, and on this basis he credits Voronskij with issuing a warning against this trend.⁹⁸ I agree that Voronskij argues against the stereotype depiction of the young Bolshevik, but he is exclusively positive about real (veteran) Bolshevism and Bolsheviks. It is their misrepresentation in post-1917 literature that concerns him. This did not prevent Voronskij later from adopting many of the same clichés in his obituary of Frunze, cf. 7.13.

It is also evident that the artistic parameters 6) Realism and 7) Psychological character portrayal are integral to Voronskij's argumentation. The stereotype rendering of Bolsheviks to which he reacts conflicts with both of these considerations. This is therefore the first article in our discussion till now where the ideological and artistic parameters in Voronskij's aesthetics seem to be of equal magnitude. Apart from the reference to the Midianites⁹⁹ (which is hardly relevant in our context) there are no references to the Bible in this article.

4.2.11 "O mudroj točke"¹⁰⁰

This brief article was first published in *Naši dni* 1925#5:309-314. As noted earlier it appeared as the third of three articles under the common heading "Na raznye teme". It has an epigraph "Mne bor'ba mešala stat' poëtom. Nekrasov".¹⁰¹ It was selected by Voronskij for reprinting in *Ob iskusstve* (1925a) but was not reprinted until Voronskij 1987a, cf. 7.4. It stands out due to Voronskij's frank admission that communists are not good artists. Possibly to allay criticism he employs the first person plural: "We, communists", although it is clear he does not group himself with the communist writers. A central point is the difference in perception between communist writers and others. In his view this results from their different psychological orientations. Communist writers have particular difficulties, he states:

⁹⁸ Akimov 1989:179.

⁹⁹ The Midian was an ancient region in the northwest of the Arabian peninsula peopled by the Midianites, cf. Exodus 2:15-22; Judges 6-8.

¹⁰⁰ "On Wise Punctuation".

¹⁰¹ "The war stopped me from becoming a poet. Nekrasov".

[...]. Kak *chudožnik*, on dolžen najti "meru veččej", umet' vzvesit' i ocenit'. V *moment raboty* trebuetsja izvestnaja stylost'. V *protivnom slučae* byvaet, čto *chudožnik* vkladyvaet v slovo, v obraz, v sobytie, v kartinu takie čuvstva i nastroenija, kakich v nich na samom dele net [...].¹⁰²

The artist is an experimenter and spectator, and this demands precision and a vision of the totality. The reader is calmer and sees the object of art differently from the artist. Artistic creation is closely linked to the artist's ability to transform (*perevoploščat'*). The artist identifies with his protagonists and must accordingly, in Voronskij's view, assimilate and reflect diversity.

Yet the majority of communist writers are seen to be too involved. To them the past does not exist; everything is in the present tense. This offers considerable material, but today it has become an obstacle; it does not offer a broad enough perspective.¹⁰³ This is why communist writers indulge so frequently in journalism, open agitation, clear tendentiousness. In consequence, this generates the stereotypes and paradigms one is so often confronted with, Voronskij adduces, in the works of communist "comrades". Each person has obvious characteristics decided by class and concealed by congenital traits. To the politician the former are most important, but the artist is more concerned by the latter. The protruding ears of Karenin reveal more about him than tens of pages of evaluation of him, Voronskij states.

He then observes that communist writers' ability to transform is limited. "We" are too goal-oriented, cannot see things from other angles. He makes the frank observation that although the RKP(b) for decades has produced cadres of political giants and ideologues, "and although we have the gigantic Lenin", the party has still failed to produce a single outstanding artist - "this is an irrefutable fact".¹⁰⁴

Referring to the article's title, he states that communist writers also have great problems in punctuation, too often they want to go to the bottom of everything -

¹⁰² *Naši dni* 1925#5:309-310 ([...]. As an *artist* he must find the "right admixture", must weigh and assess. *When at work*, accuracy is required. *Otherwise the artist invests in a word, an image, an event, a picture of such feelings and moods which in reality are not there.* [...]). As in the foregoing article it could be mentioned also here that the original text is italicized, as indicated. Yet in Voronskij 1987a:477 nothing is in italics, and no commentary is given - yet another example of unexplained text revision.

¹⁰³ *ibid.* p.310.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* p. 311.

everything must be described in detail. Yet the artist must be able to punctuate, he reminds his readers; the artist must be able to be reticent about what cannot be said, that which is not fully understood. He notes that the great masters knew when to punctuate.¹⁰⁵ He also finds faults with the style of "our" communist writers, which he finds too subjective. Further, their language is not worked well through and is still in the process of formulation. The presence of the writer is too obvious. Voronskij cites Libedinskij's *Nedelja* and *Zavtra*, and Tarasovjy-Rodionov's *Šokolad* and *Linev*. His conclusion is not, however, that communists should refrain from writing. On the contrary, there is abundant material available, he states, but communist writers should try to overcome their shortcomings. In conclusion, Voronskij cites Čechov's advice that the writer should be ice cold when he sits down to write. Voronskij personally does not agree with this because the process of artistic creation is composed of different, interconnected parts: incomplete perception of the the material, intuitive recreation of its parts (synthesis) and finally the process of writing. He states that Čechov only had the last in mind when offering his advice, and Čechov's point is that the artist must be able to "externalise" in relation to his work and observe it with the spectator's dispassionate look. This, in Voronskij's view, is indeed sound advice.

By frankly addressing why communists remain such poor artists and by locating the answer to the particular communist psyche, one could argue that Voronskij's arguments centre on artistic parameters, particularly 7) Psychological character portrayal, but also 8) Language mastery and even 5) The classical Russian literary heritage and 6) Realism. But there can be little doubt that his diagnosis of the constrictions in the communist psyche in relation to creative art suggests that Voronskij in fact at this stage is asking himself some very fundamental questions about the ideological parameter 2) The RKP(b) and also 3) Soviet society. His heretical statement that the RKP(b) after decades has not produced a single significant artist needs not only reflect disillusionment with the role of the RKP(b) in art and literature. His statement can be interpreted as a clear warning against giving the proletarian writers more power in *belles-lettres*. As was the case in the former article we see here a mingling of ideological and artistic parameters, which allows us

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.* p. 312.

to interpret this article as both an "ideological" and an "artistic" statement. There are, finally, no references to the Bible in this article.

4.2.12 "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" ¹⁰⁶

This long article was first published in *KN* 1925#7(32):241-262, cf. 7.3, and was included by Voronskij in *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926). It subsequently appeared in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. Half a dozen of Freud's books had become available in Russian by 1913. His work aroused debate also in Soviet Russia, especially 1923-1925, ¹⁰⁷ which was also reflected in *KN* well before Voronskij published "Frejdizm i iskusstvo". ¹⁰⁸ The scathing attack on Freudianism in April 1925 at the Communist Academy by Friče and the publication in *Pravda* on June 14 1925 of Lenin's critical comments in 1920 about Freud¹⁰⁹ paved the way for Voronskij's derision of Freud. Surprisingly, he did find one positive aspect, as we shall see.

The article is subdivided into 4 chapters with titles. As in 4.2.9 "Zametki ob iskusstve", this adds a note of academic officialdom: "I. Teorija snov-simvolov", "II. Namerenie i dejstvitel'nost'", "III. Bessoznatel'noe", and "IV. Vyvody". As in 4.2.9 Voronskij's ideas on cognitive psychology have not stood the test of time, ¹¹⁰ but in all fairness he should be credited for his perceptive, qualified, acceptance of the relevance to art and *belles-lettres* of the dynamic subconscious. He must have known the consequences.

He debates in chapter I "Teorija snov-simvolov" ("the Theory of Dream Symbols") to what extent Freudian psychoanalysis can be used in Marxist literary

¹⁰⁶ "Freudianism and Art". Maguire 1987:205ff. argued that Voronskij used Grigor'ev as a proxy for his own views (p.213), but seemed to underestimate that Voronskij rejected Freudianism as an alternative to Marxism also in literary analysis. Cf. also the translation and brief commentary by Choate 1998:173-201 who offers an interesting account of Freudianism's reception in Soviet Russia, including a commentary on Trockij's early familiarity from Vienna with Freud (p.200ff.); cf. also Broué (1988: 133-134).

¹⁰⁷ Choate 1998:173.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. G.Dajan's article "2-j psichonevrologičeskij s"ezd" in *KN* 1924#2(19):155-166 and #3(29):223-238, as well as A.Zalkind's article "Frejdizm i marksizm" in *KN* 1924(4(21):163-186.

¹⁰⁹ Choate 1987:211-215.

¹¹⁰ Cf. my commentary in a footnote under 4.2.9 relating to Best 1995.

analysis. The occasion is an article by I. Grigor'ev "Psichoanaliz kak metod issledovanija chudožestvennoj literatury" immediately preceding his own article in the same issue of *KN*. Briefly, Voronskij deplores Grigor'ev's acceptance of the theory of the dynamic subconscious and his readiness to interpret works of art as manifestations of dream symbols. Voronskij opposes the Freudian proposition that subconscious sentiments of a sexual nature from the artists's early childhood are later transformed into dream symbols. The artist is seen to overcome his forbidden feelings; he translates them through the special language of his fantasy, but, Voronskij argues, then Freudian reality is only an instrument, a symbol. The conscious "I" is thus the slave of the subconscious, chaotic "it" (*bessoznatel'naja stichija*).¹¹¹ He notes that Freud's negligence of external factors working on the conscious "I" contradicts not only the realism propounded by Belinskij, Černyševskij and Plechanov but also the realism of writers like Tolstoj, Balzac, Flaubert and even Zola.

Pursuing this line Voronskij infers that if art is reduced to dream symbols, then scientific disciplines should also be seen as manifestations of dream symbols, since art and science despite their differences both address the same reality. The materialist understanding of art, however, has always maintained that art does not differ from science in terms of the object under examination, only in the treatment of the object. In this perspective, Voronskij states, reality becomes just an instrument, a symbol, at best stimulating our sentiments and perceptions, an idea which Voronskij finds absurd. Grigor'ev's attempts to reconcile Freudian psychoanalysis with Marxism conflict with the fact that the most important question in Marxism is the relationship between cognition and being, between subject and object. No progress is possible in philosophy, science and art if this question remains unclarified, Voronskij states.

Voronskij is clearly disturbed by the dominating role of subjectivism in the Freudian paradigm and the perceived resulting elimination of objective criteria, which are seen to preclude realistic art. He sees a possible alliance between Freudian subjectivism and *Na postu* assertions that all art is subjective. In contrast with such views, he argues that adherents of Marxist materialism ascribe not only a subjective,

¹¹¹ *KN* 1925#7(32):242.

but also an objective significance to our feelings and perceptions; these reflect reality both in science and in art, not as hieroglyphs and symbols but as expressions of reality. Our rendering of reality truly replicates reality, but since reality is endlessly more variegated than its reflections in our psyche, Voronskij argues, the object is never synonymous with the subject. Moreover, our knowledge of reality even today remains limited. The reflections in our psyche are not symbols, i.e. conditioned, random signs covering only concealed intentions. On the contrary, he argues, they are quite exact, true and objective; adherents of this view, Voronskij assures, will also find in works of art exactitude, truth and consistency with reality, without neglecting intentions. Certain *Na postu* critics, Voronskij adds, who view art as only a means of emotional contamination seek support in idealistic and agnostic theories like Freudian psychoanalysis and ignore the basic relationship between cognition and being.¹¹²

Turning to the concept of truth in art and science, he quotes from a volume by Le Dantec, *Poznanie i soznanie*. Here it is alleged i.a. that truth in art, as distinct from science, is exclusively subjective, a view Voronskij rejects, claiming that scientific truth is a controversial issue even among scientists. In fact subjectivism at times seems stronger in science than in art, Voronskij asserts, exemplifying his point by declaring that Marx's theory of surplus value (i.e. science) is more disputed than Puškin's *Kavkazkij plennik* and Tolstoj's *Cholstomer* (i.e. art). Truth is not only applicable in science but also in art, Voronskij affirms, adding that the view of art as exclusively subjective, as in Freudian psychoanalysis, is alien to Marxism.¹¹³

In chapter II "Namerenie i dejstvitel'nost'" (Intention and Reality) Voronskij questions the primacy attributed by Freudians to basal impulses and intentions. Whereas Freudians view feelings, conceptions and thoughts only as expressions of intentions and impulses, Marxists believe in the existence of a world independent of us, ante-dating our intentions and impulses. In relation to art, Freudians usually limit their analysis to the various symbols behind which they see concealed the artist's

¹¹² *ibid.* p.244.

¹¹³ *ibid.* p.245. The sentence "*ponjatie istina imeet značenie ne tol'ko v nauke, no i v iskusstve*" is italicized, whereas in Voronskij 1987a:489 it is not. This again is an (minor) example of unexplained text revision. There are several other similar, minor, unexplained revisions in this article.

unconscious impulses. In this they ignore, Voronskij emphasizes, whether and how reality is expressed, and this error generates a completely false view of the relationship between human behaviour and impulses in relation to cognition.

Yet this is not to say, Voronskij qualifies, that realists deny that hidden and overt emotional impulses play a significant role in the creative acts of the artist and scientist. On the contrary, he acquiesces that desire is fundamental to cognition, including artistic cognition, a view he states that both Engels and Marx subscribed to, the latter in his 2nd thesis on Feuerbach.¹¹⁴ Freudians limit their analysis to sexual desire, whereas Marxism - which has long recognized the subconscious - holds that other impulses such as hunger, cold, and social instincts are normally of at least equal importance. In contrast with Freudians who claim that the subconscious only contains depraved, atavistic urges, Marxists maintain that the subconscious is much more variegated and rich, with e.g. social instincts, solidarity, self-sacrifice, and bravery.

Digressing, Voronskij states that in the case of an artist who hates the revolution, e.g. anti-Soviet emigré Russians like Gippius and others, Freudian psychoanalysis would uncover sadism, repellent sexual urges and the like projected into their art. Stating that such artists' rendering of the revolution is false, he adduces that their intentions and behaviour did not correspond to what he terms the "objective course of social and historical development". This inconsistency is seen to have occasioned these artists' distorted perspective of reality. Conversely, he argues that the intentions and behaviour of artists who support the proletarian revolution assist them in rendering, more or less correctly, revolutionary reality - depending on the artist's talent and power. The role of the critic is in both cases reduced to assessing the artist's intentions, but of equal importance is the clarification of how these intentions have influenced their portrayal of reality.

Voronskij links the Freudian understanding of the conscious "I" as the slave of the unconscious, chaotic "it" (*bessoznatel'naja stichija*) to subjectivism, which he imputes to Proletku'lt and *Na postu*. To *Na postu*, class intention is paramount, and they deny any objective element in our consciousness. They view objectivity only as

¹¹⁴ *ibid.* p. 247.

a dispassionate and indifferent attitude in the artist and scientist, and as soon as one reflects on the depiction of reality in a work of art, Voronskij states, this unleashes *Na postu* cries of violations of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In chapter III "Bessoznatel'noe" (The Unconscious) Voronskij accedes that Grigor'ev is right on one point: Freud's theory of the dynamic subconscious is partly, but not wholly, a fruitful proposition in the area of individual psychology. Intuition and instinct are vital, Voronskij asserts, adding that intuition is our actively working subconscious. He claims that intuitive truths are reliable, non-falsifiable, and do not demand logical verification. In fact they can seldom be verified logically because they arise at an early stage in the subconscious and thereafter appear suddenly and unexpected in our consciousness, seemingly independent of the "I". The role of the subconscious has never been denied by Marxists, neither in psychology nor in art, Voronskij declares, adding that most valuable aspects of Freud's teaching have already been studied by Marxism, e.g. how illusory rationalism can conceal hidden motives.

[...]. Teorija dinamičeskogo bessoznatel'nogo učit, dal'se, s očen' bol'šoj osmotritel'nost'ju odnosit'sja k racionalističeskim tolkovanijam motivov i postupkov geroev i personažej analiziruemogo proizvedenija. Kritiki, v tom čisle i marksisty, inogda trebujut ot chudožnika, čtoby on jasno, vnjatno i razumno obosnovyval dejstva i postupki svoich geroev. [...]. Tol'ko čut'em ugadyvaetsja i ocenivaetsja sploš' i rjadom, naskol'ko vnutrenne motivirovani i soglasny s prirodnoj geroja te ili inye ego postupki. Osobyje trudnosti vstajut pri analize proizvedenij pisatelja, u kotorogo irracional'noe načalo v gerojach dejstvuet naibolee aktivno. Takovy, naprimer, Dostoevskij, Šekspir. Iz etogo že vytekaet, čto peredať drugomu estetičeskiju ocenku, osnovannuju na čut'e, ili analitičeski onestis' k nej, podčas delo sovsem ne legkoe. Takaja predača vosmožna tol'ko pri uslovij *sozvučnosti* [...].¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ *ibid.* p.251 ([...]. The theory of the dynamic subconscious teaches one, moreover, to treat with great perception rationalist interpretations of the motives of protagonists and persons in an analyzed work. Critics, including Marxists, occasionally require from the artist a clear, intelligible and judicious explanation of the protagonists' actions and deeds. [...]. Only flair allows one thoroughly to probe and assess the extent to which such or such a deed by the protagonist is internally motivated and consistent with the protagonists' nature. Particular difficulties arise in the analysis of works by writers whose protagonists are marked most by irrationality. Such are e.g. Dostoevskij and Shakespeare. It follows that to communicate to another an aesthetic evaluation based on flair, or to adopt an analytical approach to this evaluation, is at times quite difficult. Such a communication can only be possible if there is *consonance* [...]).

By thus defending the complex psychology of literary protagonists, Voronskij seems to accept the difficulties in interpreting their conduct and in transmitting the aesthetical experience. Ultimately, one must rely on flair and consonance. He compares Plechanov's monograph on Ibsen with Freud's psychoanalysis of Rosmersholm, claiming the former is by far the superior analysis in view of its broad sociological approach, while Freud is only narrowly focussed on individual sexual aberrations. Comparing the work of Tolstoj and Dostoevskij, he notes that Tolstoj "snimal pokrovy" from all that was false and untrue in his time. Dostoevskij took us through "the cellars of human emotions and thoughts, harangued and tore at himself and his readers." He claims that psychoanalysis therefore existed in art long before Freud. Neither Tolstoj nor Dostoevskij claimed that psychopathological sexual desires (the Oedipus complex) determined human behaviour, or that unconscious intentions and motives, inherently anti-social, filled our conscience and guided our actions. Their character portrayal was far from monotonous. Voronskij praises Tolstoj in particular as a true dialectic materialist, and even the more subjective Dostoevskij who is closer to the Freudians, knew that our personality cannot be separated from its environment.

In chapter IV "Vyvody" (Conclusions) Voronskij concludes that Freudian psychoanalysis is incompatible with Marxism also in view of its limited focus on individual sexual aberrations:

[...]. Učenie o dinamičeskom bessoznatel'nom, povidimomu, cennoe i plodotvornoe dlja psichiatrov, nosit, tem ne menee, odnostoronnij karakter. Ono giperbolizuet bessoznatel'nuju stichiju v individe, otricaja aktivnost' soznatel'nych impul'sov. Bessoznatel'noe frejdisty svodjat isključitel'no k seksual'nym motivam, ne otvodja nikakogo mesta inym ne menee mogućim pobuždenijam. Seksual'nye impul'sy obnimajut soboj u nich atavističeskie i patologičeskie vlečenija: narcizm, Ėdipov-kompleks, gomoseksualizm, lesbijskiju ljubov' i. t. d. [...].¹¹⁶

The few positive elements he sees in Freudian psychoanalysis are already known to Marxism, e.g. the theory of the dynamic subconscious. Russian adherents

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*p.259 ([...]. The teaching of the dynamic subconscious, obviously valuable and fruitful for psychiatrists, is nevertheless biased. It exaggerates the subconscious element in people and scorns active, conscious impulses. Freudians impute the subconscious exclusively to sexual motives, not leaving any role for other, no less powerful motives. Freudians fuse sexual impulses with atavistic, pathological forces: narcissism, the Oedipus complex, homosexuality, lesbianism etc. [...]).

of Freud risk interpreting artists as basically motivated by patricide, an urge to rape, etc. Voronskij attributes the popularity of Freudian ideas partly to a false analogy between Marxism and e.g. the Freudian teaching of unconscious motives and their rationalisation and sublimation. Freudian psychoanalysis appears attractive, he states, particularly to intellectual waverers, and its popularity can also be attributed to an increased interest in personal problems. Some communists may also be disenchanted with the rational character of the proletariat's struggle under NEP. In a PS he adds some comments on a recent lecture by Friče which supports his own conclusions.

It is apparent that Voronskij's argumentation in this article mostly revolves around the artistic parameter 7) Psychological character portrayal. As such the article illustrates his growing concern with the credibility of literary protagonists. To the extent that the character depth of literary protagonists is seen as an integral part of realism, which there is all reason to do given Voronskij's frequent comments on Tolstoj's "snjatje pokrovov" technique, the article is also a comment on 6) Realism. For these reasons, the article may be considered an "artistic" article. Still, by asserting the superiority of Marxism over Freudian psychoanalysis both in a wider historical, political and social framework and also in literary analysis Voronskij is clearly also delivering an ideological message. To the extent that the RKP(b) is seen as the custodian of Marxism, one could therefore argue that the article is a affirmation of the ideological parameter 2) The VKP(b).

Finally, we may add that Voronskij's exploration of the essentially non-Marxist concepts of "intuition", "irrationality" and "the dynamic subconscious" subsequently set their mark on his literary portraits (e.g. Proust). His rejection of Freudian psychoanalysis did not prevent him in 1928 from ascribing Belyj's religious mysticism ("pathological deliriums") to a traumatic childhood. Oulanoff claims that Voronskij "redefined psychoanalysis by claiming that "societal instinct" also belonged to the area of the subconscious, and he went on to use the subconscious as a tool to explore the hidden ideological motivation of behaviour".¹¹⁷ While Oulanoff's assertion may be somewhat categorical, it is clear that Voronskij's preoccupation with the role of the individual cognition process in artistic creation in

¹¹⁷ Oulanoff 1985:160.

effect denigrated - intentionally or not - the Marxist class paradigm.

There are few if any direct references to the Bible here, possibly there is an implied ironical reference to religion when Freudism is equated with "the mighty metaphysical systems of Plato and Schopenhauer etc". ¹¹⁸

4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" ¹¹⁹

This article with its ominous title first appeared in *KN* 1925#10(35):254-265, cf. 7.3. It was included by Voronskij in *Literaturnye zapisi* (1926) but was excluded from Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b, cf. 7.4. It is subdivided into 2 numbered, untitled, chapters.

Here his disillusionment is obvious. He states that under the influence of literary infighting, poetry has come to a standstill and prose is marked by fellow traveller aloofness and escapism into the past, matched by proletarian hack work. To remedy this deplorable state of affairs, Voronskij exhorted writers to deliver more heroism, be more cultivated, show more social idealism and more psychological insight and elaboration.

In chapter I he catalogues a number of outstanding literary works over the last year by Babel', Bulgakov, Veselij, Gladkov (*Cement*), Gor'kij, Grigor'ev, Vs.Ivanov, Klyčkov (*Sacharnij nemeč*), Pil'njak (*Zavoloč'e*), Prišvin, Romanov, Sejfullina (*Virineja*), by A.Tolstoj (*Golubye goroda*), Fedin, Ol'ga Forš, as well as the poems of Esenin, Kazin, Majakovskij, Svetlov and Tichonov. Some promising newcomers have appeared, e.g. Akul'shin, Guber, Zavadovskij, Evdokimov, Anna Karavaeva, Korobov, Nikoforov, Rešetov, Tverjak, Širjaev, Fadeev and Utkin.

However, the situation is far from ideal, he notes, notably in poetry, which fails to enthuse an indifferent readership. Voronskij finds that publishing houses now boycott poetry, which as a result is not available on the market. The reader now prefers boulevard novels and literary fantasies. The readers' indifference must be blamed on the writer and the critic. He finds fault with Esenin and Majakovskij's

¹¹⁸ *KN* 1925#7(32):244. This is part of a quotation by Voronskij from Grigor'ev's book and does not reflect any familiarity on the part of Voronskij with e.g. Plato, cf. my comments on the Antiquity in parts 1-3.

¹¹⁹ "On that which we do not have".

repetitive casting around, while Tichonov is seen to be hampered by his attraction for the pyrotechnics of Pasternak and Aseev. He feels that Bezymenskij writes badly, but Kazin has some good poems. The constructivists led by Sil'vinskij have faltered, while the Kuznica poets have lost their group identity. Most of the Pereval poets are still trying to define themselves. Among the youth Utkin stands out, but not so much as could be hoped for. All in all, poetry is described as bleak.¹²⁰

Contemporary prose, in Voronskij's opinion, is richer and more substantial than poetry, and it is no coincidence that Russian emigrés pay so much attention to it; but neither in prose is all well. Over the last 1½-2 years Babel', Leonov and Pant. Romanov have come into prominence, and Voronskij finds that they share an abundance of calm and dispassion. All three, he states, avoid man with his hopes and doubts, his evaluations.

Voronskij identifies the most significant works of the years 1922-23: *Golyj god* by Pil'njak, several works by Vs.Ivanov, Malyškin, *Nedelja* by Libedinskij, *Peregnoj* by Sejfullina, several poems by Tichonov, and he states that recent prose pales in comparison. The fading of revolutionary romanticism and enthusiasm, the victory of dispassionate depiction over technique, the search for new ways - all these are in evidence, he finds. As an example, he credits Pil'njak with having learned a lot. The romanticism of *Golyj god* is gone; he has abandoned peasants and provincial citizens and now writes stories with maritime, aviation, English and Turkish settings. He also comments on why Vs.Ivanov and Sejfullina have become more withdrawn. Turning to the proletarian writers Nikiforov, Feduzkov, Evdokimov, he finds them guilty of simplified *bytovizm*,¹²¹ i.e.excessive preoccupation with everyday themes - "kitchen-sinkism", typified by an inability to experiment, construct a theme, carelessness in terms of the formal artistic aspects. The material also oppresses Libedinskij in his *Komissary*.

Others are seen as guilty of stereotypes and carelessness in their unconvincing praise of the revolution, Komintern, the communist party, the Komsomol. To Voronskij hack work (*chaltura*) - not fellow travellers - is the most dangerous

¹²⁰ KN 1925#10(35):255.

¹²¹ *ibid.* p. 257.

phenomenon in modern art.¹²² His disillusionment is obvious when he cites drunken scandals, debauchery, confessions, gossip and envy, expulsions, arrogance, fights with former friends and colleagues, wicked scheming. These quarrels frighten away the young worker-peasant from literature. Voronskij concludes part I pessimistically, finding it tragic that nobody pays attention to the threat to literature posed by banal hack work.¹²³

In chapter II Voronskij diagnoses what he sees as the main "enemies" in literature, i.e. superficial feelings and thoughts, naive depictions devoid of inner force and desire. These qualities do not prevail in contemporary art, he qualifies, but they exist, and they are not sufficiently analyzed. He deplors the continuing presence of a dismal Chechovian provincial way of life, discernable in A.Tolstoj's recent story *Golubye goroda*, which Voronskij sees as the best A.Tolstoj has written, artistically and linguistically, over the last years, cf. part 5. He also cites Bulgakov, who is seen to reject the Soviet way of life, and others like Sergej Klyčkov, who in vain are escaping into the old half-fairy tale country side, cf. part 5. Essentially also Sejfullina writes about the catastrophic, primitive, interpretation of communism in *Vstreča*, cf. part 5.

In response to the question what does Soviet literature need, Voronskij advances 4 points: a) more heroism: The artist must elevate us above reality, without letting reality out of sight. Ample material is found in the past, e.g. in the Bolshevik pre-revolutionary underground, the tough school of professional revolutionaries. With few exceptions - e.g. *K novoj žizni* by Rešetov and *Sedye dni* by Nikiforov - no monumental reflection exists in art of the Bolshevik underground in which he had taken part. Matters are somewhat better, he feels, with respect to the themes of civil war, the Entente, the mobilization of workers and the party, victory and defeat. There was a short moment in 1922 and the first half of 1923 when it seemed that early successful attempts at artistic expression of the years of the civil war would leave a solid and lasting trace in literature: *Bronepoezd*, *Cvetnye vetra* of Vs.Ivanov, *Padenie Daira* by Malyškin, *Peregnoj* by Sejfullina, *Nedelja* by Libedinskij and

¹²² *ibid.* p.258.

¹²³ *ibid.*

poems by Tichonov are listed as promising examples at the time. New themes appeared as these proved to be a short-lived phenomenon. Although some young writers have returned to themes of 1918-21, this has had little effect on today's literature, he finds, because most of these works only involve external events of that time. An exception is Babel' with his miniatures. Interesting are also *Čapaev* and *Mjatež* by Furmanov, though they are mostly reminiscences.¹²⁴

In an interesting paragraph Voronskij reflects on the positive economic and cultural growth in the republic¹²⁵ He describes the kulak thriving in the countryside, and adds that our nationalized industry is also growing in strength. A new generation of party - and non-party - workers is emerging, gripped by the pathos of the new construction, united in their fidelity towards socialist ideals combined with "businesslike, energetic americanism". *Cement* by Gladkov illustrates this, Voronskij adds; he notes its defects but he concludes that its most valuable feature is strong, healthy romanticism.¹²⁶

Cement is worth mentioning, he states, because Soviet artists largely do not take part in economic and cultural building. They only very exceptionally know and take an interest in the Soviet economic advances. The opening of new factories, the reconstruction of plants, the building of electricity stations are assumed not to be suited as literary themes. Voronskij rejects this, because to the artist there are no themes too low or too exalted, just like there are no characters or types which are not worthy of being at the centre of artistic attention. Contempt for low themes, he believes, reflects naked and abstract aestheticism.

Voronskij concedes that E.Zamjatin was right when he once complained that daily details, not the contemporary, prevail in Soviet Russian literature. A naive, childish realism dominates along with a chase for the wicked, daily newspaper material. In contrast with this Voronskij at this point offers his literary aesthetical credo:

¹²⁴ *ibid.* pp.260-261.

¹²⁵ Cf. 3.2.5 regarding Trockij's new responsibilities for electro-technical and scientific-industrial matters from May 1925.

¹²⁶ *ibid.* p.261.

[...]. Iskustvo svojim ob'ektom imeet dejstvitel'nost', - no priroda čuvstva i mysli ljudej, ich postupki tol'ko togda stanovjatsja predmetom iskusstva, kogda oni vozvodjatsja v fakt éstetičeskogo dostoinstva, v perl sozdanija po prekrasnomu vyraženuju Gogolja. Dejstvitel'nost', čuvstva i mysli ljudej, ich povedenija dolžny byt' propuščeny črez ètu èstetičeskiju prizmu, vzjatyje sami po sebe, vne ètogo oni ešče ne javljajutsja ob'ektom dlja chudožnika. Vot počemu ponjatie prekrasnogo javljaetsja rešajuščim v iskusstve. Ètogo u nas splošč' i rjadom ne ponimajut. [...].¹²⁷

During the age of Puškin and Gogol', Voronskij observes, writers were not called writers (*pisatel'*), but creators (*sočinitel'*), a term which corresponds better to the nature of artistic creation. The creator stood out from the mere writer and describer in that he elevated reality aesthetically. Today the writer - not the creator - prevails, Voronskij notes, giving Pil'njak and Veselij as poignant examples, one a declared fellow traveller, the other a young declared proletarian writer. Both are strong in observation and language, but lacking in artistic imagination, creativity, the ability to convert observation into the aesthetically resounding, in Voronskij's opinion.

In his assessment Babel', Leonov and Bulgakov more than others are creators. Generally, in almanacs and collections, the most blatant immature everyday description predominates, he states. Exhibition windows are full of translations of foreign works not only as a result of the absence of international author rights in Soviet Russia, which allows publishing without paying writers' fees. Compared to Soviet novels, most foreign works translated in 2-3 editions have clever plots, there is thought and artistic creativity.¹²⁸ Voronskij therefore calls on Soviet writers to become *sočnateľi*. When requested to pay attention to the revolutionary underground, to the years of civil war, to the economic and cultural building, they must not deliver mere petty everyday descriptions, impotent naturalism etc.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ *ibid.* p.262 ([...] Art has reality as its object, - but the nature of people's feelings and thoughts, their actions, only become art when they are elevated to facts of aesthetic worth, to pearls of creation in the beautiful expression of Gogol'. Reality, people's feelings and thoughts, their behaviour have to be sifted through this aesthetical prism, without which they are still not objects for the artist. This is why the idea of the beautiful is decisive in art. This is nearly always not understood in our country. [...]).

¹²⁸ *ibid.* p.263.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*

The second point Voronskij prescribes for Soviet literature is b) A heightened sense of culture (*kul'turnost'*). He makes an analogy between culture and magic. Like magic, culture awakens the fantasy of the poet and prose writer; it reveals unique discoveries in different scientific fields which open up unusual pictures of the future, permitting us to reconstruct the "normal" worldview; it teaches us anew to perceive and feel the world. The writer has to be up to the scientific ideas of his age. Regrettably, Voronskij adds, the overwhelming majority of young Soviet artists distinguish themselves through a striking ignorance and lack of culture, assuming that advances in science are not relevant to their craft. Soviet poets and prose writers never read books on chemistry, physics, biology, psychology, sociology, he states, adding that only Zamjatin and Bulgakov are familiar with the natural sciences.¹³⁰

Thirdly, he is convinced that Soviet literature needs an infusion of c) more social idealism. He states rhetorically that writers must "yearn for the great common human ideals of our century".¹³¹ Though some claim that this is already the case, Voronskij states frankly that, in terms of *belles-lettres*, the press remains monopolized by the communist party; the communists only allow those to be printed who conform to their ideology. Although there are works imbued with "the best ideas and feelings of our century", more often than not many works are tainted by "the affected, external, insincere and false".¹³² He sees two literary extremes: some agitate and propagate in clichés and stereotypes; others are content with directionless, dispassionate observation. Voronskij deplores the absence of the ideals of brotherhood - unity and victory - which deprive the artist of motivation. In Voronskij's view the artist must be able to love, hate, laugh, grieve, burn with the love and hate, indignation and laughter, joy and anger of living, but this is largely precluded since "man is not visible in contemporary art".¹³³

In a reference to the need to emulate the classics, Voronskij quotes allegations that the contemporary writer has expended the ability of the old masters to verbally

¹³⁰ *ibid.*

¹³¹ *ibid.*

¹³² *ibid.* pp.263-264.

¹³³ *ibid.* p.264.

illuminate the typical through the force of artistic details. Agreeing in this, he seeks an answer in the new writer's insufficient *emotional* perception of *concrete* man. The characteristic detail, e.g. the ears of Karenin, requires that the writer *feels* the hero, Voronskij emphasizes, which presupposes that the writer is capable of transformation, is capable of identifying with his protagonist. He finds it unfitting that Soviet literature has completely lost the average peasant-worker, the "hero of our revolution". It follows that writers must remotivate themselves : not through schools, groups and movements but by penetrating through post-revolutionary working life, e.g. among the assembly-line worker and peasant.

Finally, Voronskij advocates d) more psychological meditation and elaboration. He is aware of the problem which confronts the artist in the shape of "social command", which threatens the artist's liberty. But he partly defends the concept by stating that most to blame are those who treat "social command" as a commodity, forgetting that social command requires generations of work and cannot be fulfilled at the will of impatient critics and efficient editors. He links their "vulgar" interpretation of social command to a general state of non-cultivation and to the bureaucratic aspects of Soviet society.

Voronskij emphasizes that his comments relate to some *common* insufficiencies from which contemporary *belles-lettres* suffer. Both fellow travellers and proletarians indulge in naive everyday description (*naivnyj bytovizm*). Proletarians indulge in agitation and abstractions, while fellow travellers are inclined to dispassionate observation. In both cases you completely miss living man, and hack work is therefore omnipresent.

Digressing into politics, Voronskij states that the sociological equivalent to these literary manifestations in literature is easy to discern in the uncontrolled adaptation to the market with its philistine tastes, NEP with its way of life, bureaucracy, and the common lack of culture. In a final paragraph - somewhat awkward in view of the article's pessimism - he unconvincingly notes that things are nevertheless improving, without being specific. ¹³⁴

This broadly conceived article embraces most of our 8 parameters and is in this

¹³⁴ *ibid.* p.265.

sense the article which is most expressive of Voronskij's literary aesthetics discussed till now. Moreover, he defines his literary aesthetical credo. By prescribing a) more heroism, b) a heightened sense of culture, c) more social idealism and d) more psychological meditation and elaboration Voronskij is in a sense calling into question the justification of 1) The October Revolution, 2) The VKP(b), 3) Soviet society and making his case for 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism, 7) Psychological character portrayal The only two parameters not specifically invoked are 4) Slavophilism and 8) Language mastery. This article accordingly cannot be described as either ideological or artistic; it is in fact both. Finally, there are no references to the Bible in this article.

4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitatel' (Chudožestvennaja proza za istekšij god)" ¹³⁵

The article was first published in *KN* 1927#1(48):226-239, cf. 7.3. It was reprinted by Voronskij in *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna* (1927b), but was subsequently excluded from Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b, cf. 7.4. In contrast with other long articles, the 4 chapters are not numbered or titled.

As in the foregoing article, Voronskij strikes a pessimistic note, stating that Soviet literature as per 1926 has stagnated. ¹³⁶ Writers avoid contemporary issues, seeking refuge in the past, causing distress among the readership. Voronskij wants an amalgamation of realism with "good, healthy revolutionary romanticism" , anticipating a major element later favoured by Gor'kij in socialist realism from the early 1930s. Claiming his critics were obfuscating his dissatisfaction with pessimism, he leaves the impression that he saw a considerable level of alienation between the writer and reader in Soviet literature.

More specifically, in chapter I, he notes that at first sight literary affairs are fine. He adduces some major works over the last year: Gor'kij (*Delo Artamonovyč-* "a solid volume"), Čapygin's 3-volume *Razin Stepan*, Pant. Romanov's 3-volume *Rus'*, Veresaev's 3- volume *Puškin v žžni*, A.Belyj's 2-volume *Moskva*, A.Tolstoj's

¹³⁵ "Writer, Book and Reader (Prose Fiction over the Last Year)".

¹³⁶ He fails to reflect on the increased literacy figures and economic improvement in 1926 noted in the introduction 1.0.

2-volume *Giperboloid inženera Garina*, Evdokimov's *Kolokola*, Kalinninikov's 3-volume *Moščā*, Klyčkov's *Čertuchinskij balakir'* and Demidov's *Vichr'*. Poetry is also seen to be marked by large volumes (Kazin, Bagrickij, Utkin, Pasternak, Bezymenskij). He mentions that publishing houses are signing contracts for collected works: Gor'kij, A.Tolstoj, Sejfullina, Prišvin, Neverov, Gladkov, A.Sobol' and others. He finds that the novel (thick book) in 1926 has gained ground, which he believes shows improved welfare. Both the writer and reader now for the first time have time for literature.¹³⁷

Yet writers remain strongly directed to the past, Voronskij states, e.g. Gor'kij's *Delo Artamonovyč*, A.Belyj's *Moskva* and Pant. Romanov's *Rus'*, Prišvin's *Junost' Alpatova*, Klyčkov's *Čertuchinskij balakir'*, Tynjanov's *Kjuchlja* and Evdokimov's *Kolokola*. Elaborating on the latter work, he says that it describes the underground workers, the illegal press, noting that the book is particularly useful to the youth who now only have troubled ideas. Turning to the past, however, can also be seen as a convenient way of avoiding more difficult contemporary issues, he warns. In his opinion the reader would prefer that writers as Gor'kij, Veresaev, Prišvin fully turned to the present and addressed contemporary issues.¹³⁸ The new reader, Voronskij feels, is young; the war years taught him first and foremost to act. He is not culturally mature, nor inclined to contemplation; rather he is seen as practical and utilitarian and expects writing to relate to his work. The writer, by contrast, is described as complex; he collects a variety of material for his works, and old legends, superstitions, tales and historical events apparently often correspond more to his design than contemporary reality, Voronskij laments. Yet both the reader and writer are right in their own ways, he concedes; the refusal by many writers to address contemporary issues can be attributed to violent criticism, literary feuds and the vulgar application of the social command.

In chapter II he identifies the young post-revolutionary writer as somewhat more responsive to reader demands. Seemingly contradicting his comments on writers turning to the past, Voronskij cites a number of writers and works dedicated

¹³⁷ KN 1927#1(48):227.

¹³⁸ *ibid.* p.229.

to contemporary issues: Fedin, Ognev's *Dnevnik Kostja Rjabceva*, Pant. Romanov, L.Zavadovskij, L.Sejfullina, Kataev, Lidin, Malaškin, Tverjak, Guber, Bražnev, Novikov-Priboj, Zuev and others. Yet these also have shortcomings, he finds, in that the interior world of the artist is not discernable. Others remain captivated by naive naturalism, confusing writing with description (Grabar, Karpov), while a third group has good intentions and will, but electrification, co-operatives, industrialization, old-fashioned unions both in poems and in prose are conceived of as if by manual workers and semi-literates.

As a consequence, Voronskij asserts, the majority of stories, tales, poems of young writers and poets all suffer from one common weakness, noted earlier: the predominance of of an external, shallow, occasionally straight-forward descriptive approach to the shaping of people, types, events. They lack what Voronskij terms an *organic* approach.¹³⁹ The accumulated material in stories and tales over the past years demands greater generalization, psychologism, more intuitive internal penetration. What is needed is that the writer show man in his *dialectic*, in the living development of his emotions and thoughts, with all his occasionally painful disharmonic contradictions, doubts and distortions. Too often, though, the writer just presents the man in a stationary condition, resting, in a prepared state to the reader.

Voronskij exemplifies by referring to how communists are depicted. They regulate the economy, make speeches, are exceedingly busy, hurry from one meeting to another, convince, restore - but these are mostly superficial depictions, as if communists were made of cast-iron, alien to others, stereotypes in gesture and deed. Their internal world, the dialectics of their secret feelings, remains unknown. In their defence, he adds, writers claim that positive characters are the most difficult to make, forgetting that with Gogol', Gončarov and Dostoevskij positive types were also conceived, not taken wholly out of real life.

He cautions against the consequences to literature of desisting from adopting a new approach:

¹³⁹ *ibid.* p.231.

[...]. *Nado povesti bor'bu za organičeskij metod v chudožestve. Nužno naučit'sja izobražat' ljudej i sobytija v dialektičeskom processe, v živoj, v žiznennoj dinamike ich čuvstv, v stanovlenii, ne otryvajas' ot bytija. Sejčas nužna takaja škola, takoe napravlenie. Inače naša literatura ne sdvinetsja s mertvoj točki. Čitateľ po-prežnemu budet čuvstvovat' sebja neudovletvorennyj, a pisatel', [...] budet netoroplivo prodolžat' mesti bumažki.[...].*¹⁴⁰

In chapter III he discusses whether heightened literary psychologism will lead to unhealthy literary self-analysis, self-adornment. He sees such a possibility, but states that if this occurs it is because the atmosphere among writers is not a joyous one. Proletarian writers, Voronskij finds, need more than others to immerse themselves in the dialectics in art, psychologism and experimentation, and they are less in risk of becoming hampered by psychological decadence since by temperament they are more sprightly (*bodrej*) than fellow travellers. Convincing symptoms of the prevailing sad moods can in Voronskij's view be found e.g. in Vs. Ivanov's *Tajnoe tajnyh* and K.Fedin's *Narovčatskaja chronika*. He mentions that in *Dnevnik Kostja Rjabceva* - despite its sprightly tone and gentle humour - N.Ognev reproduces the absurdity, the confusion, the dreariness of daily life in school. He also cites Lidin, Kataev, Malaškin, Guber, Zavadovskij and Pant. Romanov, who all in some way reflect the prevailing despondency among writers he has diagnosed, which he also sees among writers like Nikiforov, Barsukov, Grabar', Savič.¹⁴¹

As for themes, the province and village are playing an ever greater part, Voronskij finds, deploring that they are threatening to become dominant. The backwoods is creeping out at all times: ignorance, stupidity, isolation from cultural centres, despondency and monotony of life. What has happened to our partisan volunteers, he inquires, the heroic front battles, the leather jackets? They are only respectfully noted as if they stood apart from real life. In a reference to Gladkov's *Cement*, he states that Gleb and Daša are ever more displaced by a grey provincial good-for-nothingness (*nedotykomka*).

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.* p. 232 ([...]. *It is necessary to wage a war for the organic method in art. It is essential to learn to conceive of people and events in a dialectical process, in the living, life-like dynamics of their feelings, coming into being, not separated from daily life. We need such a school, such a direction now. Otherwise our literature will not move from a dead point. The reader will as earlier experience dissatisfaction, whereas the writer [...] will leisurely continue to shuffle notes.[...].*)

¹⁴¹ *ibid.* p.233.

He poses the question whether the influx of the provincial, the village, the backwoods and the lacklustre tales about these backwoods reflect a retreat by the fellow traveller cadres from the revolution, whether they have stopped believing in the revolution? Denying that this is a general trend, he affirms that the Soviet writer remains firm in his opinions of the October Revolution and the Soviet Republic. To prove this he adds that it is no coincidence that A.Belyj in the preface to *Moskva* (1926) informs the reader that in the novel he intends to show the rotting of the foundations of the pre-revolutionary way of life and individual consciousness - into a bourgeois, petty bourgeois and intellectual circle. Neither is it coincidental that the All-Russian Union of Writers (VSP) has declared its solidarity with the resolution of CK VKP(b) of June 1925 on literary policy.

The major reason behind the sorrowful mood among writers, he maintains, is that the transition from the heroic period of the civil war and war communism to the years of calm and organizational work has been too sudden: world-shaking events have been replaced by daily trifles. Another important factor is that although literature has gained significant numbers of readers, it occupies only a modest place that does not correspond to its own great significance. This glaring discrepancy is seen to be particularly noticable in the provinces, where the provincial writer leads a miserable existence. Voronskij adduces this in support of why writers are attracted to sad themes.¹⁴² Voronskij makes a case for forging realism with "revolutionary romanticism", which he sees as an antidote to the attraction of the province. Although romanticism usually is counterposed to realism, Voronskij sees no necessary contradiction here, since one finds romanticism in Gogol's realism, just as one finds realism in the romanticism of Hugo.

In chapter IV he comments on the implications to literature of the appearance of a new bourgeois under NEP: the kulak in the village and the urban NEP-man. The old writers - Gork'ij, Prišvin, Tolstoj, Šiškov, Romanov are psychologically distant from the NEP-man and the young writers Babel', Vs.Ivanov, Leonov, Fedin, Bagrickij, Ognev, Sejfullina and others are described as afraid of the "new dirt". Voronskij sees the despondency among writers as a result of this fear. He declares

¹⁴² *ibid.* p.234

he cannot cite one significant work, not one important story or tale in which the new bourgeois is idolized. The new bourgeoisie is thus limited to expressing itself indirectly in the shape of hack work and pulp fiction (*chaltura*) - which he states is thriving - especially literature for youths and teenagers. Voronskij disagrees with those who trivialize the dangers of hack work: communism, the revolution, can easily be compromised through spiritless, cliché-like and miserable propaganda art which frightens the readership. In his estimate hack work and pulp fiction which please bad taste are even more dangerous.

Voronskij is concerned that the negative attitude to the provincial, dark sides of Soviet society could easily turn into disenchantment with the revolution. People might be encouraged to believe that the revolution has swept over the Russian backwoods without leaving much trace. In a surprising analogy Voronskij quotes Ecclesiastes:

[...]. Rod prihodit i rod prochodit, a zemlja prebyvaet vo veki. Idet veter k jugu, i perechodit k severu, kružitsja na chodu svoem, i vozvraščaetsja veter na krugi svoi [...].¹⁴³

He points out that such moods, if they gained a strong place in literature, would be reactionary. Yet writers cannot ignore the backwoods, the provinces, since the Soviet Union, regrettably, remains provincial. The satire of Ščedrin, the laughter of Gogol', the bitter fold of Čechov, Gor'kij's fight with boring life, are necessary, Voronskij states, but it must be borne in mind in whose name we should fight the backwoods. In contemporary literature there is a two-fold attitude to the city and to the village Voronskij believes. Shortly after the publication of *Cement* by Gladkov Sergej Klyčkov's *Čertuchinskij balakir'* appeared and was described by Gor'kij as "an emotional uprising".¹⁴⁴ In Voronskij's estimate Klyčkov's uprising is directed towards the "iron devil", and he finds it necessary to emphasize that communists are alien to one-sided urban bourgeois culture since socialism is the elimination of the

¹⁴³ *ibid.* p.236 ([...] One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. [...] The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to its circuits [...]), cf. Ecclesiastes 1:4-6.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.* p.237.

contradiction between the town and village. Yet in comparison with the witches and forest trolls of Klyčkov, the "iron devil" already has indisputable advantages in that it is man-made and therefore fully under his control. The fear of the "iron devil" and the effort to find a troll in the forest jungle leads, in Voronskij's opinion, straight to national Asianism (*aziatčina*), temporarily modernized.¹⁴⁵

In a pen-ultimate paragraph Voronskij reflects on the production of proletarian writers over the last year; he finds this has been weaker than previously, but this is perhaps transitory. Young Fadeev stands out - he is a genuine artist. Voronskij praises Malaškin, Tverjak, finds Nikiforov uneven, concedes some points to Novikov-Priboj, praises Ljaško, acknowledges some things by Krutikov and Bražnev. The best book of all in this category remains *Strana rodnaja* by the talented A. Veselij. Voronskij offers some deprecating comments on *Na postu* whose artistic production, he finds, has been completely annihilated over the past year. With *Na postu*, there are more protestations, promises and talk than action. *Rabočij Žurnal* is dead, *Oktjabr'* is hardly breathing. It is no coincidence that among the supporters of *Oktjabr'* discussions have intensified on the need to educate oneself. Voronskij expresses his hopes that this will be for the better. Proletarian writers have an advantage, in Voronskij's opinion: they are emotionally stronger and harder, but they must move from shouts of hegemony to the heightening of artistic qualifications, not confuse a writer with a describer, not misuse clichés and standardization.

Finally, Voronskij partly rejects accusations of disbelief, pessimism and decadence levelled at himself, explaining that his critics have confused pessimism with discontent. He declares that Soviet literature is developing, but under circumstances which are complicated and unfavourable. Evasive and passive writers, their escapism into the past and the prevalence of provincial themes are in his view not coincidental. The place *belles-lettres* occupies in Soviet society is considerable but has not been strengthened. At the same time the material and judicial conditions of writers are seen to be thoroughly difficult. In consequence, writers and readers remain alienated:

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*

[...]. Žaluetsja pisatel', čto on ne nachodit otklika v čitatele, v presse, - žaluetsja čitateľ na to, čto pisatel' ne otvečacet na ego zaprosy. I ne zdes' li, ne v ustraneni li razobščennosti meždju pisatelem i čitatelem nadležit prežde vsego iskat' sredstv i putej, kotorye vypravili by to, čto est' neustroennogo, neslažennogo i neradostnogo v sovremennoj literature? [...].¹⁴⁶

In terms of the number of parameters invoked in this article, it resembles the foregoing one. Although Voronskij denies that the popularity of province and the return of the backwoods reflects that the fellow travellers avoid contemporary issues and have turned away from 1) The October Revolution, he still poses the question. Similarly he rejects the quotation from Ecclesiastes as retrograde, but still he quotes it, which he need not have done. To a large extent 2) The VKP(b), though this is not overtly stated, is seen as responsible for the unsatisfactory role of literature in Soviet society and the alienation between writer and reader, which he complains about. The thematic influx of the backwoods and the province combined with writer escapism are obviously from his point of view a negative commentary on 3) Soviet society, although he admits that the Soviet Union unfortunately remains provincial. To some extent 4) Slavophilism is present in the backwoods and province dimension, and in his comments on modernized national Asianism and also on Klyčkov's *Čertuchinskij balakir'*, as I shall discuss in part 5. Slavophilism, however, is not openly addressed. That writers have turned to the past superficially is of course a credit to 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, but not wholly; some writers have only returned to the civil war years and not to pre-revolutionary times or classical standards. It is especially 7) Psychological character portrayal that is repeatedly stressed in this article; the common absence of convincing character complexity, which he deplors, also involves 6) Realism, which therefore is also present. The only parameter which is not manifestly present in this article is 8) Language mastery. In conclusion, 7 out of 8 parameters in various ways make their presence felt in Voronskij's argumentation in this article, and it is therefore even more expressive of Voronskij's mature literary aesthetics than was the preceding article. Mixing 4 ideological and 3

¹⁴⁶ ibid. p.239 ([...]. The writer complains of a lack of response from the reader, from the press, - the reader complains about the writer not responding to his requirements. Is it not here, in the estrangement and isolation between writer and reader that one primarily needs to seek the means and ways to correct the mess, disharmony and sadness in contemporary literature? [...]).

artistic parameters, it is in fact the article which so far in our discussion summarizes most of his views on literary aesthetics.

In this article we find a quotation from the Old Testament's Ecclesiastes 1:4-6, apparently negative judging from its context. Yet it echoes the quotations from Ecclesiastes which are positive, that we find in the autobiography, This is significant because as shown in the conclusion, this is one of the three most "complete" articles in our selection involving 7 parameters, cf. diagram 4.3.1.

4.2.15 "O federaciji sovjetskich pisatelej" ¹⁴⁷

Published in *KN* 1927#4(51):214-221, this was to be Voronskij's pen-ultimate appearance in *KN*, cf. 7.3. It was reprinted by Voronskij in *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna* (1927b), but subsequently omitted from Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a and 1987b, cf. 7.4. The article is a diatribe against the VAPP-domination of FOSP, and reflects many of the same arguments as the Pereval manifesto in 7.14, to which it is closely linked chronologically and thematically.

In chapter I of its two untitled, numbered, chapters, Voronskij comments on the considerable progress made in setting up a federation of Soviet writers, which he had called for in 4.2.8 "O 'tekuščem momente' i zadačach RKP(b) v chudožestvennoj literature" (1924). As commented on in 3.2.8, Voronskij had represented VSP in the negotiations, but he soon became pessimistic since he thought the federation was only cosmetically united and on the threshold of internal quarrels and animosity.

He states that an enormous amount of work has been laid down in committees and sub-committees, manoeuvring and harmonizing viewpoints and positions. The literary organizations involved in FOSP have previously waged a merciless internecine war, and the sudden establishment of normal relations is to expect too much. Even among groups close to each other in their view of the revolution there is no agreement. What disturbs Voronskij most is that the federation does not seem to have a special *desire* to create amicable working relations. ¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ "On the Federation of Soviet Writers". Cf. also the German translation by Eimermacher 1972:339-343.

¹⁴⁸ *KN* 1927#4(51):215.

The federation, which Voronskij claims has been shaped by a small clique, lacks friendship; he sees no common trust and finds that writers have no faith in it. Writers' attitudes to it are seen to vary from indifference, through pessimism to blatant opportunism, e.g. those who only hope to secure a printing press. There are 2nd class groups and organizations in FOSP without full rights (Pereval, Kuznica, LEF).¹⁴⁹

Voronskij emphasizes that although FOSP is founded on voluntary agreement, VAPP is attempting a hegemony by using their majority vote. VAPP's attempts to command, he finds, are compounded by the arrogant behaviour of its representatives and their repeated assertion that only VAPP expresses the party line, a view to which Voronskij strongly objects. He sees no reason for his own union VSP to view VAPP as a leadership, but this is what is being expected.

A primary task for the federation, in Voronskij's opinion, is a rapprochement between proletarian writers and what he describes as the more revolutionary wing of the fellow travellers. Yet VAPP's axiomatic positions in FOSP are clearly not attracting the waverers, Voronskij declares in a reference to the leading fellow traveller writers Babel', Vs.Ivanov, Leonov, Sejfullina and Fedin as well as several proletarian writers affiliated to *KN*, partly to Pereval. He alleges that a crusade, which by far exceeds the confines of normal critical discussion, has been launched against the criminal and pernicious *krasnonovščina*. He warns that the federation is becoming a bureaucratic, barren, artificial body, internally false, and it does not reflect the variety and complexity of Soviet literature.¹⁵⁰

In chapter II he sees a parallel between the situation today and 1921-22 when writers formed groups (*KN*, *Krug*) aided by the party and Soviet authorities. Then also they sought a common language. But the situations are markedly different: 5-6 years ago the civil war had just ended, and the NEP just started. He states that the common platform which "we communists" at that time shared with non-party artists consisted in recognizing the October Revolution, the Soviet power and making writers work harmoniously with the Soviets. At the same time one strove to elevate

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.* p. 216.

and give literary training to young communist and proletarian writers, to show them the best in our literary heritage, eliminate approximations, *komčanstvo*, naive everyday depictions while bearing in mind very important artistic considerations like genre, theme, style, language, realism, symbolism, romanticism.¹⁵¹

5-6 years later these questions are far from resolved, he states, and the fellow traveller writers are e.g. meaninglessly quarrelling about whether, or to what extent, they should recognize the irrefutable facts of Soviet power or NEP. Turning to the policy in economics and industry,¹⁵² he observes that industrialization has generated "a new filth" in cities and in the countryside in the shape of new owners: tradesmen with "greedy fascist psychologies, surrounded by cronies feathering their own nests".¹⁵³ He sees a concealed and tense battle going on between the builders of socialism and the new citizen at many levels; this artists must come to grips with.

Voronskij argues that as per 1927 recognizing the October Revolution and the Soviets are insufficient as a literary-social framework to writers. Attempts to communize literature in a peasant country with weak industry would be absurd, in his view.¹⁵⁴ He asks for acceptance for the view that many prose writers and poets will continue to express feelings that are alien to "us communists". Such variety should be accepted, he finds, especially in the case of talented and true artistic contributions. At the same time artists must decide which ideological side they are on: the builders of socialism or "the new filth", i.e. the new bourgeoisie.

Voronskij explains the despondency of many artists in terms of a complicated Soviet reality in which artists are lost emotionally. The period of civil war themes has waned while new themes have not been clarified, and he thinks this has caused the artist's disorientation. Instead of the artist burning with involvement, indignation and joy, what one finds is lack of conviction, of spirit and artistry, matched by widespread dissatisfaction, literary nihilism and squabbling, shameless hypocrisy, lack of principles and suspicious objectivism. This poses a threat to communism, which is

¹⁵¹ *ibid.* p.217.

¹⁵² This may be a reference to Trockij's new responsibilities from May 1925, cf.3.2.5.

¹⁵³ *KN 1927#4(51):218.*

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

seen as a rough, material and chaotic development of life, a doubtful experiment separated from this life.¹⁵⁵

Lessons are to be drawn from classical literature, he stresses, which in its best forms always exhorted the reader to fight entrenched and limited, thirsty, egoistic instincts, the psychology of the "strong boss", philistinism, stupidity and slowness. From Gogol' to Čechov, Voronskij states, the word of Russian art has served the best ideas of the age, without panicking. In Voronskij's opinion the federation must make an adherent of the fellow traveller and oppose him to the new bourgeoisie. Proletarian writers face particular problems, he continues, since they must deepen their artistic work and learn to relate the present with the past. The Soviet writer must become a philosopher, psychologist, moralist, scientist, since the reader is more refined now. Above all, Voronskij, states,

[...]. I pora, nakonec, ponjat' praktičeski, čto net nikakoj nuždy nepremenno nagraždat' kommunistu vsemi dobrodeteljami, suščestvujuščimi i nesuščestvujuščimi v mire, a ego protivnika izobražat' isčadiem ada. Buržua možet byt' chorošim sem'janinom, očen' čuvstvitel'nym i dobrym; kommunist, rabočij mogut, naoborot, takovymi svojstvami ne obladat' - ot ètogo značimost', cennost' ich *obščestvennogo* povedenija ostaetsja, ne menjaetsja. [...].¹⁵⁶

In support of this Voronskij informs his readers that Sinclair Lewis' Mister Babbit is not a bad human; his thirsty uprising causes some sympathy on the part of the reader, but all the same his limitations and negative social role are clear enough. Gogol' found warm, bitter, humane words for Pljuškin and the scrooge's despicable role was not weakened. Are there really no positive qualities, he asks, in Čičikov? To apportion the light and dark sides is a basic task in artistic creation. In this field it is timely and very useful that the proletarian writers learn from the more dexterous fellow travellers.

The federation, in Voronskij's view, faces the task of elevating the name of the

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.* p.219.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.* p.220 ([...]. And it's time, finally, to understand in practical terms that there is no need to constantly decorate the communist with all kinds of virtues, real and not real, while demonizing his opponent. The bourgeois can be a good family man, very sensitive and good; the communist, the worker can conversely lack such qualities, - this does not alter the importance and value of their *social* conduct.[...]).

writer; it must intervene in cheating, hypocrisy and take to task the delinquents of the new age who have shamelessly concealed themselves behind communism; it must wage war against sloppiness, cynicism, nihilism, complaining and group intrigues. In conclusion, Voronskij repeats that the federation is confronted by obvious complications, and he declares rhetorically that the major asset of the contemporary artist is the support of the October Revolution. Anthropomorphizing the revolution he assures that it forgives the contemporary writer many of his shortcomings, but not treachery, informing, abandonment, cowardice and irresolution.¹⁵⁷

This is primarily an ideological article involving the parameters 2) The VKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. Voronskij's attack on VAPP can also be seen as criticism against the VKP(b) for accepting VAPP hegemony in FOSP and the VAPP crusade against *krasnonovščina*. The emergence of the new bourgeoisie, ("new filth"), the low spirits of disoriented writers in a complicated Soviet reality, and the "absurdity" of attempting to communize literature are all arguments that are linked to these two ideological parameters. The artistic parameter 7) Psychological character portrayal is reflected in Voronskij's comments on proletarian writers' tendencies to demonize their opponents, i.e. ascribe only positive character traits to communists and negative traits to non-communists. All in all, though, it is fair to conclude that this article is mostly "ideological" in its argumentation.

With regard to Biblical references, there are two oblique and in my view positively phrased references to "testament" and "holy" unrest.¹⁵⁸

4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve"¹⁵⁹

This long article first appeared in *Novyj mir* 1927#8:160-169 and #9:177-186 and was reprinted in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a), and in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. The article is subdivided into no less than 7 numbered and titled chapters, which give it the formal pretensions of an academic treatise: "I. Realizm Tolstogo" (Tolstoj's Realism), "II. Tajna chudožestvennogo perevoploščeniija" (The Secret of

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.* p.221.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.* p.219,220.

¹⁵⁹ "Notes on Artistic Creativity". Cf. the translation by Choate 1998:267-297.

Artistic Transformation), "III. O tehnike, ob otzyvach sovremennikov" (On Technique and Contemporary Criticism), "IV. Nado trudit'sja. Pesok i kamni" (Hard Work is Required. Sand and stones), "V. Ešče o perevoploščennii" (More about Transformation), "VI. Sistema K. S. Stanislavskogo" (The System of K.S. Stanislavskij), "VII. Politika i chudožestvennaja pravda. Zaključenie" (Politics and Artistic Truth. Conclusion).

Voronskij takes as his point of departure 2 books: T.A.Kuzminskaja *Moja žizn' doma i v Jasnoj Poljane* (1927), and K.S.Stanislavskij *Moja žizn' v iskusstve* (1924). Though quite different, the two books in his opinion offer revealing insights into the psychology of artistic creation. In chapters I-III, he discusses the book of Kuzminskaja, the younger sister of Tolstoj's wife Sofia. The book i.a. describes the years from Tolstoj's marriage to Sofia in 1862 until 1868, during which the author lived periodically with the Tolstojs at Jasnaja Poljana. Her comments thus bear on the period when Tolstoj wrote *Vojna i mir* (*War and Peace*) (1863-69). Voronskij finds that the book confirms that Tolstoj's genius was realistic, in contrast with Gogol' and Dostoevskij, and a prerequisite for Tolstoj's strong ability to penetrate his characters was his happy family life. The lesson for contemporary writers was a fusion of the classics:

[...]. No otricaja dejstvitel'nost', Gogol' i Dostoevskij ne sumeli primirit' ideal'noe s realnym, im nechvatalo dialektičeskogo, žiznennogo otricanija, i potomu ich protest protiv žal'koj, pošloj i strašnoj dejstvitel'nosti zakančivalsja tupikom, libo uvodil ich v mir bređa i fantastiki. Iskusstvo revoljucii dolžno sumet' organičeski slit' realizm Tolstogo s romantikoj Gogolja i Dostoevskogo, osvobodiv pervyj ot črezmernogo preklonenija pered dejstvitel'nost'ju, a vtoroj ot mračnoj mizantropii, pessimizma i skepsisa. [...].¹⁶⁰

Voronskij estimates Tolstoj's realism 1846-1868 to be extremely family-based, almost egocentric, with few observations of, and little engagement in, larger social issues. Tolstoj was e.g. against the emancipation of women. Voronskij states that

¹⁶⁰ Voronskij 1928a:51-52 ([...]. Yet by disclaiming reality Gogol' and Dostoevskij could not reconcile the ideal with reality; disclaiming dialectic living was insufficient to them, and thus their protest against pitiful, trite and terrible reality ended in a cul-de-sac, or led them into a world of deliriums and fantasies. Revolutionary art must be able to organically fuse the realism of Tolstoj with the romanticism of Gogol' and Dostoevskij, liberating the first from exaggerated worship of reality and the second from sombre misanthropy, pessimism and scepticism.[...]).

contemporary revolutionaries cannot understand the life of the aristocracy at Jasnaja Poljana. He sees this privileged family environment as a precondition for Tolstoj's intuitive insight into human behaviour and psychology and his ability to transform observations into great, "artistically true", literature. ¹⁶¹ Proletarian writers whose characters become stereotypes produce on "social command" still have much to learn from Tolstoj's identification with his protagonists:

[...]. Tolstoj obladal udivitel'nym darom chudožestvennogo perevoploščenijsja, no emu sravnitel'no legko bylo perevoploščat'sja, dumat' dumami, čuvstvovat' čuvstvami Rostovyh, Oblonskich, Kareninyh, Vronskich, potomu čto eti dumy i čuvstva, blagodarja osobo blagoprijatnym uslovijam, byli dlja nego na vidu, otkryty, jasny i ponjatny. V ètom tajna genial'nych intucij velikogo pisatelja [...]¹⁶²

Proletarian fictional protagonists are in Voronskij's view often vulgar, dull and primitive. When Tolstoj dictated *Vojna i mir*, walking around his study, Tolstoj still cared about what critics wrote. Voronskij reminds the readers that all critics at the time, including Turgenjev, were negative to *Vojna i mir*. Today, he adds, critics have a monopoly, which makes their task difficult and calls for circumspection and restraint. ¹⁶³

Turning to Stanislavskij, Voronskij notes in chapters IV-VI his concentration on approaches and techniques in the theatre, and on the psychology of artistic creation, from which he argues that Soviet literature and writers have a lot to learn. Stanislavskij's major requirement of his actors is their complete immersion in their roles. Artistic transformation is achieved by Stanislavskij through naturalism and realism, according to Voronskij, who repeats that Marxist art must be concrete and realistic. Stereotypes and social command must be avoided, yet he finds that Soviet art too often becomes a superficial realism. Stanislavskij's demand of full cohesion

¹⁶¹ *ibid.* p.55.

¹⁶² *ibid.* p.56 ([...]. Tolstoj had an astonishing gift of artistic transformation, yet it was relatively easy for him to transform, think the thoughts, feel the feelings of the Rostovs, the Oblonskij, the Karenins, the Vronskij, because these thoughts and sentiments, thanks to particularly auspicious conditions, were there in front of him, open, clear and understandable. This is the secret of the great writer's ingenious intuition [...]).

¹⁶³ *ibid.* pp.57-60.

and correspondence between internal and external qualities is seen by Voronskij as very instructive in relation to Soviet literature. Using repeatedly the term "istina" about Stanislavskij's method,¹⁶⁴ Voronskij finds that the books of Stanislavskij and Kuzminskaja both reveal the artist's total identification with his models. Though being an actor in Voronskij's view is necessarily a self-centred and introvert activity, Stanislavskij demonstrates that this can be overcome; it can be extroverted and transformed into art. Successful artistic transformation demands the artist's complete identification with his work. This gives the artist an ambivalence, which Voronskij sees as characteristic of all great artists, e.g. Čechov, who are seen to combine creative power with objectivity. The quality of ambivalence, an inner struggle, is found in all great artists, e.g. Shakespeare, Tolstoj, Gogol', Puškin, Dostoevskij. These successfully overcome their inner disharmony thanks to their gift of creative transformation. From the point of view of the spectator, reader or listener this inner conflict is also required to some extent in order to appreciate great works of art, and partake in the artist's creative work. Echoing Plechanov's adaption of Kantian aesthetics,¹⁶⁵ Voronskij seeks to reconcile the dichotomy between socio-political utility and personal pleasure in aesthetics. He does so by distinguishing between objective and subjective aesthetic perception. These are seen to coexist and complement each other:

[...]. Na ètom svoistve osnovano i èstetičeskoe na nas vozdejstvie igry artista, romana, muzykal'nogo proizvedenija. Èstetičeskaja èmocija, kak *psichologičeskoe* sostojanie, lišena neposredstvennogo utilitarizma, praktičizma, "zabot suetnogo sveta", iz čego, konečno, otnjud' ne sleduet, čto čuvstvo prekrasnogo - kakogo-to nadzemnogo i nadmirnogo proischoždenija [...]. *Ob"ektivno* naši èstetičeskije èmocii vsegda korenjajutsja v konečnom itoge tech ili inych "zemnych", "sliškom čelovečeskich", klassovyh interesach, no èto ne mešacet nam *sub"ektivno*, čitaja roman, ljubujas' kartinoj, slušaja Bechtovena, ispytyvat' èstetičeskoe udovol'stvie *beskorystno*, ne dumaja v ètot moment o svoich ili gruppovyh interesach. My prichodim k zaključeniju: *èstetičeskaja èmocija psichologičeski est' takoe duševnoe sostojanie, pri kotorom ljudi pereživajut tvorčeskoe samočuvstvie, otkazyvas' v ètot moment ot*

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.* p.66.

¹⁶⁵ *cf.* part 2.

*samočuvstvija "Žitejskogo", t.e. perevoploščajas'. [...].*¹⁶⁶

Voronskij nevertheless finds several shortcomings in Stanislavskij's system, e.g. his definition of artistic creation only as full concentration of all faculties. This is too narrow in Voronskij's assessment; he feels that Stanislavskij is only referring to instinct and not to rationality. The actor immerses himself in his role thanks to his intuition, as one must in order to render e.g. Čechov's characters.

*[...] bez intuitivnogo proniknovenija v bessoznatel'nuju sferu čelovečeskich namerenij i pomyslov - net podlinnogo iskusstva. [...]*¹⁶⁷

Intuition, though, is not seen as sufficient. Technique is as important. He furthermore criticizes Stanislavskij's use of Freudian concepts, e.g. the superconscious and concepts derived from mysticism and metaphysics. Marxists, Voronskij explains, see concepts like the World Spirit, Man, Mysticism as alien, but are favourable to scientific psychology. Yet Voronskij defends Stanislavskij against the criticism that he disrupts the link between the actor and his surroundings. The actor's immersion in his art only serves to better render his characters to the public. He writes that in the theatre nobody has attained Stanislavskij's level the last 7 years. In literature the situation is somewhat better. He mentions Babel', Vs.Ivanov, Pil'njak, Leonov and Fedin, who have all reached far, not to speak of the classics Gor'kij, A.Tolstoj and Prišvin. The success of Stanislavskij's theatre is due not to the dramaturgs but to Čechov, L.Tolstoj, Gor'kij, Ibsen. The classics have been a prerequisite for Stanislavskij's success. The purpose of the theatre is partly to teach writers how to better, more profoundly, portray the human soul. Theatre

¹⁶⁶ Voronskij 1928a:69 ([...]. Also the aesthetic impact on us of the artist's play, novel, musical work is based on this particularity. An aesthetical emotion, as a *psychological* condition, is devoid of direct utilitarianism, practicality, "the worries of this empty world". From this, of course, by no means follows that a feeling of beauty is some kind of celestial and other-worldly event [...]. *Objectively* our aesthetical emotions always ultimately consist of one kind or another "worldly", "too human", class interests, but this does not stop us from *subjectively* reading a novel, enjoying a picture, listening to Beethoven, experiencing aesthetical pleasure *selflessly*, without considering at that moment one's interests or the interests of a group. We arrive at the conclusion: *an aesthetical emotion is psychologically a mental condition in which people experience a creative state, rejecting at that moment a "worldly" state, i.e. they transform themselves.* [...]).

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.* p.74 ([...] *without intuitive penetration into the unconscious sphere of human intentions and thoughts there can be no real art* [...]).

performances must address contemporary issues, and art must avoid one-dimensionality.

In the final chapter VII, which bears the revelatory title "Politika i chudožestvennaja pravda. Zaključenie", Voronskij reflects on the concept of truth in art. Though realistic art like Stanislavskij's staging of Ibsen's plays addresses contemporary issues, actors are not politicians. In a revelatory passage Voronskij not only accedes that ideological considerations may conflict with artistic considerations, but even that to the artist the latter take precedence:

[...]. U nas často odnosjatsja k chudožniku tak, kak budto on, podobno politiku, tol'ko i dumaet o tom, kak ego igra, kak ego proizvedenija budut istolkovany obščestvenno-političeski. Obščestvenno-političeskaja ocenka i v samom dele javljaetsja rešajuščej i osnovnoj, tem bolee v naši dni. No ee nužno davat', nikogda ne upuskaja iz vnimanija to črezvyčajno važnoe obstojatel'stvo, čto nastojaščij chudožnik prežde vsego stremitsja k pravde chudožestvennogo pokaza, i čto v étom odna iz osobennostej iskusstva. [...].¹⁶⁸

Voronskij finds that Stanislavskij's art thus reveals refined nuances which are precluded in the prevailing one-dimensional Soviet art. The complex possibilities of subjective perception are ignored and objective reality is seen through the prism of a vulgar, allegedly Marxist and Leninist, conception of art as a manifestation of the class struggle.¹⁶⁹ Finally, he praises Stanislavskij for his dynamic view of art and his humble conception of his own significance, qualities which Voronskij finds express Stanislavskij's true proportions as a great artist.

By being devoted to the theme of artistic creation exemplified through Lev Tolstoj and K.S. Stanislavskij, this article is largely dominated by the artistic parameters 7) Psychological character portrayal, 6) Realism and 5) The classical Russian literary heritage. It is thus, together with 4.2.5 and 4.2.6 the third "artistic" article in the selection so far. The last chapter, which anticipates the concept of "artistic truth" to which he reverted in 4.2.18, additionally illustrates the balancing

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.* p.78 ([...]. In our country the artist is often treated as if he, like a politician, only considers how his play, his work of art will be interpreted socio-politically. Socio-political assessment in reality is decisive and fundamental, especially these days. Yet such assessment must always consider the extremely important point that the genuine artist primarily seeks to demonstrate artistic truth, and that this is particular of art.[...]).

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.* p.79.

between various ideological and artistic parameters. As for the Bible, there are no significant references in this article.

4.2.17 "Desjatiletie Oktjabrja i sovetskaja literatura" ¹⁷⁰

This commemorative article marking the decennial of the October Revolution was first published in *Literatura. Iskusstvo. Kul'tura*, an addition to the journal *Učitel'skaja gazeta* 1927#11:6-7. It was republished in Voronskij 1928a and was later included in Voronskij 1982, cf. 7.4. It gives a useful summary of Voronskij's view over the decade 1917-27.

Here Voronskij initially strikes a more optimistic note, contradicting the pessimism of the three foregoing articles. He now finds that a literary renaissance has taken place since 1921-22. In marked contrast with pre-1917 introvert literary individualism, literature was now replete with social and communal themes. Realism was now firmly established as the dominant literary genre; language was now clear, imaginative and concrete. Still, among literary inadequacies Voronskij, as before, notes the persistent lack of psychology in character portrayal, and a scarcity of heroic figures. Yet he is hopeful that, given the low average age of the new generation of Soviet writers, matters will improve.

More in detail, in chapter I of the article's two untitled chapters, Voronskij affirms that the October Revolution was incomparably more talented than the literature reflecting it. He gives a heroic account of the revolution, what it demanded, how it affected tens of millions of people. There was at the time little room or possibility for prose, while in poetry two trends dominated: either poetry completely subordinated to practical, burning objectives of the moment, or the cosmic poetry of the Kuznica poets, of Gerasimov, Kirillov, Obradovič. He finds that *Dvenadcat'* and *Skify* by Alexander Blok were exceptional, ingenuous, solid testimonies of 1917-1918. Despite pan-Slavism, Scythianism and the mystic Christ-figure, Blok in Voronskij's view proved receptive to the storminess of those years, the readiness to fight the bourgeois to the end, the ungodliness, the will of the Twelve to sacrifice their lives, their great hopes and their elemental incitement. In *Skify* he sees a

¹⁷⁰ "The Decennial of October and Soviet Literature". Cf. translation by Choate 1998:299-320.

profound sincerity and bitter pathos in the warning to the old culture of the West. Blok exerted great influence on later literature, in Voronskij's view, and fellow traveller literature, both in prose and poetry, to this day remains indebted to Blok. From Blok is derived the storm of Pil'njak and the neo-Slavophilism of *Golyj god*, as well as village neo-populist romanticism.¹⁷¹

Voronskij believes that the fellow traveller preference for the chaotic revolution reflects Blok's influence. Also in poetry Blok has made an imprint, e.g. in the hooliganism of Esenin, which Voronskij attributes to *Dvenadcat'*, along with Esenin's reveries of the transformation of the cosmos, of the peasant paradise, of Christ and God's mother. Esenin, Voronskij states, felt and appreciated the chaotic aspects of the revolution just as Blok but he held back once the new age of commands, organization, and "trivialities" set in, and the chaos was overcome by the strong RKP(b).

There was at the time a need for poetry which could accommodate slogans and battles, and poetry had to come down from its heights and "go to the people", to the izba, the workers' group, the Red Army barracks. First and foremost came songs, tales, sayings, poems, chants, epigrams, the serials of Demjan Bednyj. These were simple, sometimes coarse, but always written with lively, excellent, peasant humour - all this came at a very opportune moment, Voronskij explains.

He then addresses futurism - "Kalif for an hour"¹⁷² Although futurism has its merits, its supporters exaggerate these excessively. As a counterweight to the mysticism of symbolism, the poetry of Severjanin, and the spoilt *Bal'montovščina*, futurism announced the primacy of simple material things and the vital "earthly" needs of man. He expands his critique of futurism, including Majakovskij, noting its abiding incomprehension of the fact that socialist society means the reign of new *societal* relations, and not the adaptation of "things" by a mass of separate individuals. Futurism's character of doubtful nihilism and simplification remains, in Voronskij's view, far from Lenin's communism. Futurism's urbanism also suffered from obvious extremes; it took the contemporary town to some kind of absolute,

¹⁷¹ Voronskij 1928a:171.

¹⁷² *ibid.* p.172.

forgetting that socialism does not mean the destruction of the village but the unification of town and countryside. Due to its excessive urbanism, futurism neglected the countryside. Above all its blatant individualism precludes futurism from playing any leading literary role and also curtails its influence on contemporary art.¹⁷³

Turning to the poetry of Proletkul't, he states that at the time the revolution did not build or create; it devastated, defended and attacked. The slogans of new construction, of industrialization, electrification, and destruction of village backwardness all remained rhetoric. Proletkul't art of the civil war epoch, he states, was unwisely bereft of concreteness; this gave rise to the new abstract man, determinedly rebuilding the world and sky. The abstract collectivism involved an abstract worldview; it extended to the cosmos and led to the rejection of "I", and to efforts to transform oneself completely. Voronskij estimates that the poems of Gastev, Gerasimov, Kazin, Obradovič, Kirillov and Aleksandrovskij were all composed along these lines. The theory of Proletkul't and their mistakes at the time were handled, Voronskij summarizes, with sufficient decisiveness by V.I.Lenin.¹⁷⁴

In chapter II Voronskij reflects on the transition from the hardships of the civil war period to the benign effects of the NEP period: Printing presses and publishing houses reappeared; paper became available again; publishing houses began to pay fees instead of food parcels to the starving, and people returned to normal life. It became possible to publish literary journals, print novels, stories, collections, almanacs. The economic success was reflected in a new way of life. A great literary renewal began, especially in prose. For the first time since the revolution prose could speak up. Young and talented fellow traveller writers emerged: Vs.Ivanov, Pil'njak, Fedin, Sejfullina, Jakovlev, Zoščenko, Nikitin, somewhat later Babel', Leonov, Zavadovskij. Some old pre-revolutionary writers also resurfaced: Gor'kij, A.Tolstoj, Prišvin, Veresaev, Sergeev-Censkij, Trenev, Zamjatin, Šiškov, Nikandrov, Klyčkov, Romanov. He finds that also proletarian prose now grew in strength, and Ljaško, Bessal'ko, Novikov-Priboj, Nizovoj, Volkov were joined by Veselyj, Gladkov,

¹⁷³ *ibid.* p.173.

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.* p. 174.

Furmanov, Libedinskij, Fadeev, Nikiforov, Tverjak, Nikitin, Grabar' and others.

Poetry came to life again; Esenin wrote again; Tichonov and Pasternak were again printed, and a young group of Komsomol appeared: Bezymenskij, Utkin, Doronin, Žarov. A new group Pereval was formed, demanding an inner, organic approach to man and to events: Guber, Barsukov, Anna Karavaeva, Zarudin, Svetlov, Golodnyj, Nasedkin, Skuratov, Altauzen. Voronskij refrains from assessing individual writers and works in the article; he wants only to note some general trends and results.¹⁷⁵

Since 1921-22 Soviet literature has despite its shortcomings undergone a renaissance but Voronskij states it cannot compete with the classics in terms of depth, strength, genius. Many acknowledged great writers could not accept the revolution; some grew silent; some stepped aside; others went abroad. Andreev, Bunin, Kuprin, Šmelev, Merežkovskij and Bal'mont, not to speak of second-rate writers, were all lost for the revolution. Simultaneously the revolution brought to life representatives of new classes: workers, peasants, intellectuals of mixed background, not fully familiar with the old culture. He states that post-revolutionary achievements in the arts are indisputable; literature now has its identity and shows considerable more talent than many believe. Literature has reached new readers, and this is the clearest reflection of its success. Soviet writers are often translated into foreign languages, and since 1926-27 translated literature has been supplanted by Soviet literature.¹⁷⁶

In contrast with pre-revolutionary narrow individualism, contemporary writers, both fellow travellers and proletarians, are in Voronskij's view preoccupied exclusively by social themes: the village, the partisan movement, the civil war, communists, rebuilding factories, contemporary youth. Even individualists like Belyj and Pil'njak address contemporary problems in their work, which Voronskij interprets as a result of the revolution. However, Voronskij's pessimism resurfaces when he states that literature does not fully reflect life and is too superficial in relation to our daily lives. Fellow travellers have with great ease and success written about the partisans, the confused half-raw countryside and the chaos of the revolution, while

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.* p.175.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.* 176.

proletarian writers are completely guilty in a naive daily-life cliché-ridden description and cannot reach the average peasant-worker. He finds that lyrics are often superficial but concludes that literature is strong in its social purposefulness.¹⁷⁷

Voronskij sees contemporary literature as realistic, both in form and content. It is atheistic and language-oriented, and its "physiologism" and "biologism"¹⁷⁸ is reflected in an unbridled coverage of the relationship between man and woman. Voronskij describes Babel', Pil'njak, Vs.Ivanov, Seifullina, Nikitin, Veselyj, and partly Gladkov, as exponents of "physiological" writing, but he warns that a sense of proportion should be observed. A too primitive admiration of the physiological aspects of life is justifiable only to the extent that it is an antidote to God-oriented thoughts and feelings, transcendentalism and symbolism. Yet primitivism, he continues, can also become the expression of an ideology of today's petty bourgeois if it attempts to pass judgement on - in the name of "flesh" - the communist "experiment", "doctrinariness", "dreamery", etc. He admonishes fellow communists to be alert to this danger. Fellow travellers, in particular, he states, must manage to incorporate realism into their work:

[...]. Našim pisateljŕam, osobenno poputničeskogo tolka, nadobno sumet' sočetat' "plot" s "duchom", "derevo ŕizni" s "derevom kresta", "kubok ŕizni" s velikim obščestvennym idealizmom. [...].¹⁷⁹

So far, though, e.g. Pil'njak, Nikitin and Bulgakov direct their thirst for life towards arid mysticism, Don Quijotes and towards obsolete intellectual symptoms. In this respect Voronskij finds proletarian writers more circumspect, although their work suffers from other shortcomings. Fellow travellers should become more infected with social idealism and dispense with their "physiologism", while proletarian writers should become more daring in portraying communists.

Voronskij now finds parts of Soviet literature dynamic, tense and emotional,

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.* p.177.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.* p.178.

¹⁷⁹ *ibid.* ([...]. It is necessary especially for our fellow traveller writers to be able to unite "flesh" with "spirit", "the tree of life" with "the tree of the cross", "the goblet of life" with great social idealism. [...]).

citing the short stories of Babel', the stories of Vs.Ivanov, the novels of Leonov, Gladkov, the work of Ognev, Veselyj, Malyškin, Furmanov, the poems of Majakovskij, Pasternak, Sel'vinskij, Tichonov, Kazin, Bezymenskij and Svetlov. This expression of contemporary neorealism is strikingly different from the former realism of *Sovremennij mir*, *Russkoe bogatstvo*, the editions of *Znanie*.¹⁸⁰

Devoting for the first time in our selection of articles a whole passage to language, he notes that language in literature now is clear, imaginative, evocative and at the same time concrete. Young writers in his view have recently turned ever more to classical evenness and simplicity. Expressiveness, richness in sound and concreteness can be seen in the work of Babel', Veselij, Vs.Ivanov and Leonov. Writers like Leskov, Remizov, Zamjatin continue to exert considerable stylistic and linguistic influence. A good influence is felt from the rich folk language of the village and workers' suburbs. Voronskij declares that language is becoming more democratic. The appearance of such exceptionally beautiful and linguistic marvels as *Čertuchinskij balakir'* and *Sacharnyj nemeč* by Sergej Klyčkov is in his view not coincidental. Here the folk tale is purified, enriched by profound lyricism and rendered in a Gogolian way. Voronskij characterizes these as jewels by a genuine master.¹⁸¹

Reverting finally to the shortcomings of Soviet literature, Voronskij says that these must neither be exaggerated nor forgotten. First and foremost he identifies what he sees as the lack of psychology: Soviet writers remain thoroughly superficial, more so in prose than in poetry. Exceptions are the lyrics of Esenin and Kazin while the proletarian poetry of Bezymenskij, Utkin, Obradovič, Svetlov, Zarudin and Dement'ev is beginning to deal with the inner world of the new man. Another shortcoming in Voronskij's opinion is the lack of great literary (heroic) characters and the insufficient ability of writers to transform living phenomena into "pearls of creation." Voronskij admits that this is difficult, because "the hero of our times" is still only unclearly delineated.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.* p.179.

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*

¹⁸² *ibid.* p.180.

Voronskij describes contemporary literature as characterized by two different groupings: fellow travellers and proletarian writers. The former express the sentiments and thoughts of a range of people: the emigrés, the offspring of the old pre-revolutionary intellectuals, specialists, Soviet civil servants, the masses of teachers and the average peasantry. Voronskij sees the combination of fellow travellers together with the writers of the past generation - A.Tolstoj, Prišvin, Čapygin, Veresaev, Romanov - as the most literarily accomplished and therefore most important branch in literature, although its members remain undecided on communism. The proletarian writers are seen to be artistically inferior to the fellow travellers but more sharply defined ideologically, and despite its setbacks Voronskij believes this segment is growing and finding its way to the reader.

The literature of what Voronskij terms "the inner emigration" cannot appear openly due to censorship.¹⁸³ With the exception of Bunin, emigrant literature is not seen to carry any weight in Soviet Russia. Voronskij notes that even many proletarian writers in Soviet Russia appreciate Bunin on account of his high level of accomplishment, his depth of depiction and his Puškin-like language. Yet his cold fatalism, disbelief in man and his mysticism are hardly attractive. Otherwise, he alleges that Russian emigré literature is in a shambles: Kuprin is silent; Šmelev writes his "wicked libelous pamphlets", Merežkovskij is "boring"; Čirikov is "bad and completely dried out"; among the "young", Aldanov (Landau) is "interesting".

In conclusion, he stresses that relations between fellow travellers and proletarian writers are not always normal, although they often work in the same writers' organizations. Closer relations are prevented by malicious and arrogant critics and writers from *Na literaturnom postu* combined with suspicion by some fellow travellers towards the strength of proletarian writers. Looking ahead, Voronskij expresses the hope that these differences will be amended, since Soviet literature is still young, and the average age of the post-revolutionary prose writers is only 28-32 years, and for poets even less.

It is not surprising that this article which covers the decade since the October Revolution should contain all 8 ideological and artistical parameters. Most of

¹⁸³ ibid. 181.

Voronskij's reflections on the "glorious revolution" and on the early post-revolutionary years (futurism, Proletkul't, Russian emigré literature) involve 1) The October Revolution, 2) The VKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. They have been discussed in the foregoing articles and need not be repeated. One exception, though, are his comments on Blok, his pan-Slavism and Scythianism, and Blok's considerable influence on Esenin, Pil'njak and others, which illustrate the perceived negative impact of 4) Slavophilism, and partly also the influence of 5) The classical Russian literary heritage. In part II we see an indication of Voronskij's favourable attitude to NEP, which he describes as a prerequisite for the literary renaissance of the 1920s. His positive appraisal of several aspects of post-revolutionary literature (realism, collective/communal contemporary themes, dynamism and language) as well as his comments on persisting shortcomings in literature (fellow traveller dexterity contrasted with proletarian ineptitude, lack of psychology, the presence of "physiologism" and "biologism", the lack of heroic protagonists) all evoke 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism, 7) Psychological character portrayal and 8) Language mastery. The latter parameter is for the first time in our selection so far given some prominence. Since all 8 parameters to some extent are present, this article in a sense is the most "complete" article discussed so far.

As to expressions of Biblical relevance, we note the odd contrast between Voronskij's assertion of the atheist nature of contemporary literature and his admonition against the God-orientation in literature, especially the perceived fellow traveller problem of uniting the "tree of life" with the "tree of the cross".¹⁸⁴

4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde"¹⁸⁵

This long article which was to be one of Voronskij's final statements on literature, first appeared under the pseudonym "Anisimov" in *Sibirskie ogni* 1928#1:176-198, but was included in Voronskij 1928a. It was only reprinted in Voronskij 1987a, cf. 7.4. It is subdivided into 3 untitled chapters. It is noteworthy in my view not only because Voronskij's odyssey in aesthetics here leads him to equate

¹⁸⁴ *ibid.* p.178.

¹⁸⁵ "On Artistic Truth". Cf. the translation by Choate 1998:323-359.

beauty with truth, but also for Voronskij's choice of Tolstoj's description of a dying man addressing heaven as the best pages ever written in world literature.

Here Voronskij explores further the concept of truth in art, an issue that had concerned him first in 4.2.12 "Frejdzizm i iskusstvo" (1925), and more extensively in 4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927), as shown. In chapter I, Voronskij opposes at some length Gor'kij's view of the world as wholly anarchic and chaotic, and Gor'kij's assertion that beauty merely exists in man's mind, not in nature.

[...]. Naši ponjatija o prekrasnom bolee sub"ektivny i nepostojanny, - èto pravda. [...] v kosmose est' *otnositel'nyj* porjadok, *otnositel'naja* garmonija, i ètot porjadok i èta garmonija mogut postigat'sja ne tol'ko našim razumom, no i našimi čuvstvami, t.e. sozdavat' v nas vpečatlenija prekrasnogo [...].¹⁸⁶

Voronskij is adamant that there is an objective reality which can be beautiful: the beauty of the soul may correspond to beauty in nature and in the universe. According to Voronskij, a parallel is how scientific, abstract logical conceptions of the world may correspond to the existing world. He states that we are convinced of the truthfulness or untruthfulness of a work of art through our aesthetic evaluation.

[...]. Kogda chudožestvennyj obraz kažetsja nam ubeditel'nyj? On kažetsja nam ubeditel'nyj togda, kogda my pereživaem osoboe duševnoe sostojanie radosti, udovletvorenija, vozvyšennogo uspokoenija, ljubovanija, sočuvstvija k avtoru. Èto duševnoe sostojanie i javljaetsja èstetičeskoj ocenkoj proizvedenija iskusstva. Èstetičeskoe čuvstvo lišeno uzko-utilitarnogo charaktera, ono beskorystno i v ètom otnošenii svjazano organičeski s našimi obščimi ponjatijami o prekrasnom [...]. Èstetičeskaja ocenka proizvedenija - kriterij ego pravdivosti ili nepravdivosti. Chudožestvennaja pravda opredeljaetsja i ustanavlivaetsja imenno blagodarja ètoj ocenke. [...].¹⁸⁷

However, remaining faithful to Plechanov's idea of the "sociological

¹⁸⁶ Voronskij 1928a:8-9 ([...]. Our conceptions of beauty are quite subjective and inconstant, it is true. [...] in the cosmos there is *relative* order, *relative* harmony, and this order and this harmony may be attained not only through our intellect but through our feelings, i.e. may create in us an impression of beauty [...]).

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.* p.11 ([...]. When does an artistic image seem convincing to us? It convinces us when we experience a particular spiritual condition of joy, contentment, an exalted calm, admiration, sympathy with the author. This spiritual condition is also an aesthetic evaluation of the work of art. An aesthetic sentiment is devoid of narrow utilitarianism, it is unselfish, and in this sense organically linked with our general concepts of beauty [...]. An aesthetic judgement of a work of art is a criterion of its truthfulness or untruthfulness. Artistic truth is defined and established precisely due to this assessment.[...]).

equivalent", he maintains that the final criterion of truthfulness in art remains a sociological evaluation.¹⁸⁸ Echoing his comments on L.Tolstoj from 4.2.9 "Zametki ob iskusstve" (1925), Voronskij rejects Tolstoj's definition of art as only a means of emotional infection. Voronskij argues that a much better definition of art - fully consistent with Marxism - is to define art as a particular emotional and rational cognition of the world through images (*obrazy*), which is fully dependent on man's social way of life. He is aware that some will object that this definition gives too much scope to imagery at the expense of rationality. Yet he sees imagery as the basis of all art. Drawing on his ideas on the subconscious and intuition stated in 4.2.12 "Frejdizm i iksusstvo" (1925), he asserts that whereas our mind does play an active role in shaping forms, an even greater part is played by our subconscious. Images are evaluated aesthetically, aesthetic judgement is not devoid of rational aspects, but it is essentially intuitional in his view.

In chapters II-III Voronskij explores Tolstoj's epigraph in *Čto takoe iskusstvo?* ("Rasskazat' pravdu očen' trudno"). ("It is very difficult to tell the truth"). He brands many attempts in contemporary poetry and prose as lies, thereby sharpening his argument concerning artistic truth. In his opinion both fellow travellers and proletarians are guilty of lies, e.g. biased depictions of communists. As quoted in the introduction, Voronskij calls for ethics to improve aesthetics:

[...]. Èstetičeskoe čuvstvo chudožnika dolžno byt' dopolneno čuvstvom ètičeskim. Ètičeskaja bezzabotnost' našich chudožestvennych krugov obščezvestna. Ottogo u nas tak mnogo i lgut v romanach, v povestjach, v poëmach, v kartinach, lgut i soznatel'no, a ešče čašče bessoznatel'no. [...].¹⁸⁹

Voronskij tries to explain what he sees as the genius of L.Tolstoj with examples from *War and Peace*, noting Tolstoj's reliance on intuition, the subconscious in his character portrayal, even venturing that the whole epic *War and Peace* was written by Tolstoj in order to show the strength of the subconscious in the

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*p.16.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.* p.23 ([...]). The artist's feeling of aesthetics must be complemented by a feeling of ethics. The ethical indifference of our artistic circles is commonly known. This is why so many lie in novels, in stories, in poems, in pictures, in our country; they lie consciously, and even more often unpremeditatedly [...].

man's social history.¹⁹⁰ He then introduces Dostoevskij to illustrate the importance of the subconscious. Whereas both great masters treat the subconscious as very important, Voronskij believes that Tolstoj views the subconscious as a benevolent force, while Dostoevskij sees it as basically evil. Voronskij is of the opinion that both views need corrections: Tolstoj's optimistic view of the benevolent subconscious needs to be modified by Dostoevskij's pessimism, and Dostoevskij's view of the evil subconscious needs to be corrected by Tolstoj's optimism. Only then, Voronskij notes, will it be possible to overcome these classics and move ahead in Soviet literature.¹⁹¹ Among contemporary writers, he finds that the most attentive to the importance of the subconscious are Babel', Pil'njak and Vs.Ivanov. Yet these do not subscribe to, trust in, reason he adds disapprovingly. Among the poets, what Voronskij terms the "elemental force" is seen is Esenin, Pasternak and Tichonov, whereas he estimates the most rational to be Libedinskij, Nikiforov, Bezymenskij and Žarov.¹⁹²

Bowing to the complexity of the human mind, Voronskij acknowledges that it is impossible to see through man, and he finds that there are great, hidden, still little researched parts of the human spirit, although he by no means wishes to marginalize the influence of human rationality. He argues that his views do not contradict Marxism, declaring rhetorically that the strengthening of the "Country of Soviets" has permitted the proletariat for the first time to replace "the tsardom of obligation" with "the tsardom of freedom", to replace "the rule of the elements" with "the rule of wise social development".¹⁹³ In his view this obliges leaders, theoreticians, practitioners and artists to clearly distinguish between the conscious and the subconscious in all aspects of social and individual life.

Voronskij believes one aspect of artistic untruthfulness is the widespread tendency towards fiction, which is contrary to realism. He scorns writers who write about things and places they have not experienced or seen themselves, and he regrets

¹⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.26.

¹⁹¹ *ibid.* p.28.

¹⁹² *ibid.* p.29.

¹⁹³ *ibid.* p.30.

that even the best writers resort to such doubtful practices: Pil'njak, Leonov, Vs.Ivanov, Gladkov, Babel' Libedinskij Malaškin. He defines this as hack work, pulp fiction (*chaltura*), citing Sologub's *Tarantas*.¹⁹⁴

Concluding that we do not have sufficient artistic truth, he returns to L.Tolstoj, viewing the key to his mastership in simplicity and commonness. He sees Tolstoj's technique as based on the contrast and quotes at length from the depiction of the dying prince Andrej, stating that he does not know anything in world literature comparable to the genius and simplicity of these pages.¹⁹⁵ Simplicity and commonness have two aspects with Tolstoj, he finds. Yet Tolstoj's simplicity must not be confounded with his incessant drive to picture only the most necessary and unconditional, though these are related, in Voronskij's view. Tolstoj's technique dictates, he believes, that if you want to be artistically true, then relate only what has to be and refrain from the doubtful as well as the hypothetical. Only then are universal, harmonious works of art attainable.¹⁹⁶

As a contrast Voronskij turns to Dostoevskij, whom he interprets as an exponent of the most complicated and dark psychological states of mind and spiritual experimentation taken to its extremes. He sees this as a narrower artistic approach than Tolstoj's and adds that Dostoevskij has not had - and probably will not have in the future - such broad influence on readers as Tolstoj.¹⁹⁷

Voronskij reverts to the abiding distance between the reader and writer, which he had addressed in 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga čitatel' " (1927), and now also ascribes this alienation to the deficiency of artistic truth. The multitude of literary schools and groupings and fashions, of whose value he remains doubtful, compounds this

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.* p.31.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.* p.36. In commenting on these passages, Maguire noted an "epiphanous" dimension in the later version of Voronskij's theory of cognition (Maguire 1987:358-361). Against the background of his autobiography, I find it suggestive of an underlying Christian element in Voronskij's literary aesthetics that what he identifies as the best in world literature is in fact Tolstoj's description of a dying man viewing the vast sky and experiencing what many would term religious clarification. Incidentally, Maguire stated that Voronskij found this scene to be "perhaps even the finest moment in all Russian literature" (Maguire 1987:359). Voronskij in fact stated "i ja ne znaju v mirovoj literature bolee genial'nych i bolee prostych stranic" ("I do not know of more ingenuous and simple pages in world literature") (Voronskij 1928a:36).

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.* p.37.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.* p.38.

alienation. More truthful and expressive of psychological complexity, in Voronskij's opinion, is Marcel Proust's reminiscences of the early childhood and adolescence, which Voronskij considered so important that he wrote a literary portrait of Proust, cf. part 5. Among the few Soviet contemporary writers who attach importance to early childhood reminiscences Voronskij mentions Gor'kij, A. Tolstoj and Prišvin.¹⁹⁸

Superficiality is another aspect of untruthfulness which Voronskij discusses, quoting Gercen's *Byloe i dumy* (1861-68) (cf.3.4.5), and the narrator's comment that he hates superficiality. Voronskij finds that superficial stereotypes are prevalent in Soviet Russia, not only many coarse, false and scrupulous falsifiers posing as revolutionaries, about which he has written enough already. Much more dangerous in his view are the superficial and untrue mastering of the revolutionary and Marxist ideology of the proletariat combined with literary and non-literary careerism. He identifies no fewer than 8 types of unprincipled characters in literary life, all exponents of literary bureaucratization.¹⁹⁹

A final condition for artistic truth, Voronskij concludes, is personal freedom. Quoting the old professor in Čechov's *Skučnaja istorija* (1889),

[...]. Ja ne skažu, čtoby francuzskie knižki byli i talantlivy, i umny, i blagorodny. I oni ne udovletvorjajut menja. No oni ne tak skučnye, kak ruskije, i v nich ne redkost' najti glavnyj element tvorčestva - čuvstvo ličnoj svobody, čego net u ruskich avtorov. Ja ne pomnju ni odnoj takoj novinki, v kotoroj avtor s pervoj že stranicy ne postaralsja by oputat' sebja vsjakimi uslovnostjami i kontraktami so svoeju sovest'ju. [...].²⁰⁰

he affirms that the lack of personal freedom noted by Čechov 38 years earlier is very noticeable also in 1927. Though defending the denial of personal freedom to "half-enemies and enemies of the revolution", he finds that this must be done measuredly

¹⁹⁸ ibid. p.40.

¹⁹⁹ ibid. p.44.

²⁰⁰ ibid. p. 44 ([...]. I am not saying that French booklets are talented, clever or decent. And they do not satisfy me. Yet they are not so boring as Russian (booklets), and in them you often find the main element of creativity - a feeling of personal freedom, which is lacking in Russian authors. I cannot recall a single new booklet in which the author from the very first page wouldn't attempt to entangle himself in all kinds of conventions and contracts with his conscience.[...]).

but admits that such a sense of proportion is lacking.²⁰¹

It is fair to conclude that Voronskij's rejection of Gor'kij's anarchic-chaotic perspective, his preference for Tolstoj's "benevolent subconscious" rather than Dostoevskij's "evil subconscious", his view that aesthetic judgement is partly rational and partly intuitive and his call for higher ethical standards are all particularly expressive of the artistic parameters 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, 6) Realism and 7) Psychological character portrayal. Yet at least of equal importance in this article are his comments on superficiality, the alienation between writer and reader, the plethora of contending literary groups, "scrupulous falsifiers posing as revolutionaries", untruthfulness and lies in contemporary literature - even among fellow travellers. These arguments are all indirect indictments of 2) The VKP(b), from which he was excluded in February 1928 at about the time this article was first published, and of 3) Soviet society in which he was increasingly an outcast. One cannot help feeling Voronskij's sense of total abandonment in this article, which may be reflected in his incrimination of even the fellow travellers he had defended for so many years. In a sense all Voronskij now retained was a sentimental and heroic vision of 1) The October Revolution gone wrong, which one also senses in this article. The only parameters not to play a noticeable role are 4) Slavophilism and 8) Language mastery. In the composition of argumentative parameters the article is dominated by both ideological and artistic parameters. Seen in conjunction with the autobiography, there is in my view an indirect but quite important reference to Christianity when Voronskij identifies as the best pages in world literature Tolstoj's depiction of the dying but elated Andrej discovering a universal harmony in heaven.

4.2.19 "Ob industrializaciji i ob iskusstve"²⁰²

This article first appeared in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) and was not republished until Voronskij 1987a, cf. 7.4. It consists of 3 untitled chapters.

Again Voronskij's disillusionment is manifest: he attempts to answer why industrialization is not matched by literary progress but instead by what he sees as a

²⁰¹ *ibid.*

²⁰² "On Industrialization and Art".

modern version of *oblomovščina* - widespread sluggishness, indifference and ineptitude. He despairs over materialism (!), bureaucratization and alienation and sees only one way ahead: writers of prose and poetry must comprehend that industrialization and the corresponding psychological transformation do not mean submitting to either the "Russian way of being" or the negative aspects of the Russian "broad nature". The sooner they strive for a synthesis with American efficiency, the sooner their characters will cease being "mechanistic" builders of the future, and the richer, more differentiated and artistically convincing their character portrayals will be.²⁰³

More in detail, in chapter I Voronskij notes that industrialization - engines, electric lamps, stone buildings, factory pipes, steel, coal, tractors, steamers, railway lines, bridges - is being celebrated in poetry and prose, but he objects to the superficiality, especially in poetry. Some of this exaggeration is comprehensible, Voronskij states in an oblique reference to the first 5-year plan, since an adequate output of heavy and light industrial goods and agricultural products is vital to the Soviet Republics. Yet industrialization, he feels, is not accompanied by a clear understanding that building socialism first and foremost entails the decisive change of *social*²⁰⁴ relations among people on the basis of collectivization of the means of production. Socialism in his view destroys the reign of items over people, frees man from its power, replaces this power by direct, free and equal straight relations among people. The religion of capitalist society, he reminds his readers, is the fetishist relation to items.²⁰⁵ Extolling the theoretical differences between socialist and capitalist states, he points to a paradox in the predominance of items, and not people, in the Soviet literature celebrating socialist industrialization. The average worker is ignored; man is missing. A bleak, dead landscape in which epic poems, poetry, stories and tales do not inspire the reader is drawn up. Yet in art, Voronskij reminds his readers, man's relation to man is vital, and art must familiarize us with the variety

²⁰³ Voronskij 1928a:162-169.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.* p.163. Here the term "obščestvennyh" is italicized, but this is not indicated in Voronskij 1987:589. The article in Voronskij 1928a contains in all 5 italicized terms which are not emphasized in Voronskij 1987a, without any commentary.

²⁰⁵ *ibid.*

of human conditions and draw us nearer to one another.²⁰⁶

Inquiring why this detrimental itemization at the expense of human relations is taking place, he finds the answer in the alienation of prose writers and poets from the factory floor; they are not part of the life they are describing. At the same time the proletariat has not created artistic conditions which are sufficiently amenable: this explains why fellow travellers and proletarian writers seek their subject matter elsewhere, in groups and organizations. These are dominated by the former bourgeois and petty bourgeois literary trends and schools, he notes, and these writers remain superior to communists in terms of literary mastership. Existing bureaucratic distortions only reinforce the alienation between the writer and production life. It is of no avail, Voronskij believes, to send the writer to the factory in order to eliminate writer alienation from production life. What is needed is a realization that industrialization is not only the building of new factories; it also involves new feelings and thoughts, habits and rules. Industrialization is about social man, about interpersonal relations, and until Soviet prose writers and poets feel this, their work will remain unconvincing.²⁰⁷

In chapter II, Voronskij notes that building socialism requires more speed than before. He judges contemporary literature to be contaminated with *oblomovščina*:

[...]. I nužno prjamo skazat', čto sovremennaja chudožestvennaja literatura sama zaražena ešče oblomovščinoj. Čto takoe literaturnaja oblomovščina v naši dni - razgljadet' ne trudno. Literaturnyj Oblomov nikuda ne spešit - razve tol'ko za polučeniem gonorara; on unylo popisivaet, on pletetsja vsegda v chvoste žizni i pišet liš' o tom, čto davno uže otošlo v prošloe i nikogo ne volnuet; on nikuda ne zovet, tak kak sam ne znaet, kuda itti, on ne chočet po nastojaščemu podumat', on izbegaet ostrych tem, otgovarivajas' tem, čto ostrye temy - udel fel'etonistov; kogda on pytaetsja obobščit' čto-nibud', obobščeniya u nego polučajutsja krochotnye, ničtožnye, on privyk značitel'nye javlenija svodit' k pustjakam. Žizn' idet sama po sebe, a literaturnyj Oblomov suščestvuet sam po sebe. [...].²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ ibid. pp. 163-164.

²⁰⁷ ibid. p.165

²⁰⁸ ibid. pp.165-166 ([...]. And it has to be stated clearly that contemporary belles-lettres itself is still infected with *oblomovščina*. It is not hard to discern what this literary *oblomovščina* consists of these days. The literary Oblomov doesn't hurry anywhere unless he receives a fee; he despondently does a bit of writing, always drags along at the tail-end of life, and only writes about things in the past that do not disturb anyone; he is not heading anywhere because he does not know where to go. He doesn't want to think in present terms, and he avoids controversial issues, excusing himself that controversial

He finds *oblomovščina* in the recent preference of many writers for the past, shown in their repetitious, inadvertent relapses into the heroics of the civil war although they may be afraid of the heroic. The writer's attitude to politics is to view all "isms" - communism, socialism, Marxism - only as barren clichés. Voronskij finds this type of writer very common in Soviet literature as per 1927/28. Beyond literature Voronskij diagnoses *oblomovščina* all around, especially in the provinces. Contemporary writers ought to, in his opinion, engage in a decisive war against *manilovščina*, *chlestakovščina*, *philistinism*, *oblomovščina*. But often resourceful people "on post" prevent this from taking place, he states. What is called for is quick and economic work speed, inspiration, independence, great cultural improvements. Voronskij despairs that this should be the writer's concern, but he too often hides away.²⁰⁹

In chapter III Voronskij states that industrialization requires American efficiency and accuracy, which often is at variance with what he terms the "broad Russian character". Often the latter means hooliganism and drunkenness, purposeless mischief, idleness, contempt for organizational work and culture.²¹⁰ However, he adds consolingly, one may interpret this character differently: a great reserve of fresh untapped force with powerful instincts of life, flowering health, richness and variation in emotions and thoughts, the ability of a youth to avariciously absorb different impressions and respond to them, dissatisfaction with achieved results, sweeping work, eagerness in setting the agenda of the day, truth-seeking, self-confidence, absence of pettiness, pedanticism, arrogance and self-content, unspoiltness, endurance, observation.²¹¹

To this he, however, adds rather negative traits: the hope for "perhaps" and "probably", the propensity for feverish but short-term work, lack of self-confidence, the strength to be wise after the event. Voronskij finds that these inherent Russian

issues are the field of writers of serials. When he attempts to generalize something the results are meagre, insignificant; he is accustomed to letting significant events evaporate. Life runs its own course, and the literary Oblomov exists all to himself. [...]).

²⁰⁹ *ibid.* pp.165-167

²¹⁰ *ibid.* p.167

²¹¹ *ibid.* p.168

character traits have expressed themselves differently over time, sometimes in hooliganism, *ciganščina*, and in mindless killing, but that they, in conjunction with other traits, and with the influence and assistance of European thought and practice, have created Puškin, Gogol', Tolstoj, Belinskij, Gercen, Bakunin, Lenin. Voronskij at this point reflects on the qualities of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who also evinced many traits of the "broad Russian character." ²¹²

These reflections lead Voronskij to the conclusion, rather spectacular coming from a Russian Marxist, that the successful building of socialism presupposes the elision of American efficiency, German accuracy and British stubbornness with the sweeping, broad un-suppressed Russian character. The sooner Soviet prose writers and poets realize this, he maintains, the sooner they will stop conceiving of the builders of the future in mechanistic terms, and the richer, more varied and artistically convincing their protagonists will be. ²¹³

Most clearly, this article involves the parameters 2) The VKP(b), 3) Soviet society, 6) Realism and 7) Psychological character portrayal, and is thus another instance of a blend of ideological and artistical considerations. That industrialization has not been matched by an increased understanding that man and social relations, not items, are the most important aspect in advancing socialism must to a large extent be interpreted as an indirect indictment of the VKP(b) and Stalin's first 5-year plan, as well as a negative commentary on Soviet society and insufficient psychology, both in *belles-lettres* and in society at large. Some may find it paradoxical that a Marxist complains about excessive materialism and bureaucratization, but in my view this is a positive illustration of Voronskij's undogmatic ideological stance. In the same vein is his spectacular recommendation of a fusion between American efficiency, German accuracy and British stubbornness with the "broad Russian un-suppressed character". When Voronskij finds that man is missing in the prose and poetry celebrating industrialization, that to writers all "isms" are barren concepts, and when he berates the widespread *oblomovščina*, *manilovščina*, *chlestakovščina*, *ciganščina* and philistinism, this is also a negative commentary on 3) Soviet society

²¹² *ibid.*

²¹³ *ibid.* p.169.

and an illustration of insufficient 6) Realism. There are few overt religious or Biblical references in this article, apart from the noted pejorative reference to the religion of capitalist society being a fetishist relation to objects.

4.2.20 "Iskusstvo videt' mir (O novom realizme)" ²¹⁴

This final article for discussion in part 4 first appeared in the book with the same title *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a), and was later reprinted in Voronskij 1982 and 1987a, cf. 7.4. It was to be among the very last articles on literary aesthetics that Voronskij published during his own life time, since his writings 1928-34 were to be mostly reminiscences and fiction. It is subdivided into 4 untitled chapters.

In chapter I, Voronskij initially reflects on what great writers like Puškin, Tolstoj, Gogol', Lermontov, Blok, Belyj, Esenin, Flaubert, Ibsen and Marx have in common. Despite their differences, Voronskij reaches the conclusion that real art is the renaissance of early childhood and adolescent impressions. The secret of art lies in the revocation of primordial impressions. He states that Dostoevskij's art - his existential problems, rebellion, Grand Inquisitor, *karamazovščina*, *smerdjakovščina* and *svidrigajlovščina* - boils down to a hymn to renascent "sticky spring leaves". ²¹⁵ Voronskij believes that although art and religion are both preoccupied with procreation, art pursues its aims in living reality and is therefore by nature atheistic, materialistic and anti-religious, while religion pursues its objectives in an otherworldly existence. Religion, moreover, is seen to have had a detrimental effect on art, and it is no coincidence, Voronskij asserts, that art and religion were in conflict in the work of both Tolstoj and Gogol'. Another similarity between great artists is their experience of rare moments of inspiration and revelation, which Voronskij describes in quasi-religious terms despite his comments on the differences between art and religion above. ²¹⁶

In chapter II, he affirms the objective existence of beauty: the artist merely

²¹⁴ "The Art of Seeing the World (On The New Realism)". Cf. the translation and brief commentary by Choate 1998:361-391.

²¹⁵ Voronskij 1928a:85.

²¹⁶ *ibid.* p.86.

reveals what is already there. He claims at least three times in this article that "the world is beautiful by itself", ²¹⁷ which explains the title of and the epigraph to the present dissertation. Voronskij cites Marcel Proust's description of studying the painting of a young girl, and Tolstoj's "snjatje pokrovov" technique, as well as the persisting beauty of Venus of Milo to successive generations, in order to illustrate that beauty exists objectively in nature, and that the artist merely uncovers it. Influenced by Plechanov's Kantian views, cf. part 2, Voronskij stresses that the core of aesthetics is the *unselfish* enjoyment of beauty. ²¹⁸

In chapter III, he notes that according to Plechanov art is often opposed to rationalism. While rationalism is necessary in science and in practical matters, the secret of art - as Proust's art reveals - lies in revoking early childhood impressions untainted by adult rationalism. Moreover, Voronskij states, intuition allows the writer to free himself from the constrictions of rationalism and to identify with his subject matter. Among great works of art in which rationalism is absent or insignificant, he cites *Goljy god* by Pil'njak, *Brat'ja Karamazovy* by Dostoevskij, *Nos* by Gogol', and *Kon'armija* by Babel'.

[...]. Iskusstvo prekrasno tem, čto ono osvoboždaet nas ot ètogo čuvstva disgarmonii, s kotorym vseгда svjazana rassudočnaja dejatel'nost' [...].
Soderžanie èstetičeskogo čuvstva svoditsja prežde vsego k ètomu oščuščeniju vosstanovlennogo ravnovesija, čotja i ne isčerpivaetsja im [...]. ²¹⁹

Yet this is not to say that art is completely subjective: when the artist immerses himself in the flow of primordial, extra-rational, impressions and transforms them, he at the same time partially dissolves his "I" in these impressions. He does so not to escape, Voronskij states, but to recover the world "as it really is in its most lively and beautiful forms". ²²⁰ It follows, he notes, that our sense of art is truer the less it is

²¹⁷ *ibid.* pp.83,87,97.

²¹⁸ *ibid.* pp.87-91.

²¹⁹ *ibid.* p.94 ([...]. Art is beautiful because it liberates us from this feeling of disharmony, with which rational activity is always associated [...]. *The essence of aesthetic sentiments consist first and foremost of this feeling of restored balance, although it is not exhausted by it.*[...]).

²²⁰ *ibid.* p.95.

corrected by subsequent impressions. Artistic creation is essentially intuitive, Voronskij maintains but he qualifies this by adding that the artist also needs intellectual faculties and methods, because these are necessary, even decisive, in the post-impressional artistic transformation of the work of art.

In chapter IV he concludes that art always has strived, and will strive, to restore and reveal the world, which he repeats is beautiful by itself. Yet whereas pre-revolutionary art and literature were distorted by the artists' petty individualism and subjective ideas *about* the world (symbolism, mysticism, decadence, impressionism, futurism) which supplanted the real world, post-revolutionary art and literature have in contrast - despite many good writers like Gor'kij, Prišvin, A.Tolstoj, Babel', Pil'njak, Leonov, Vs.Ivanov, Fedin - unfortunately not been able to bridge the gap between art and life: literature is either too involved in propaganda and agitation or in naturalism and naive realism.²²¹ Echoing his views from 4.2.5 "Na perevale" (1923), he repeats that art is (still) at a cross-roads. The only way ahead he sees is neo-realism, a holistic, all-encompassing art that convinces us of the world's independent existence ("samostojatel'naja dannost' mira").²²² To achieve this he finds that a reorganization of art is needed, and new literary schools must be set up.²²³ He does not elaborate on this point, but it is difficult to ignore the reference to the Pereval manifesto, cf. 7.14, and to formulations in "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej", cf. 4.2.15.

Obviously 5) The classical Russian literary heritage is very present in this article, likewise 7) Psychological character portrayal. His reflections on the similarity among great writers, the vital importance of primordial impulses, and great writers' rare moments of intuitive and visionary insight, which he describes in quasi-religious terms, are all testimony to the primacy of these two parameters. His reflections on the objective existence of beauty and the beauty of the world by itself have at this stage become axiomatic in his literary aesthetics and can most simply be seen as a commentary on 6) Realism, partly also on 7) Psychological character portrayal. His

²²¹ *ibid.* pp.97-106.

²²² *ibid.* p.106.

²²³ *ibid.* p.113.

concluding views on the persisting shortcomings of contemporary literature and on salvation through neorealism and literary reorganization are in my reading indirect indictments against 2)The VKP(b), because the all-powerful party must assume responsibility for the situation he describes, and also criticism of 3) Soviet society. As in several preceding articles, we thus find a mixture of ideological and artistic parameters which typify the mature literary aesthetics of Voronskij. Finally, there are some negative references to religion, which is contrasted with art, but no references to the Bible.

4.3 Article and parameter combinations

The foregoing lengthy qualitative (interpretative) content analysis of which parameters prevail in the selection of 20 articles can be restated as follows:

<u>Article</u>	<u>Dominating parameters :</u>
4.2.1 "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni" (1921)	2,3,5 (not 1,4,6,7,8)
4.2.2 "Literaturnye otkliki" (1922)	1,2,3,4,6 (not 5,7,8)
4.2.3 "Iz sovremennykh literaturnykh nastroyenij" (1922)	1,2,3,4, 6 (not 5,7,8)
4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost' " (1923)	1,2,3,5,6 (not 4,7,8)
4.2.5 "Na perevale" (1923)	3,5 (not 1,2,4,6,7,8)
4.2.6 " O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach (1923)	2,5,6 (not 1,3,4,7,8)
4.2.7 "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chud. politike našej partii" (1923)	2,5, (not 1,3,4,6,7,8)
4.2.8 "O 'tekuščem momente i zadačah RKP v chud. literature (1924)	1,2,5,6 (not 3,4,7,8)
4.2.9 "Zametki ob iskusstve"(1925)	1,2,3,5,6,7 (not 4,8)
4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna" (1925)	2,3,6,7 (not 1,4,5,8)
4.2.11 "O mudroj točke" (1925)	2,3,5,6,7,8 (not 1,4)
4.2.12 "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" (1925)	2,6,7 (not 1,3,4,5,8)
4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925)	1,2,3,5,6,7 (not 4,8)
4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ" (1927)	1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (not 8)
4.2.15 "O federacii sovetskikh pisatelej" (1927)	2,3,7 (not 1,4,5,6,8)
4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927)	5,6,7 (not 1,2,3,4,8)
4.2.17 "Desjatiletie Oktjabrja i sovetskaja literatura" (1927)	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8
4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928)	1,2,3,5,6,7, (not 4,8)
4.2.19 "Ob industrializacii i ob iskusstve" (1928)	2,3,6,7 (not 1,4,5,8)
4.2.20 "Iskusstvo videt' mir" (1928)	2,3,5,6,7 (not 1,4,8)

Diagram 4.3.1

Thirteen tentative conclusions emerge:

1) the early domination by exclusively ideological parameters in 4.2.3 (1921) is quickly supplanted from 4.2.4 (1922) by the influx of artistic parameters.

2) 19 of the 20 articles are judged to involve a combination of *both* ideological and artistic parameters. Only one article - 4.2.16 (1927) - deviates from this pattern: By raising three artistic and no ideological parameters, this article is the closest we come in this selection to a purely artistic, i.e. non-ideological, article. Its appearance in 1927 apparently supports the proposition of Voronskij's increased sensitivity to artistic criteria as the 1920s unfolded.

3) Parameter 7 is absent in all articles 4.2.1 - 4.2.8 but included in all articles from 4.2.9 (1925) onwards. This confirms the increased importance of psychology in the second half of the 1920s in Voronskij's literary aesthetics.

4) Parameter 8 is discussed in some detail for the first time in our selection in 4.2.17 (1927). This confirms the increased importance in the second half of the 1920s of language in Voronskij's literary aesthetics.

5) One article stands out as a comprehensive statement on literary aesthetics, i.e. evokes all 8 parameters: 4.2.17 (1927). Since it embraces a decade, this may not be so surprising. Conversely one article distinguishes itself as a narrow statement, i.e. revolves around only 2 parameters: 4.2.5 (1923). This would seem to corroborate "the maturity argument", i.e. that there is a broadening perspective in Voronskij's literary aesthetics 1921-28. Yet 5 articles limited to only 3 parameters were published through the whole period: 4.2.1 (1921), 4.2.6 (1923), 4.2.12 (1925), 4.2.15 (1927), 4.2.16 (1927), contradicting the maturity argument.

6) The non-publication of 7 articles in Voronskij's posthumous books of collected articles limits as noted in 4.2 the representativity of these works. In my view articles 4.2.13, 4.2.14 and 4.2.15 may have been excluded due to their generally very critical

tone and content. Articles 4.2.7 and 4.2.8 may have been omitted due to their identification with the intra-party power struggle at the time. Articles 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 may have been viewed as too closely identified with the civil war period and thus not so representative of Voronskij's later, more mature views.

7) References to Christianity are rare prior to the mid-1920s. If they occur they refer mostly to the Old Testament, and are usually negative. Around 1926 a slight change is noticeable, and this is consistent with my findings in part 3 where I pointed out that Voronskij commenced work on his autobiography in mid-1926. In articles 4.2.14 (1927), 4.2.17 (1927) and 4.2.18 (1928) Christian references are still few, but clear and in several cases also positive, especially 4.2.18(1928), in my reading. Their occurrence coincides with the Christian orientation I found in the autobiography and could therefore reflect a tendency starting around 1926 to fuse Marxism with Christianity.

8) Beyond these points caution must be exercised in attributing too much importance to the occurrence or non-occurrence of parameters. Thus articles 4.2.3 (1922) and 4.2.18 (1928) raise 5 and 6 parameters, respectively, and can also be seen as "broad" statements. Yet the former article was published so early that it constitutes an exception to the maturity argument. Conversely, although 4.2.15 (1927) and 4.2.16 (1928) - each with 3 parameters - can be included in the "narrow focus" group, neither of these articles can be seriously described as "less mature" than other articles.

To delve deeper a more comprehensive analysis, e.g. embracing more of Voronskij's articles and including more indices, possibly even weighted for comparison, would be mandatory. While avoiding the frequency counts of key concepts typical of a quantitative content analysis, my qualitative variant does allow for the following observations regarding the 3 key terms "aesthetics", "beauty" and "truth", which I shall also comment more on in 4.4.

9) Aesthetics: The first explicit formulations in our selection occur in 4.2.4 (1923). As the first quotation under 4.2.4 illustrates, Voronskij was sensitized in 1923 to the

close relationship in aesthetics between beauty and artistic truth. In 4.2.12 (1925), the complexities in transmitting an aesthetical experience are acknowledged but it is only in 4.2.13 (1925) that he declared his aesthetical *credo* where the aesthetical experience is made contingent on beauty. In 4.2.16 (1927) in an attempt to reconcile utilitarianism with enjoyment, he distinguished between objective and subjective aesthetical perception. Yet in 4.2.17 (1927), he finds aesthetics insufficient and sees a need to introduce ethics. In 4.2.20 (1928) he repeats the Plechanovite-Kantian notion that the core of aesthetics is selfless enjoyment.

10) Beauty: The notion of beauty (*krasota, prekrasnoe*) does not occur explicitly in his articles in our selection until the mid-1920s. As shown under 4.2.9 (1925) it is then only suggested, as an echo of Plechanov's view that there are no absolute criteria for beauty. However in 4.2.13 (1925) he affirms the decisive role of the concept of beauty in art in conjunction with stating his aesthetical *credo*. In 4.2.18 (1928) he equates reality with beauty, stating firmly that there is an objective reality which is beautiful in itself. In 4.2.20 (1928), he adds that the artist merely reveals a beauty which is already there.

11) Truth: In a sense all Voronskij's writing as a Marxist literary aesthetician involves the concept of truth (*istina, pravda*). Any departure from the axiomatic dialectic materialist conception of history and society with its attendant literary realism is seen as false or untrue. Choate has argued that Voronskij in 1923-24 brandished Lenin's dialectic distinction between "absolute" and "relative" truth, ²²⁴ while Maguire has noted as one of Voronskij's shortcomings that he eventually "shrank at the specter of "absolute" truth that rose up before him". ²²⁵ My discussion shows that Voronskij's later writings reflected a search for the eternal or absolute truths which were rejected by Lenin. His frequent observations (especially from 1925 onwards) of the distortions in Soviet literature, e.g. in 4.2.10 (1925), 4.2.13 (1925), 4.2.14 (1927), are thus also reflections on the absence of truth in Soviet *belles-lettres*. He explicitly

²²⁴ Choate 1987:143-144 and 169-173.

²²⁵ Maguire 1987:257.

begins to apply the concept of truth only from 4.2.9 (1925), again in 4.2.10 (1925) and especially in 4.2.16 (1927) and 4.2.18 (1928). Illuminating in relation to his political and personal traumas is his assertion in 4.2.18 (1928) that a final condition for artistic truth is personal freedom.

13) Finally, I would like to draw some conclusions relating to the distribution of parameters 1-8 within different writer groups. I have shown that Voronskij repeatedly refers to fellow travellers, proletarian writers, and also to pre-October writers, Pereval writers and foreign writers. A reasonable and general inference from the 20 articles presented is illustrated in diagram 4.3.2 below.

<u>Parameter:</u>	<u>Writer category</u>				
	Fellow trav.	Proletarian	Pereval	Pre-Oct.	Foreign
1) October Revolution	0	+	+	-	-
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	-	+	+	-	-
3) Soviet society	-	+	+	-	-
4) Slavophilism	0	-	-	+	-
5) Russian literary heritage	+	-	+	+	+
6) Realism	0	+	+	0	0
7) Psych. character portrayal	+	-	+	+	+
8) Language mastery	+	-	+	+	+

Diagram 4.3.2

As shown e.g. fellow travellers are generally seen to be neutral (0) in terms of 1)The October Revolution, 4) Slavophilism and 6) Realism. Moreover, they are seen to be negative (-) with regard to 2) The RKP(b)/VKP(b) and 3) Soviet society but positive (+) in relation to 5) The Russian literary heritage, 7) Psychological character portrayal and 8) Language mastery. In part 5 I shall further refine this simplified projected distribution by in addition weighting the cross-matrixes and compare these with the distributions derived from 10 selected portraits.

4.4 In search of beauty and truth

As stated in 4.1.Voronskij's holistic view of art as cognition presupposed a fusion of Plechanovite sociology with the best standards of European and Russian classical literature. His odyssey in aesthetics led him to the inner psychological confines of the great individual writer whose "dynamic subconscious" and intuition

permitted the decoding of reality through an "aesthetical prism", thereby adding a surplus value to the object of art. Making his aesthetical credo contingent on beauty and truth from around 1925, and becoming increasingly disenchanted and frustrated with Soviet literature and politics as his comments on censorship and personal freedom reflect, his odyssey ended with his equation of beauty with truth. In my reading this paralleled his fusion of Marxism and Christianity in his autobiography, discussed in part 3. The quest suggested in the title of his autobiography may therefore well have been a quest for beauty and truth, for an elision of the 2 value systems that made the largest impact on Voronskij: Christianity and Marxism.

The title of Voronskij's last volume of literary aesthetics published during his lifetime - *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) (The Art of Seeing the World) calls for one last comment. To Voronskij cognition was dependent on especially the faculty of sight. This is seen i.a. in his concealed double reference to the faculty of sight in the autobiography, as I noted in 3.4.4. Voronskij in more than one sense was Valentin, one who saw and attempted to make others see.

4.5 Voronskij: literary critic and aesthetician, but also a theorist?

During the period under examination 1921-28, Voronskij was undoubtedly what Stacy terms a "normative literary critic".²²⁶ I have argued that beyond this Voronskij was a literary aesthetician. Thus in part 2 I noted that literary aesthetics and literary aestheticians seek to provide theories of beautiful literature, e.g. explaining its characteristics, its construction, genesis, or impact on readers. There is little doubt that Voronskij made contributions to literary aesthetics and even to literary theory as these concepts are usually defined.²²⁷ He was not only preoccupied by the literary text, which is the field proper of literary criticism, but he went beyond the textual confines and partly into descriptive aesthetics, which seeks to classify objects of art

²²⁶ Stacy (1974:3-6) distinguishes among 3 types of literary criticism: 1) normative (prescriptive, legislative), 2) theoretical and 3) descriptive or analytical. He groups all Russian literary criticism of the 1800s under type 1, in which he also groups the Russian Marxists. This type of literary criticism is directed at establishing norms for both the writer and reader based on an authoritative system of norms or values. The studies of Choate 1987, 1998 also conform to this view.

²²⁷ Jefferson, Robey 1985:7-23; Elder 1968:10-12.

(including literary texts) and to explain the genesis and perception of the aesthetically valuable, drawing on psychology, sociology and religion.

Do then Voronskij's literary aesthetics *in toto* amount to a theory of literature and can he, in addition to being a literary critic and aesthetician, also be considered a theorist? To answer this some comments regarding the concept of "theory" are needed. The ephemeral concept of "theory" is not defined by Gorpenko,²²⁸ Belaja,²²⁹ or Maguire.²³⁰ Yet this does not prevent them from generously attributing the term "theory" to Voronskij and his writings instead of the more appropriate terms "hypothesis" or "proposition".²³¹ But such grandiloquence is expressive of the theoretical fluidity in the humanities in general. As can be gathered from Lodge the concept of "theory" lacks a precise meaning in literary analysis.²³² In his recent survey Culler sees "theory" as an "unmasterable" and "intimidating" combination of 4 sets of properties:

- a) Theory is interdisciplinary - discourse with effects outside an original discipline.
- b) Theory is analytical and speculative - an attempt to work out what is involved in what we call sex or language or writing or meaning or the subject.
- c) Theory is a critique of common sense, of concepts taken as natural.
- d) Theory is reflexive, thinking about thinking, enquiry into the categories we use in making sense of things, in literature and in other discursive practices.²³³

This contrasts with the more exact meanings of "theory" cultivated in the social sciences, and particularly in the natural sciences: In the field of e.g. political science Pedersen et al. define "theory" as "a deductive system of hypotheses", preferably in the form of quantifiable causal analysis.²³⁴ In the natural sciences, e.g. mathematics,

²²⁸ Gorpenko 1980.

²²⁹ Belaja 1987, 1989.

²³⁰ Maguire 1987.

²³¹ *ibid.* p. 214 even refers to the "theory" of transformation (pervoplošćenie).

²³² Lodge 1988:X-XI.

²³³ Culler 1997:15.

²³⁴ Pedersen et al. 1997:269.

"theory" is much more rigorously defined, e.g. a "theorem" is seen as "a mathematical statement established by means of a proof".²³⁵

In my view Voronskij's contributions cannot be rated as a theory of literature as defined above, but only as a set of propositions or hypotheses. Voronskij himself avoided the term "theory" and did not consider his own views on literature as a theory e.g. in competition with Marxism. Maguire has questioned the quality, consistency and explanatory power of what he refers to variously as Voronskij's "theory of cognition" and/or "theory of art" and even "theory of transformation" (*perevoploščenie*), initialled in the article "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost".²³⁶ I agree with Maguire's main argument that Voronskij's "theory of cognition" - or propositions regarding cognition as I prefer - contained many inconsistencies, suffered many setbacks and revisions, and that Voronskij in his late articles of 1928 had come to the point where he viewed the function of art as similar to religion: through art (like religion) we can regain the lost paradise. Yet Maguire did not explore the issue of Voronskij's religiosity. Moreover, Maguire in my view somewhat unfairly criticized Voronskij for something Voronskij had not intended. Voronskij remained within a Marxist framework, which he redefined and expanded on some points, notably the role of intuition and the subconscious in artistic creation. But as we have seen in 4.2.12 "Frejdzizm i iskusstvo" (1925) he rejected Freudian psychoanalysis as an alternative to Marxism also in literary analysis, a point Maguire seems to have underestimated.²³⁷ The only Freudian concept he was partly positive about was the dynamic subconscious, but he stated that this was nothing new, that L.Tolstoj's superior concept of "snjatje pokrovov" anteceded Freud. However, both Gorpenko (1980) - as stated in the introduction - and Belaja (1987) view Voronskij as a major Soviet Marxist literary critic, theorist and aesthetician. Belaja refutes Maguire's view that Voronskij added little to Plechanovite aesthetics, by showing how Voronskij's classically oriented aesthetics superceded Plechanov's limited post-

²³⁵ Clapham 1996:277.

²³⁶ Maguire 1987:188ff.

²³⁷ *ibid.*,p.205ff.

Pisarev restoration of aesthetics.²³⁸ Belaja, though, has little to say about e.g. Kant whose concept of aesthetics Plechanov and later Voronskij adopted. Still, hers is not an uncritical interpretation: she does not conceal what she views as Voronskij's exaggeration of the role of intuition,²³⁹ and his occasional bad judgement, e.g. his low esteem of Majakovskij's work.²⁴⁰

In retrospect Voronskij's work has in the West not been judged to be of such scope and depth that he today is considered an important Marxist literary theorist or even aesthetician. This is presumably why he is omitted in Eagleton, Milne (1996). Yet the objection that he, like Plechanov, did not harmonize his sociological and aesthetical views, can also be levelled at all Marxists, and also at much of the thinking in Western and Russian aesthetics through the centuries, as shown in 2.0-2.1. In contrast with Plechanov who explained the object of art in terms of its "sociological equivalent", and who was sceptical to psychology as an explanatory element, Voronskij sought beyond this a "psychological equivalent" in the artist's mind to explain the genesis of art. Whereas Plechanov explained art and literature in terms of external criteria, Voronskij increasingly sought to explain great art and literature in terms of internal psychological character traits. Marxism nonetheless remained his theoretical framework, but he sought to enrich and define it. In this perspective he transmitted and defended the best standards of classical Russian and European literature. As suggested in parts 1 and 3, his main contribution in Soviet *belles-lettres* may thus in a sense have been to play a limited and temporary, humanizing, individualizing and modificatory role.

4.6 Summary and conclusions

In 4.1 I presented a set of 8 parameters, 4 ideological and 4 artistical. These express the predicament in aesthetics outlined in part 2 and also correspond to Voronskij's definition of literary aesthetics 1921-1928. In 4.2 the 8 parameters were used to analyze through qualitative content analysis a selection of 20 of Voronskij's

²³⁸ Belaja 1987:16ff.

²³⁹ Belaja 1987: 26-28.

²⁴⁰ *ibid.* pp.18-19.

key articles 1921-28 on literary aesthetics judged to be representative of his work. This generated 13 conclusions listed in 4.3. Voronskij's growing problems at *KN* together with his increasing disillusionment with Soviet literature led to his autobiographical fusion of Christianity and Marxism discussed in part 3. In part 4 we have seen that his articles on literary aesthetics in many ways paralleled this development by ultimately identifying beauty with truth and making this dependent on personal freedom. In 4.5 I concluded on this basis that Voronskij in addition to being a literary critic was more importantly a literary aesthetician. His contribution in literary aesthetics, however, while advancing several interesting propositions, does not amount to a theory of literature, as I define the term "theory".

PART 5: APPLIED LITERARY AESTHETICS: THE PORTRAITS

As stated in 1.1.2 the objective here is to analyze Voronskij's literary portraits in their final versions in Voronskij 1928b and 1929a. Soviet scholars, e.g. Neživoj, rated them the best part of Voronskij's legacy.¹ I view the portraits as case studies in, or applications of, his literary aesthetics analyzed in part 4. A selection of 10 portraits is presented, sub-divided into the 5 writer groups given in part 4, diagram 4.3.2, with two writers in each category. As in part 4 qualitative (interpretative) content analysis is employed to structure Voronskij's argumentation. Within each writer group I first give what I see as the salient points raised in the portrait. This is concluded by a cross-matrix with the 8 parameters defined in part 4. In this part I have also weighted each parameter on a scale ranging from +5 to -5. For each of the 5 groups I have computed what I term a "projected group score" (Pg-score) based on diagram 4.3.2. This is compared with a "derived individual score" (Di-score) extracted from the 10 portraits. The relationship between Pg- and Di-scores is seen as a measure of the consistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics, i.e. the level of consistency between his views presented in part 4 and in part 5. Concluding part 5, the results of the findings are verified by means of a statistical cluster analysis.

5.1 The literary portraits²

The literary portraits (*siluěty*, *portrety*) consist of a) individual portraits, b) double portraits (i.e. 2 writers/poets) and finally c) group portraits (i.e. more than 2

¹ Neživoj 1988:10.

² Though I have consistently employed the term "portrait", it must be pointed out that Voronskij initially referred to his portraits as "silhouettes". The series, begun in *KN* 1922#4(8):252-269 with Pil'njak, was entitled "literaturnye siluěty". The last writer for whom he used this epithet was Seifullina in *KN* 1924#5(22):291-300, cf. 7.3. Beginning in 1925, Voronskij ceased using this epithet, and in *KN* 1925#2(27): 249-276 Majakovskij was presented solely as "V. Majakovskij". In practice, portraits now blended with book reviews, cf. 5.3.2 (A.Tolstoj) and 5.5.2 (Klyčkov). Switching to the term "tipy" in his book *Literaturnye tipy* (1925b, 1927a), he presented a collection of his literary silhouettes before settling on the term "portrety" in his most complete and final collection of writer portraits: *Literaturnye portrety*, Vols. I-II, (1928b, 1929a), cf. 7.3-7.4. The distinctions between "silhouette", "type" and "portrait" could e.g. express the level of ambition and detail involved. Belaja 1989:202-204 related the shift to "portraits" from the mid-1920s to Voronskij's problems and his increased concern with psychology. Yet, as diagram 5.1.3 indicates, many of Voronskij's early "silhouettes" 1922-24 were long and detailed (e.g. Pil'njak), while several of his "portraits" 1925-28 were short and cursory (e.g. Fadeev). I have relied on the term as used in *Literaturnye portrety* 1928b, 1929a.

writers/poets). Though I shall mainly examine the first and largest category, which is summarized in diagram 5.1.3 below, I shall also comment briefly on the double portraits and group portraits. These two last categories were mostly employed for proletarian writers. As diagram 5.1.3 illustrates, the individual portrait was mostly used for fellow travellers, and occasionally for other categories of writers.

5.1.1 Double portraits

2 examples of double portraits could be mentioned: the Pereval poets Svetlov - Utkin (*Prožektor*1927#7) and the proletarian writers Belych and Panteleev (*Prožektor* 1927#13). When Voronskij found it convenient to combine 2 writers in one portrait, this was largely due to their perceived proximity in style, subject matter and genre. Compared to the individual portrait the double portrait was a more cursory and detached approach, though not so much as in the group portraits. Both examples quoted postdate Voronskij's departure from *KN*, which could help explain the element of detachment.

5.1.2 Group portraits

This was the standard medium for Voronskij to portray proletarian writers, e.g. in his early and favourable appraisal in 1921: "Pesni severnogo rabočego kraja", which highlights the "green communist" poets Artamanov, Semenovskij and Žižin from Ivanovo-Voznesensk.³ A later example from 1923 was his paternalistic assessment of Rabfak and Komsomol writers in "O gruppe pisatelej *Kuznica*".⁴ Here we find appraisals of the poets Gerasimov, Ljaško, Obradovič, Filipčenko, Kazin ("the youngest and most talented"), Kirillov, Sannikov, Aleksandrovskij, Poletaev and Makarov and the prose writers Ljaško ("the most gifted"), Volkov, Neverov, Nizovoj, Gladkov, Novikov-Priboj, Čuževskij and Jarovoj. Yet another group portrait

³ *KN* 1921#2:215-222, cf. 7.3. Republished in Voronskij 1923, cf. 7.4. Voronskij's positive assessment of these local anti-urban "green communist" poets in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, whom he knew from his work in *Rabočij kraj* 1918-1920, was conceived before his move to Moscow where he became much more critical of proletarian writers.

⁴ *KN* 1923#3(13):297-319 and *KN* 1923#4(14):309-334, cf. 7.3. Republished in Voronskij 1924b, and later under the title "Prozaiki i poëty Kuznicy" in Voronskij 1929a, cf. 7.4.

was "O grupe pisatelej "Oktjabr" i "Molodaja gvardija"⁵ from 1924, quite condescending and in some places even hostile. In it he reviewed the 8 proletarian writers Bezymenskij, Žarov, Rodov, Doronin, Golodnyj, Svetlov, Jasnyj and Kuznecov. Two special group portraits were Voronskij's largely positive review in 1923 of several Serapion brethren/fellow travellers, whose work had been published in the almanacs of Krug,⁶ and his review in 1923 of the proletarian prose writers Arosev, Libedinskij and Tarasov-Rodionov. Here his positive estimate of Arosev contrasts with his mostly negative assessment of Libedinskij and Tarasov-Rodionov.⁷ In Voronskij 1929a he published unrevised versions of these 3 proletarian writers as individual portraits. The review of the Krug almanacs is the first of 2 examples of a non-proletarian group portrait. He included in Voronskij 1929a an expanded individual portrait of Ognev, as well as an unrevised portrait of Malyškin, who both following this review had joined Pereval. Finally, his only group portrait written after 1924, and also his second non-proletarian group portrait, was the more general and shorter 6-page "defence speech" from 1925 entitled "O Perevale i Pereval'cach".⁸ This focussed on Veselyj, Svetlov, Jasnyj, Golodnyj, Kosterin, Družinin, Akul'sin, Nasedkin, Altauzen, Kovynev, Skuratov, Platonov, Zarudin, Kauryčev and Sergeeva, but excluded e.g. Klyčkov, Ognev and Malyškin, cf. 5.5.

I might add that the brevity of 2 of Voronskij's articles on the Serapion brethren and other fellow travellers, which were not reprinted in book form later, preclude these two reviews from being counted as group portraits.⁹

⁵ KN 1924#2(19):288-306, cf. 7.3. Republished in Voronskij 1925b, 1927a and under the title "Prozaiki i poëty Oktjabrja i Molodoj gvardii" in Voronskij 1929a, cf. 7.4.

⁶ "Ob almanachach "Krug", KN 1923#2(12):333-346, cf. 7.3, contained reviews of Pil'njak's *Tretja stolica* (pp.333-338), Budancev's *Mjatež* (338-341), Malyškin's *Padenie Daira* (pp.341-343), Ognev's *Ši respubliki* (p.343), Nikitin's *Noč*, (p.344), Zoščenko's *Koza* (p.344), Zamjatin's *Na kuličkach* (p.344), Fedin's *Anna Timofeevna* (p.345) and Kaverin's *Pjatyj strannik* (p.345).

⁷ KN 1923#1(11):290-305, cf. 7.3.

⁸ Voronskij 1925b. Republished in Voronskij 1927a, 1929, cf. 7.4.

⁹ "Serapionovy brat'ja. Al'manach pervyj", KN 1922#3(7):265-267 and "Peterburgskij al'manach. Kniga pervaja", KN 1923#3(7):267-268, cf. 7.3.

5.1.3 Individual portraits

The death of Voronskij's childhood favourite, the populist (*narodnik*) Korolenko (1853-1921) in 1921 made Voronskij's article of him in *KN* that year ¹⁰ more an obituary than a portrait; disregarding this, the first of Voronskij's 24 individual literary portraits to appear in *KN* ¹¹ - 16 were in fact first published in *KN* - was of Pil'njak, followed by Vs.Ivanov, Zamjatin, (all three in 1922), then Esenin, Leonov and Babel' (all three in 1924) and others. ¹² A complete list of the 24 portraits is given in diagram 5.1.3 below. Most of these appeared originally as individual portraits in *KN*. In a few cases already noted (Ognev, Malyškin, Arosev, Libedinskij, Tarasov-Rodionov) these had been first published as parts of group portraits, but were later presented as individual portraits in Voronskij 1929a; thus I have included them among the 24 individual portraits.

Voronskij was quite outspoken, e.g. condemning Zamjatin for his enmity towards the Bolsheviks, ¹³ and he writes openly, though sympathetically, of Esenin's alcoholism and scandals and later also of his suicide. Voronskij's correspondence (cf. 7.5-7.7) corroborates his public attitudes. While not fully representing all the 75 writers, 104 poets and 101 critics published in *KN* during his editorship, ¹⁴ the portraits, seen by Soviet literary historians as his major contribution, ¹⁵ did serve as vehicles for his general views on literature. They are thus the best practical measure we have of his applied literary aesthetics; therefore I consider them "case studies".

This does not mean that I assume a causal linkage between his aesthetical

¹⁰ *KN* 1921#2:324-327, cf. 7.3.

¹¹ Choate 1987:81-96 commented on the "literary silhouettes" of Pil'njak, Ivanov and Zamjatin without mentioning that Voronskij from 1925 no longer employed the term "literary silhouette" as mentioned in an earlier footnote. Nor did he consider possible distinctions between "silhouettes", "types" and "portraits". Further he selected apparently at random the 4 "portraits" of Babel', Majakovskij, Esenin and Hamsun, adding in a footnote 14 other silhouettes/portraits (pp.231-275).

¹² B. Pil'njak (*KN* 1922#4(8):252-269), Vs. Ivanov (*KN* 1922#5(9):254-275), E. Zamjatin (*KN* 1922#6 (10):304-323), L. Leonov (*KN* 1924#1 (18):271-289), S. Esenin (*KN* 1924#3(20):295-305) and I. Babel' (*KN* 1924 #5(22):276-291), cf. 7.3.

¹³ Vaagan 1997a.

¹⁴ Dinerštejn 1983:537.

¹⁵ Dement'ev 1982:22-23; Vozdviženskij 1984:106.

views, presented in part 4, and his literary portraits presented in part 5. The portraits were published 1922-29¹⁶ and ran parallel to his more theoretical articles 1921-28 presented in part 4. His literary portraits may thus have influenced his more theoretical articles on literary aesthetics. What we have is thus a reciprocal or nonrecursive linkage, or even interdependence, between the articles in parts 4 and 5. What usually differs is the level of abstraction. The theoretical elements are usually but not always - a case in point is the portrait of Belyj - concentrated in the more general articles on literary aesthetics, while the concrete application of his views is usually elaborated in the portraits. In 5.2.1 below, I shall discuss how I compare the theoretical articles and portraits.

His portraits offer a fascinating and subjective survey of developments in Soviet Russian literature during the 1920s, and of developments in Voronskij's own thinking on aesthetics. Ranging from his early and guarded appraisal in 1922 of Pil'njak's view of the October Revolution as a slavophile peasant riot to his resolute rejection in 1928 of what he saw as Belyj's pathological religious mysticism, his literary aesthetics are throughout characterized by the difficult balancing of ideological, against artistic, considerations examined in parts 2 and 4. As we shall see ideology and Christianity were perceived as far less damaging in the case of foreign writers (Hamsun) than in the case of Russians (Zamjatin, Belyj, Klyčkov, A.Tolstoj).

Voronskij's portraits allowed him to comment on selected works, often presented in *KN*, by the author in question. Thus his portrait of Pil'njak was followed by a 16-page excerpt in the next *KN* issue of Pil'njak's novel *Golyj god* (1921). While such parallel appearances in *KN* were the rule, there were exceptions, the most obvious being Zamjatin. Voronskij's portrait of Zamjatin was not matched by a presentation of Zamjatin's novel *My* in *KN*: Voronskij had received the manuscript but refused to publish it, cf. 5.6.1.¹⁷

In diagram 5.1.3 below the 24 individual portraits Voronskij published 1922-29

¹⁶ The Ognev portrait was also written during the years 1922-28, but was published in Voronskij 1929. It had comprised one page in *KN* 1923#2(12):343 but had been expanded to 7 pages in Voronskij 1929a.

¹⁷ Vaagan 1997b.

have been listed. The 2 first columns show the name of the writer and when and where the portrait was first published. Most of the portraits (effectively 16) had first been published in *KN* and later reappeared in other journals and books, occasionally with revisions, cf. 7.2 and 7.4 - 7.5. The names of 10 writers analyzed in 5.2 are marked with a *. The third column indicates the writer's ideological affiliation. As shown 11 writers were widely regarded, also by Voronskij, as fellow travellers and 6 as proletarian writers during the 1920s, as shown. However, in *Literaturnye portrety* (1928b-29a) Voronskij omitted Pereval and cursorily classified Klyčkov as a fellow traveller and Ognev and Malyškin as proletarian writers, although all 3 were at some point associated with Pereval, cf. 3.2.9 and 7.14. He even included the group portrait "O Perevale i pereval'cach" in part III, proletarian writers.¹⁸ This confusion may indicate that, due to Pereval's problems noted in parts 3-4, Voronskij in *Literaturnye portrety* downplayed Pereval. Further, in the foreword and list of contents in *Literaturnye portrety* (1928b) he grouped A.Tolstoj as a pre-October writer, although I shall argue in 5.3.2 that in the portrait he is seen as a fellow traveller which is what I have indicated in brackets. The uncertainty regarding the grouping of particularly A.Tolstoj, Ognev and Klyčkov is further commented on in 5.2 below and will be clarified in the ensuing analysis of the each writer. In diagram 5.1.3 I have therefore established the category of 3 writers in brackets. The 2 last columns seek to gauge the scope of the portrait by stating how many works are reviewed or referred to and finally how many pages the portrait consists of in Voronskij 1928b, 1929a. Several points of interest emerge. Of a total of 575 pages devoted to his 24 individual portraits, 332 pages (58%) were allocated to fellow travellers, 84 pages (15%) to proletarian writers, 82 pages (14%) to pre-October writers, 40 pages (7%) to Pereval writers, and finally 37 pages (6%) to foreign writers. Further, the longer estimates dealing with several works were reserved for fellow travellers, Pereval, pre-October and foreign writers, while proletarian writers (except Bednyj) are dealt with in shorter portraits addressing only one or a few works.

¹⁸ Voronskij 1929a:328.

Voronskij's individual writer portraits 1922-29

<u>First publication</u>		<u>Writer category</u>	<u>Works reviewed</u> ¹⁹	<u>Pages</u> ²⁰
<u>1922</u>				
B. Pil'njak	KN 1922#4(8):252-269	Fellow trav	11	43
Vs.Ivanov	KN 1922#5(9):254-275	Fellow trav.	6	42
E.Zamjatin *	KN 1922#6(10):304-323	Pre-Oct.	6-7	35
V.V.Veresaev	<i>Pravda</i> 1922#288:2-3(20Dec)	Fellow trav.	1	11½
D.Bednyj	<i>Pravda</i> 1922#98:2-3 (5 May)	Proletarian	var. (y)	45
<u>1923</u>				
N.Tichonov	<i>Prožektor</i> 1923#1:14-15	Fellow trav.	3(x,y)	11
A.Arosev	KN 1923#1(11):293-299	Proletarian	2	13
Ju.Libedinskij*	KN 1923#1(11):299-303	Proletarian	1(3)	7
A.Tarasov-Rodionov	KN 1923#1(11):303-305	Proletarian	1	4
A.Malyškin	KN 1923#2(12):341-343	(Pereval)	1	4
<u>1924</u>				
S.Esenin	KN 1924#1(18):271-289	Fellow trav.	var.	38
L.Leonov	KN 1924#3(20):295-305	Fellow trav.	var.	28
I.Babel'	KN 1924#5(22):276-291	Fellow trav.	3	31
L.Sejfullina *	KN 1924#5(22):291-300	Fellow trav.	3	24½
<u>1925</u>				
V.Majakovskij	KN 1925#2(27):249-276	Fellow trav.	var.	49
K.Hamsun *	KN 1925#8(33):234-246	Foreign	3	24
<u>1926</u>				
A.Tolstoj *	KN 1926#9(44):194-208	(Fellow trav.)	21	27½
A.Novikov-Priboj	<i>Komsom. Pravda</i> 1926#117:3 (23 May)	Proletarian	1-2	7
A.M.Gor'kij	<i>Pravda</i> 1926#79:2 (7 April), #80:3 (8 April)	Fellow trav.	var.	26
S.Klyčkov *	KN 1926#10(45):215-224	(Pereval)	4 (x,y)	20
<u>1927</u>				
A.Fadeev *	<i>Prožektor</i> 1927#7:20-21 Voronskij 1927b	Proletarian	1	8½
<u>1928</u>				
A.Belyj *	Voronskij 1928b	Pre-Oct.	8 (x,y)	47
M.Proust *	<i>Pereval</i> No.6, 1928:341-352 Voronskij 1928b	Foreign	2	13
<u>1929</u>				
N.Ognev *	(KN 1923#2(12):343) Voronskij 1929a	(Pereval)	7	16

Diagram 5.1.3

¹⁹ x = prose; y = poetry.

²⁰ Based on Voronskij 1928b, 1929a.

While some caution must be exercised in interpreting such estimates, which depend on a writer classification that is questionable in at least 4 cases as noted, the overall trend is clear: Voronskij was most interested in fellow travellers and least interested in proletarian and foreign writers.

In some cases later additions were made to the portraits, suggesting Voronskij tracked these writers' development. Two cases in point are Sejfullina and Ognev. By contrast no substantial additions have been made in the portraits of proletarians. Only 6 portraits feature proletarian writers: Bednyj, Arosev, Libedinskij, Tarasov-Rodionov, Novikov-Priboj, and Fadeev. The only year Voronskij portrayed more than one proletarian writer - 1923 - was in a group portrait. One motive for this condescending attitude was of course the virtual boycott of *KN* by VAPP which Voronskij complained about in "O federaciji sovjetskich pisatelej", cf. 4.2.15 and 3.2.8. A 2-page obituary of the proletarian Larissa Rejsner²¹ does in my view not qualify as a portrait and has been excluded above. In the case of Esenin the portrait "proper" consists of 38 pages, to which Voronskij (1928b) added 2 articles, both completed after Esenin's suicide in 1925, which have been excluded here.²²

On closer scrutiny the individual portraits reveal a common trait: Voronskij invariably finds ideological faults with pre-October, fellow travellers and Pereval writers, but, excepting Zamjatin and Belyj, he allows artistic considerations to compensate for perceived ideological shortcomings. With proletarian writers he is surprisingly fair given his dispute with RAPP and Oktjabr'. He is in one case even positive (e.g. Arosev), but overall he remained throughout ideologically and artistically critical of proletarian writers, as we would expect from parts 3 and 4.

Voronskij's appraisal of all types of writers is characterized by the dichotomy we have analyzed in parts 2 and 4: On the one hand - often with writers he liked - he tends to first praise the artistic and technical aspects (Hamsun, Proust). This is

²¹ *KN* 1926#2(37):235-236, cf. 7.3. Cf. the translation in Choate 1998:248-249.

²² In Voronskij 1928b:191-259, the Esenin portrait comprises 38 pages (pp.191-229), the obituary 15 pages (pp.229-245), and Voronskij's reminiscences of Esenin another 14 pages (pp.245-259). Thus 3 articles on Esenin occupy 67 pages, which is more than any other writer or poet Voronskij ever portrayed. The literary portrait "proper" of Esenin had been first published in *KN* 1924#1(18):271-289. The obituary "Ob otošedšem" was published in *KN* 1926#1(36):227-236 and an article of reminiscences "Iz vospominanij o Esenine" was added in Voronskij 1928b:245-259.

tempered by ideological considerations, e.g. mild reservations (Hamsun, Pil'njak, Proust) and reprimands (Tolstoj, Veresaev). With writers he disapproves of (Zamjatin, Belyj) he tends to first list his ideological objections, and then add some praise of artistry towards the end. Especially younger fellow travellers, with a potential for being won over to the Party, like Tichonov, are a select group chosen by Voronskij as examples in order to advance Soviet Russian literature. The Pereval writers are favourably represented, both individually and as a group in "O perevale i pereval'cach". An exception is his negative view of Klyčkov whom, it must be stressed, Voronskij did not link with Pereval. His portrait of the poets Svetlov and Utkin, though quite positive, notes some defects. It is a measure of Voronskij's objectivity that he is fair in his individual portraits of proletarian writers like Arosev and to some extent also Libedinskij and Bednyj, but this is counterbalanced by the overall negative appraisal given in the group portraits "O gruppe pisatelej Oktjabr' i Molodaja gvardija" and "O gruppe pisatelej Kuznicy". His reserved, but positive, view of Fadeev is wholly explained by what Voronskij saw as Fadeev's successful emulation of L.Tolstoj.

Thus on the basis of diagram 5.1.3 we may therefore conclude that Voronskij in terms of his individual literary portraits did give preferential treatment to fellow travellers, Pereval writers, pre-October writers, and foreign writers, to the detriment of the proletarians. Voronskij himself would no doubt have agreed with such an observation. As shown in 4.2.4 "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost' " he observed that since 95% of Soviet Russia's population are fellow travellers in relation to the party (i.e. non-members), it is understandable that fellow travellers also tend to dominate the literary scene. Many of the portraits, once having been published in *KN*, were subsequently featured in other journals and in books.

Many other comments could be made regarding diagram 5.1.3, i.a. which writers were *not* portrayed: leading contemporary writers as e.g. the Serapion brethren Zoščenko, Nikitin og Fedin ²³ as well as Bulgakov, Ėrenburg, Prišvin, Oleša, Kataev, Pasternak and others were all spurned. As noted earlier of the 9 writers reviewed in

²³ Terras 1985:398.

his article on the almanacs of Krug in 1923²⁴ Budancev, Nikitin, Zoščenko, Fedin and Kaverin were not individually portrayed although Pil'njak, Malyškin, Ognev and Zamjatin were. A given writer's non-portrayal by Voronskij in *KN* certainly did not preclude that writer appearing in *KN*, or that his/her work remained uncommented on by Voronskij. Several of these writers were featured in other journals Voronskij edited, especially *Naši dni* where he e.g. published both Pasternak, Zoščenko and Mandel'stam, cf. 3.2.2. Not all promising Soviet writers, including even those published in *KN*, could expect to be portrayed by Voronskij.²⁵ As stated in 3.2.7 Voronskij visited on Gor'kij's advice the Serapion brethren in late 1921 after which Vs.Ivanov and Pil'njak promptly became household names in *KN*. Among the Serapion brethren Voronskij did not portray were those listed by their mentor Zamjatin in his lecture "The Serapion brotherhood" in 1922²⁶ Zoščenko, Lunc, Slonimskij, Nikitin, Fedin, Kaverin (but not Šklovskij, Pozner, Gruzdev, Polavskaja, Tichonov), who all attended Zamjatin's lectures. By only portraying Pil'njak and Vs.Ivanov from this group Voronskij possibly tried to downplay this group's prominence in view of his negative portrait of their mentor Zamjatin. As noted by Edgerton²⁷, Voronskij had previously given a propitious review of the first almanac of the Serapion brotherhood, including some favourable comments of Zamjatin.²⁸

Voronskij's selective 24 individual portraits must be measured against the 75 prose writers, 104 poets and 101 critics who, as previously noted, appeared in *KN* during his editorship. In some cases, e.g. Bulgakov, who Voronskij did not correspond with and who did not contribute to *KN*, from 1922 mainly published his sketches and serials in the emigré journal *Nakanune* in Berlin, including *Belaja gvardija* (1924), and from 1925 Bulgakov dedicated himself to the theatre, a genre

²⁴ *KN* 1923#2(12):333-346, cf.7.3.

²⁵ Voronskij had a virtual monopoly on literary portraits in *KN* 1921-27. The only literary portrait in *KN* 1921-27 not written by Voronskij was in *KN* 1924# 7-8(24-25):352-367 where Jakubovskij in the section entitled "Literaturnye kraja" published "Literaturnye siluety: P.Nizovoj i A.Novikov-Priboj".

²⁶ Ginsburg 1970:75-80.

²⁷ Edgerton 1949:47-64.

²⁸ *KN* 1922#3(7):265-268, cf.7.3.

which was not strongly represented in *KN*.

Yet it is intriguing that Voronskij did correspond with both Zoščenko, Nikitin, Ėrenburg og Prišvin, who all contributed to *KN* without being portrayed. Zoščenko, who made his debut in 1921, was during the 1920s (and 1930s) almost as popular and widely read as Gor'kij. Voronskij received 3 known letters in 1922 from both Zoščenko and Nikitin, and an additional 5 known letters from Nikitin in 1922/23, cf. 7.5. Nikitin first appeared in *KN* 1921#3 with the short story (*skaz*) *Mokej*, and again in *KN* 1922#4(8) with excerpts from the story *Rvotnyj fort*, and yet again in *KN* 1926#5(40) with *Vosstanie mertvych*. To all appearances Nikitin therefore deserved a literary portrait. The story *Prestuplenie Kirika Rudenko* by Nikitin was published in *KN* 1927#9-11(56-58) when Voronskij had left the journal. Voronskij's non-portrayal of the Serapion brother Nikitin was perhaps attributable to Trockij's accusation against Nikitin of "especially malicious cynicism" in *Literaúra i revoljucija*, and Trockij's option that he must either change his attitude or emigrate.²⁹

The absence of a portrait of Oleša is comprehensible since his first appearance in *KN - Zavisť* - took place in *KN* 1927#7-8(54-55) when Voronskij no longer was editor. The fellow travellers, however, obviously had an interest in being published in the leading contemporary literary journal. As the controversy between Voronskij and *Na postu* and VAPP gained pace 1924-27, the fellow travellers were no longer as hesitant to be published in *KN* as they had been initially in 1921-22. Despite the Bolshevik parentage of *KN* Voronskij's independent editorship meant that their appearance in *KN* could not be seen as ideological acclimatization as long as *voronščina* and *krasnonovščina* remained an issue.

5.2 A selection of 10 individual portraits

Based on Voronskij 1928b and 1929 I have chosen for closer consideration 10 literary portraits - 2 fellow traveller writers (Sejfullina and A.Tolstoj), 2 proletarian writers (Libedinskij and Fadeev), 2 Pereval writers (Ognev and Klyčkov), 2 "pre-October" writers (*Zamjatin* and Belyj), and finally 2 foreign writers (Hamsun and

²⁹ Trockij 1923:53-55.

Proust).³⁰ As mentioned by Voronskij in the preface to *Literaturnye tipy*³¹ there have in some instances (Klyčkov, Ognev) been text revisions in comparison with the first version in *KN*, and even in relation to Voronskij (1925b). Posthumous editions (Voronskij 1963, 1976, 1982, 1987a, 1987b) must be considered less representative than these early editions. One case in point is his portrait of Sejfullina in Voronskij 1987a, cf. 5.3.1.2. Another example is the portrait of Ognev, cf. 5.5.1, which Voronskij included in *Literaturnye tipy*,³² but for unknown reasons it was excluded from Voronskij 1987a, which nevertheless purports to be the most representative volume of his work. In saying this I do not question the good intentions of the publishers and editors.

The selection of 10 comprises roughly 42% of Voronskij's 24 individual portraits, and covers all the years 1922-29 with at least one portrait every year: 1922:1; 1923:1; 1924:1; 1925:1; 1926:2; 1927:1; 1928:2 and 1929:1. With the exception of Hamsun I have chosen to not include the portraits which already have been discussed by Maguire or reviewed by Choate.³³ Moreover, my selection contains the only female portrait Voronskij ever wrote (Sejfullina). As far as possible the selection has been designed to allow a comparison within each category of 2 portraits written at intervals of several years.³⁴ This will throw some light on the level of consistency in Voronskij's assessment over time within each writer category.

³⁰ As indicated in 1.1.1 and above, Voronskij (1928b:6) distinguished among 4 broad writer categories: 1) pre-October writers; 2) fellow travellers; 3) proletarian writers and 4) foreign writers. In addition I believe it is justifiable to credit him with a fifth group - Pereval, on the strength of the group portrait "O Perevale i pereval'cach" mentioned in 5.1.2. and my comments in 3.2.9. In relation to my selection of 10 writers I might mention that from Voronskij's category 1 I have included Zamjatin and A.Tolstoj, from category 2: Klyčkov and Sejfullina; from category 3: Ognev, Libedinskij, and Fadeev; and finally from category 4: Hamsun and Proust. The differences between my categorization and Voronskij's is limited to A.Tolstoj, Ognev and Klyčkov. While I shall comment more on this in the discussion of each portrait, I could say here that Voronskij seems to be in some doubt himself regarding A.Tolstoj's classification. Based on what Voronskij states, cf. 5.3.2.2, it is possible to regard A.Tolstoj, as I do, as a fellow traveller. As for Ognev and Klyčkov cf. 5.5.

³¹ Voronskij 1928b:6.

³² *Literaturnye tipy* 1929a:79-95.

³³ Maguire 1987:101-147 discussed Pil'njak and Vs.Ivanov, who were the two first writers Voronskij portrayed. Choate (1987:231-275) reviewed the portraits of Babel', Majakovskij, Esenin and Hamsun and offered some comments on the literary silhouettes of Pil'njak, Ivanov and Zamjatin (pp.81-106).

³⁴ The portraits of Ognev and Sejfullina were later expanded.

Secondly, it facilitates cross-group comparisons. At this point some preliminary comments on such comparisons are mandatory.

5.2.1 Pg- and Di-scores ³⁵

The same 8 parameters defined in part 4 will be applied also here to structure the analysis. Here they will be employed in the comparison of the two writers within each of the 5 writer groups. In diagram 5.2.1 the 5 groups of writers have been cross-tabulated with the 8 parameters. To refine the projected distribution already given in diagram 4.3.2, and to express the perceived strength or level of each parameter and allow a meaningful comparison, I make use of a "projected group score" (Pg-score). The Pg-score, which expresses the expected score of each writer group with regard to the 8 respective parameters, is my normative, quantitative expression of how strong, weak or neutral the 8 parameters could reasonably be expected to be in relation to each writer group based on part 4. Scores vary on a range from +5 to -5. Diagram 5.2.1 therefore also aptly expresses the dilemma in Voronskij's literary aesthetics, the potentially counteractive nature of ideology and artistry.

Projected group scores (Pg-scores) for different writer groups

	Fellow trav.	Proletarian	Pereval	Pre-Oct.	Foreign
<u>Parameter:</u>					
1) October Revolution	0	+4	+4	-3	-2
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	-2	+4	+1	-3	-2
3) Soviet society	-1	+3	+1	-3	-2
4) Slavophilism	0	-5	-1	+2	-2
5) Russian literary heritage	+2	-3	+2	+3	+2
6) Realism	0	+3	+4	0	0
7) Psych. character portrayal	+3	-3	+2	+3	+3
8) Language mastery	+5	-1	+2	+3	+3

Diagram 5.2.1

Diagram 5.2.1 illustrates e.g. that Voronskij *a priori* viewed Pre-October writers in general as negatively inclined towards the October Revolution, the RKP(b)/VKP(b) and Soviet society (-3), but favourable towards Slavophilism (+2), neutral (qua modernists) in terms of literary realism (0), equally favourable towards

³⁵ I am indebted to Professor Eva Skovlund, University of Oslo, for her comments on statistical analysis in this part and her help in the final cluster analysis.

the classical Russian literary heritage (+3), psychological character portrayal (+3) and language mastery (+3). Voronskij's general assumption was thus that pre-October writers only had limited significance for Soviet literature. The Pg-score of foreign writers did not vary significantly from that of pre-October writers except for 4) Slavophilism where foreign writers were generally expected to be negative and pre-October writers positive. It is indicative that of Voronskij's 24 individual portraits only 2 were of foreigners. Given Soviet Russia's isolated position noted in parts 1, 2 and 3, Voronskij had few expectations in ideological terms from foreign writers. Yet his background and inclinations sensitized him to foreign writers' artistic potential, as e.g. 4.2.6 "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach" illustrated. The Pg-score of Pereval writers was unique in that their positive scores on the ideological parameters 1-3 were matched by positive scores on the artistic parameters 5-8. As for proletarian writers they were understandably seen as the most positive on parameters 1-3, and also as the most negative with regard to 4) Slavophilism. Yet their hostility with regard to the artistic parameter 5, and their deficiencies with respect to parameters 7 and 8 explained Voronskij's overall condescending attitude towards this group, e.g. in 4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna"(1925). Finally as for fellow travellers, as a group Voronskij had few illusions about their ideological preferences (parameters 1-3). Their attitude to 4) Slavophilism and 6) Realism was ambiguous as e.g. Pil'njak's authorship revealed.

In addition to the Pg-score I shall make use of comparable scores derived from each individual portrait, termed "derived individual scores" (Di-scores). The Di-scores are also my normative, quantitative reading of what Voronskij states in the portrait with regard to each writer's score on the 8 parameters. These may correspond to or deviate from the matching Pg-score. Matrix combinations of individual writers in part 5 are accordingly filled with two sets of scores: Pg-scores reflecting what could be expected based on Voronskij's general literary aesthetical views presented in part 4, and Di-scores stating what is perceived to have been stated in the "case study", i.e. the applications of Voronskij's literary aesthetical views.

Since as stated earlier my intention is not to perform causal modelling or sophisticated statistical computations, I shall limit the analysis to an interpretation of perceived consistencies between sets of Pg-scores and Di-scores which are seen as

expressive of consistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. Discrepancies between Pg- and Di-scores of 3 or more ³⁶ are judged as significant and in my reading express inconsistencies in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. Thus a Pg-score of +2 for a proletarian writer on a given parameter matched by a Di-score of +2 on the same parameter is interpreted as consistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. This is not so uninteresting as it may sound since Voronskij as stated earlier has been criticized for vagueness and changing positions. By contrast, a Pg-score of -2 for a pre-October writer on a given parameter as compared with a Di-score of +4 on the same parameter is seen as a significant inconsistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics, and warrants particular comment.

Since different combinations of positive and negative scores may generate the same total score, the computation of total scores for each group of writers with a view to comparing these would mean loss of information. Put differently each set of scores is unique and is used as a basis for the computations concluding this part. ³⁷

Concluding part 5 I shall therefore verify the findings by means of a simple statistical cluster analysis.

5.3 Fellow traveller writers

A.Tolstoj, to a lesser extent Sejfullina, frequently published in *KN* during Voronskij's editorship. Although both corresponded with Voronskij, of the two it was Sejfullina whom Voronskij rated highest in personal and artistic terms.

5.3.1 Lidija Nikolaevna Sejfullina (1889-1954)

The daughter of an Orthodox priest and herself a teacher by profession, Sejfullina was among the founders in 1922 of the journal *Sibirskie ogni*, in which Voronskij in 1928 published "O chudožestvennoj pravde", cf. 4.2.18. Sejfullina relates how she and other members of Sibirgosizdat in late 1921 in remote Novonikolaevsk admiringly devoured the first issues of *KN* headed by the helmsman

³⁶ A lower limit would generate a higher number of significant discrepancies, and vice versa.

³⁷ I had initially computed a set of total scores but discussion with Professor Eva Skovlund convinced me of refraining from such a procedure.

Voronskij in distant Moscow, and how this helped motivate the launching of *Sibirskie ognj*.³⁸ Her story *Virineja* (1924), which was first published in *KN*,³⁹ and which Voronskij comments on in his portrait, was later staged as a successful play.⁴⁰ She resigned from the board of *Molodaja gvardija* in December 1923 due to the journal's criticism of *KN* and Voronskij.⁴¹ Apart from *Babel'* and *Pil'njak*, she was among the few who risked visiting Voronskij during his exile to Lipetsk in 1929.⁴² In the 1930s Sejfullina was mostly active in journalism and education. Sejfullina regularly contributed to *KN* during the years 1923-25: *V budnyj den'. Rasskaz*⁴³, *Mužickij skaz o Lenine*⁴⁴, *Virineja - povest'*⁴⁵, and finally *Vstreča. Povest'*⁴⁶. The second contribution cited was one of 3 obituaries of Lenin published in *KN* 1924#1(18), the others being by Voronskij and Preobraženskij.

5.3.1.1 Correspondence

The only known correspondence between Voronskij and Sejfullina are two previously unpublished letters⁴⁷ which she sent him in 1923 and 1925. In her first letter the tone was formal:

Uvažаемyj tovarišč Voronskij,
 Pis'mo Vaše polučila i očen' mnogo hotela napisat' Bam, no 10:20 vyezžaju v
 Moskvu. Nadejus' lično pogovorit'. Zastat' Vas v "Krasnoj Novi" trudno, kak
 mne peredavali, tak kak u Vas mnogo drugoj raboty. Ja že probudu v Moskve
 vsego šest' dnej, i uvidet' Vas mne neobchodimo. Bud'te dobry, čisla 15:20 ijulja,

³⁸ Sejfullina 1969 (IV):232ff.

³⁹ *Virineja* first appeared in *KN* 1924#4(21):26-96, cf. Sejfullina 1968 (II):435 and Maguire 1987:296,323-324.

⁴⁰ Surkov 1971(VI):729-730; Terras 1991:575; Kasack 1992:1117-1118.

⁴¹ Belaja 1989:108.

⁴² Voronskaja 1997:81,95.

⁴³ *KN* 1923#7(12):23-35.

⁴⁴ *KN* 1924#1(18):162-169.

⁴⁵ *KN* 1924#4(21):26-96.

⁴⁶ *KN* 1925#7(32):35-98; *KN* 1925#9(34):86-107; *KN* 1925#10(35):83-108.

⁴⁷ They are not included in Dinerštejn (1983) and are not mentioned in Sejfullina's index cards at RGALI. They are located in Gor'kij Archives/IMLI, cf. 7.7, letters 1-64-1 and 1-64-2.

soobščenie na Moskovskij moj adres, kakogo čisla, v kakoj čas i gde ja mogu zastat' Vas? Adres: Moskva, Novaja Basmanaja. D.10go, kv.19. Vasiliju Pavloviču Pravduchinu dlja Sejfullinoj.

S tov. privetom
L.Sejfullina

1923go goda,
26go ijunja ⁴⁸

The formal tone had disappeared two years later, suggesting the cordial relationship that must have developed:

17 ijulja 1925
Leningrad

Uf! Nakonec-to končila. Šlju pudlevuju rukopis'. Esli nikak že ujet v odnu knigu, to už, požalujsta, razdelite tak: bol'suju snačala, a menšuju potom. Pjat' glav v odnu knižku objazatel'no! A tri vo vtoroj. Požalujsta, revet' budu esli inače razdelite. 21go vyezžaem v Moskvu, togda peregovorim lično. Sejčas tak ostočertelo pisat', celuju bibliju ispisala čto končaju pis'mo. Privet Sime Salomonovne, Galočke i Babelju. A Veročke ne nado. Den'gi objazatel'no prigotov'te. Kulakov dušit' nado!!! Avans ne vypitajte Gosizdat den'gi ne otdaet. Pozvonite im, ei-bogu, éksploatatory! Povešt' prošu chvalit'. Ja ee vsju slezami ulila. Čut' prosušila. Krepko žmu ruku.

L.Sejfullina

Pravduchin kljanjaetsja ⁴⁹

It is reasonable to assume that they must have exchanged more than the 2 quoted letters since Sejfullina i.a. refers to a letter by Voronskij not registered in 7.5-7.9.

⁴⁸ Honoured comrade Voronskij, I have received your letter and wanted very much to write to you, but at 10:20 I am leaving for Moscow. I hope to talk to you personally. I have been told it's difficult to find you at Krasnaja Nov' since you have much other work. I shall be staying in Moscow six days in all, and it is essential that I meet you. Please inform before 15:20 of July at my Moscow address what date, time and where I can find you? My address is: Moscow, Novaja Basimanaja, house 10, flat 19, c/o Vasilij Pavlovič Pravduchin. With comradely greetings, L.Sejfullina, 26 June 1923.

⁴⁹ Uf!. At last I have finished. I am sending the draft manuscript. If it in no way will appear in one book, then please divide it as follows: *The bigger first, then the smaller*. Five chapters in one booklet is essential!. And three in the second. Please, I shall scream if you divide it otherwise. We leave on the 21 for Moscow, then we can talk personally. Now I am so fed up with writing, I have written a whole Bible, so I shall finish this letter. Regards to Sima Salomonovna, Galočka and Babel'. But don't bother about Veročka. It's essential to prepare the money. The kulaks must be suffocated!!! You won't pay an advance <if> Gosizdat will not provide money. Phone them for God's sake, the exploiters! I ask you to praise the story. I have covered it with tears. I've just dried up. Warm greetings. L.Sejfullina. Pravduchin sends his regards.

5.3.1.2 The portrait

Voronskij's portrait of Sejfullina was the only one he ever wrote of a female writer (and playwright). As noted in diagram 5.1.3 and in 7.3, it first appeared in *KN* 1924#5(22):291-300. Thereafter they became friends, at least until the early 1930s. He published a sequel article "Puti i pereput'ja (po povodu poslednych veščej L.Sejfullinoj)" in Voronskij 1928a, cf. 7.4, and this was added to the portrait in *Literaturnye portrety* (1928b, 1929a).⁵⁰ On the basis of diagram 4.3.1, and bearing in mind the late addition to the portrait, we would expect it to reflect all 8 parameters discussed in part 4. The fellow traveller Pg-score in diagram 5.2.1 means that we would expect a Di-score in this range.

Voronskij first reflects on what he perceives as the negative depiction of peasants and the countryside in Russian literature since Turgenev's mid-1800 *Zapiski ochotnika*. In his estimate the situation has been improved by the influx of the masses in literature, primarily the peasantry, less so the worker, in the post-revolutionary period.⁵¹ He views Sejfullina as a purely post-October writer in terms of the content, character and direction of her work focussed on the peasantry, the intellectuals and "the children of the revolution". Without explicitly referring to the titles of her published works in *KN* cited above, he mentions that Sejfullina, 35 years old in 1924, had mostly written about Siberia and the Orenburg steppes 1917-19. Whereas the *sibirjak* Vs.Ivanov is seen to describe an exotic Siberia where the east and Asia dominate, Voronskij finds Sejfullina's Siberia more familiar and her peasants resemble the ones of Rjazan' and Tambov. Whereas Ivanov portrays the Siberian peasant during the turbulent period of Red partisans battling Kolčak, Sejfullina's countryside is clasped in a fierce confrontation between poverty and wealth during the upheaval of the old system.⁵² Referring obliquely to the problems noted in 1.0 between the Bolsheviks and the peasantry, he notes that Sejfullina's peasants refrain from joining the ranks of the poverty-stricken partisans and support the emerging *kolčakovščina* because they are suppressed by poverty and Soviet power. Her characters are seen to

⁵⁰ Voronskij (1928b:446-470). This 5-page article was added without commentary as an untitled and unnumbered final chapter to her portrait in Voronskij 1987a:265-269.

⁵¹ Voronskij 1928b:446-447.

⁵² *ibid.* p.448.

be one with the village, the earth, the fields - "here they grew up; here too they will die".⁵³

Yet hers is not an old, half-blind priestly and servile countryside with greedy kulaks; Voronskij views her work as new and engaging, intoxicated with the first effects of the revolution. Her work confirms that instinct rather than rational thought prevail. Although numerous, the peasants are culturally and politically isolated in adapting to the new realities. The city is far away, the local intelligentsia is completely opposed to the poverty unleashed by the revolution. There is a realization that the old system is moribund, but her protagonists have as yet no clear idea of how to proceed, and there are no leaders. Her character portrayals reflect in Voronskij's view both psychological depth and truth. He estimates that few others could have presented such artistically rich material so convincingly.

[...]. Sejfullina ne opravdyvaet, "ne prinimaet", ne skryvaet, ne podkrašivaet, ej èto ne nužno, ibo dlja nee Sofrony svoi, rodnye, ona vidit, kak žizn' svoju oni kladut bezzavetno i neogljadno za toržestvo ugnetennoho truda. [...].⁵⁴

Citing how Sejfullina's impoverished countryside has only just awoken to the new realities, Voronskij stresses that Sejfullina is the forerunner of a new type of village writer.

[...]Sejfullina - bytopisatel'nica ne derevni voobščè, sumarnoj, ne sibirskogo ili orenburgskogo mužika, a derevenskoj bednoty, vpervye real'no oščitivšej svoju silu. V ètom ee pervaja osobennost' kak chudožnika [...].⁵⁵

Later he emphasizes that she has succeeded in looking at the village with the eyes of a simple village woman, like a family member of her protagonists. Voronskij gives examples of Sejfullina's favourite village vocabulary, with her simple country

⁵³ *ibid.* p.449.

⁵⁴ *ibid.* pp.450-451 ([...] Sejfullina neither corrects, "accepts", conceals, nor adorns; she does not need this, since to her her Sofrons are kin; she sees how they expend their lives selflessly and boundlessly for the victory of oppressed labour. [...]).

⁵⁵ *ibid.* p.453 ([...] Sejfullina does not write about everyday themes in the countryside in general, summarily, not about the Siberian or Orenburg peasant, but about countryside poverty, which for the first time has sensed its own strength. This is her main characteristic as an artist [...]).

vernacular and realistic dialogues. Finding her expressiveness to be distilled from life itself, not from *literaturščina*, he praises her stories *Virineja* and *Peregnoj* (1922).⁵⁶ Her language is seen to be simple and clear; her occasional intellectuals sound bookish in their descriptions and dialogues.

Seeing her work in a literary historical perspective, Voronskij states that Sejfullina's work throws light on the conceit of Gončarov, recalled by Tolstoj, but it also probes into the oneness, the extremes of village life depicted by Čechov, Bunin, and moreover by Gor'kij.⁵⁷ In Voronskij's view especially *Virineja* and *Peregnoj* make one realize how far things have developed since Turgenev's blushing girls. Tolstoj and Čechov, he reminds readers, wrote about the complete way of life ("splošnoj byt"), Gleb I. Uspenskij pondered about it. The "best Russian minds" spoke of it, beginning with Belinskij through to Plechanov. But this extreme way of life has gone, Voronskij notes, adding that Turgenev's girls and Čechov's sisters are all dead. In a caustic description of pre-October culture and literature Voronskij states

[...].Vmesto nich - truslivo-primančivye Antoniny, ozloblennaja, tupaja obyvatelščina, kankan, kokain, tu-stěp, isterički, chvatajuščiesja gde-to za rubežom za faldy Kerenskogo [...].⁵⁸

Voronskij states enthusiastically that great changes are taking place in Rus'; everything is boiling, moving and flourishing. For the first time the personality and individuality of the working man is making its appearance felt. In this context Sejfullina's story *Virineja*, in his opinion, is the best she has written and one of the best things in the whole post-October literature.⁵⁹ Sejfullina is seen to be advancing, and in *Virineja* she has found herself. He also notes that her proclivity for abrupt endings in her stories does not change this estimate.

Voronskij gives an account of *Virineja* as a new, active and fully developed

⁵⁶ *ibid.* p.454. *Peregnoj* was first published in *Sibirskie ogni* 1922#5, cf. Sejfullina 1968 (I):337.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* p.455.

⁵⁸ *ibid.* pp.455-456 ([...]. Instead of these - cowardly-alluring Antoninas, embittered and dull philistinism, can-can, cocaine, two-steps, hysterics, all groping somewhere abroad for the tailskirts of Kerenskij [...]).

⁵⁹ *ibid.* p.456.

woman character who finds fulfilment with the Bolshevik Pavel Suslov who has returned from the front to his native village. She dies defending her child against the whites. *Virineja* in his estimate is a new type of Soviet woman, made possible only in Soviet Russia. She bears witness to the powerful growth of working man's personality, in particular the village woman, where the extreme way of life ("splošnoj byt") long has been particularly noticable. Among the good qualities of this type of woman, Voronskij lists her Russianness, her Siberianness, strength, ability to work hard, to abide by the unbreakable law of the earth, give birth, her femininity etc. Yet despite *Virineja's* identification with her native village, she is aware of the city's pre-eminence, Voronskij cautions. He views *Virineja* as a fully realistic character, different from previous generations of idealistic female protagonists. She is the key to Sejfullina's artistry, and exemplifies a firm rebelliousness and love of life, combined with hostility towards insincerity, hypocrisy, arid and lifeless good deeds, and unfitting intellectualism.⁶⁰

Voronskij quotes Lev Tolstoj's assertion that all emotions could be grouped into three types: pride, sexual desire and moodiness over life. Sejfullina has emulated Tolstoj's masterful uncovering of these emotions, e.g. in her protagonists Auntie Zina in *Pravonarušitely* (1922)⁶¹, Antonin in *Peregnoj*, and the engineer in *Virineja*.⁶²

Voronskij also comments on Sejfullina's novel *Putnik* (1924),⁶³ which is dedicated to the Russian intellectuals. Voronskij finds the novel promising, but weaker than *Virineja* and *Peregnoj*. He judges her stories of intellectuals to be generally weaker than her stories of the peasantry; the language more bookish; the characters are drier and depicted with far less warmth than e.g. *Virineja*; there is not the directness of her native village. The main character is the social revolutionary Litovcev and his wife. He is a complainer, who cannot come to terms with October or the Bolsheviks. To him October remains an evil spell, the victory of unrestrained chaos. He is

⁶⁰ *ibid.* pp.457-459.

⁶¹ *Pravonarušitely* first appeared in *Sibirskie ogni* 1922#2, cf. Sejfullina 1968 (I):333.

⁶² *ibid.* p.460.

⁶³ *Putnik* (1924) was later excluded from Sejfullina's *Sobranie sočinenij*, Vols. I-IV, Moscow 1928, and from the 4-volume 1968-69 edition.

contrasted with the uncomplaining Bolsheviks Tipunov and Šeremetev. Voronskij credits Sejfullina with very true renderings of 1918 when Bolsheviks had to fight whites and purist intellectuals but also cope with sabotage and anarchic-peasant chaos. The Bolsheviks moreover had to struggle with their own comrades who were drunk with the first effects of the revolution.⁶⁴ Voronskij also comments on Sejfullina's stories of children, which he judges are written with love and great sophistication. The best of these in his view is *Pravonarušiteli*. In conclusion, Voronskij estimates that Sejfullina's art is active and illustrates the joy of life. He reflects that she does not like depicting blood or death, which were integral to the period she is describing, her evasions of these elements may explain the abrupt endings of her stories. Acknowledging that Sejfullina is considered to be a fellow traveller, he concludes that in her artistic perception of present Soviet Russia he finds more communism than one sometimes finds with those who have specialized in the persecution of fellow travellers. Her village writings are seen to be accessible to many workers and peasants, and hence exemplify the artistic literature the Soviet countryside needs.⁶⁵

In a sequel added later to the original portrait,⁶⁶ he rates *Kain-kabak* (1926)⁶⁷ as her most significant recent work. This story deals with the superfluous man ("lišnij čelovek") caught in the course of revolutionary events. In his judgement superfluous people continue to receive the attention of many Soviet writers. He cites L. Leonov's *Vor* and *Barsuki*, the stories by A.Tolstoj *Golubye goroda*, a number of stories by B.Pil'njak, to a considerable extent Vs.Ivanov's *Golubye peski*, Anna Karavaeva's *Berega* and Loginov-Lesnjak's *Stepnye tabuny*. Echoing the pessimism in his articles from around 1928 cited in part 4, Voronskij finds this interest not to be accidental. After the first chapter of partisanship and peasant heroics, a second chapter has been composed these last years by a number of contemporary writers addressing the loss

⁶⁴ *ibid.* pp.460–462.

⁶⁵ *ibid.* p.462.

⁶⁶ "Puti i pereput'a (po povodu poslednych večšej L.Sejfullinoj)" was published in Voronskij 1928a:183-188 as a sequel to the original portrait, cf. 7.5, and was added without any explanation to the portrait as an unnumbered and untitled 5-page chapter in Voronskij 1928b:462–470. Voronskij 1987a:266-269 also fails to note this addition, and here even the chapterization cited has disappeared.

⁶⁷ *Kain-Kabak* was first published in *Novyj mir* 1926#4 and #6, cf. Sejfullina 1968 (II):443.

of revolutionary fervour by the recently brave and self-abnegating partisan revolutionary heroes.⁶⁸

Alibaev, the main protagonist in *Kain-kabak*, fails to assimilate these new conditions and cuts a tragic figure, becomes a superfluous man. Voronskij cautions his readers that one must in time understand and feel the course of events; otherwise even the most dexterous meet a political and social death. The best passages in the whole book, in his view, are the ones on the snowstorm on the steppe; here he states that everything is described truly and convincingly.

Sejfullina, Voronskij believes, perceived of the revolution primarily as the victory of the peasant workers, of free, poor chaos. Of course, Voronskij adds, she recognizes that this chaos is transitory, that the genuine organizing force is to be found in the cities. However, he believes that Sejfullina understands this with her mind and not her emotions.⁶⁹

He sees her as emotionally antagonistic to all kinds of regimented discipline, which is why she hates everything landlordlike, aristocratic intellectual which appears artificial. In his view Sejfullina believes that norms formulated as impersonal laws are incapable of grasping life's complexities. Sejfullina's story *Vstreča* (1925)⁷⁰ is thus written partly on the theme of the instincts of life. While he does not rate this work as successful, he finds it expressive of her antagonism to norms.⁷¹

Sejfullina's rejection of narrow-minded rationality is seen by Voronskij as one of the reasons for her long absences from writing and her silence and pondering in 1926-1927. He detects that she is alienated, and he agrees that in everyday life much is bleak and grey. In the story *V obščem i celom* (1925)⁷² her protagonist El'ga typically tells a friend that she lost her youth after the revolution and that nobody is happy. There are no illusions left. Whereas Voronskij accedes that one cannot ascribe

⁶⁸ *ibid.* p.464.

⁶⁹ *ibid.* p.466.

⁷⁰ *Vstreča* first appeared in *KN* 1925#7(32):35-98, #9(34):86-107 and #10(35):83-108, cf. also Sejfullina 1968 (II):440.

⁷¹ *ibid.* p.467.

⁷² *V obščem i celom* (1925) was later omitted from Sejfullina's *Sobranie sočinenij*, Vols.I-IV, Moscow 1928 and from the 4-volume 1968-69 edition.

to the writer everything the various characters think and say, one can hardly doubt that the inclinations of some of Sejfullina's protagonists are expressive of her own state of mind. Voronskij adds that he will not elaborate this point about decadence, lack of freshness since he finds it better merely to show the writer her tendencies, without dwelling on this.⁷³

In conclusion, Voronskij reflects on the presence of a serious crisis among Soviet writers. Repeating views we have already seen from 4.2.5 "Na perevale"(1923), 4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925) and 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitatel'" (1927), he states that Soviet literature is at a crossroads. The reader is now more demanding and all themes seem to be worn out. Many writers, including Sejfullina, have lost their favourite characters, which in his view explains why Sejfullina writes so little. In this situation silence seems more honest than enforced repetition, and often temporary silence can prove beneficial to a writer, he notes. Voronskij believes that it is not a coincidence that Babel' is silent and Pil'njak is travelling. Writers are caught in a squeeze:

[...]. Pravda, tut est' svoi opasnosti: iskusstvo - trebovatel'naja ljubovnica, kogda ee nadolgo ostavljajut, ona uchodit k drugomu. Odnako ešče bolee opasno "potrafljat" rynku i toptat'sja na meste. Zdes' - vernaja smert' [...].⁷⁴

He now judges that the main thing for the writer is to be honest and really believe, whatever the cost, in the artistic power of the revolution, in its mighty movement forward. He concludes reassuringly that new themes and heroes will be found.

As for Sejfullina's score on the 8 parameters these will be discussed in 5.3.3 when compared with A.Tolstoj.

5.3.2 Aleksej Nikolaevič Tolstoj (1883-1945)

In *KN* in 1921 Voronskij had given an extremely negative review of the first

⁷³ *ibid.* p.469.

⁷⁴ *ibid.* p.470 ([...]. Art is a demanding mistress; when she is left alone she seeks others. Yet it is even more damaging to flood the market and stand on the same place. This is the real death [...]).

volume of Count A.Tolstoj's *Choždenie po mukam*, published in Paris (1921)⁷⁵, cf. 7.3. Noting that the novel had been published by the exile journal *Sovremennye zapiski* and had been hailed by white emigrant critics as a masterpiece, he in marked contrast emphasized the novel's failures: it failed to convey the spirit of the civil war and it transfigured events in a "grey sticky cobweb" and "grey autumnal darkness" due to its lack of artistic animation. Voronskij was particularly vexed by Tolstoj's rendering of the Bolshevik underground, finding it totally false. Affirming that Tolstoj was only giving vent to his aristocratic hatred, Voronskij added that

[...]. Takie vešči kak roman A.N.Tolstogo na tri četverti produktovany imenno social'noj nenavist'ju, soslovnym égotismom, prezreniem k Michrytam, slepotoj i neponimaniem épochi, žaždoj vernut' staroe. Èta literatura reakcionna do poslednej stroki, ibo èto daže ne literatura: talant pošel na službu samym nizmennym, reakcionnejšim social'nym strastjam. [...].⁷⁶

Prior to his return to Soviet Russia in April 1923 (he had left in 1919 for France and settled in Germany), not much by A.Tolstoj had appeared in *KN*. This changed with his return. During Voronskij's editorship 1921-27 the following works by A.Tolstoj were published in *KN*: *Ačlita*,⁷⁷ *Na rybnoj lavle*,⁷⁸ *Golubye goroda*,⁷⁹ *Giperboloid inženera Garvina*,⁸⁰ *Azef. Sceny iz istoričeskij p'ecy*,⁸¹ and finally *Slučaj iz Bassejnoj ulice (iz chronika Leningradskogo gubsuda)*.⁸²

⁷⁵ *KN* 1921#1:223-227. Cf. Maguire 1987:249.

⁷⁶ Voronskij, *KN* 1921#1:226 ([...]. Such things as A.N.Tolstoj's novel are three quarters dictated exactly by social hatred, limited egotism, contempt for the Michrytes, blindness and lack of comprehension of the epoch, a thirst to restore the old. This literature is reactionary to the last drop, for this is in the last analysis not literature: talent has been put to the service of base reactionary social fervour [...]).

⁷⁷ *KN* 1922#6(10):104-149; *KN* 1923 #1(11):52-91; *KN* 1923#2(12):36-57.

⁷⁸ *KN* 1923#6(16):26-32.

⁷⁹ *KN* 1925#4(29):3-32.

⁸⁰ *Giperboloid inženera Garvina. Roman*, *KN* 1925#7(32):26-32; *KN* 1925#8(33):38-68; *KN* 1925#9(34):108-132. *Giperboloid inženera Garvina. Kniga II*, *KN* 1926#4(39):3-17; *KN* 1926#5(40):3-16; *KN* 1926#6(41):112-131; *KN* 1926#7(42):93-111; *KN* 1926#8(43):88-108; *KN* 1926#9(44):3-39. *Garin-diktator*, *KN* 1927#2(49):104-118.

⁸¹ *KN* 1926#1(36):3-23 (with co-author P.E.Šegolev).

⁸² *KN* 1926#12(47):68-77.

After his return, Tolstoj concentrated on the genre of science fiction before he underwent a metamorphosis in the late 1920s and became a prominent and cherished Soviet writer of historical novels.⁸³

5.3.2.1 Correspondence

Their published correspondence consists of 2 letters, cf. 7.5. Both letters are from Tolstoj to Voronskij and both were sent from Berlin, the first is dated 19 May 1922, the second February 1923. Though not so personally close to Voronskij as Babel' and Pil'njak, A.Tolstoj apparently often visited Voronskij during the 1920s,⁸⁴ and it is probable that more than 2 letters were exchanged. The first letter confirms that Voronskij - presumably in a letter not included in 7.5 - had requested Tolstoj to contribute to *KN*. In the second letter, written shortly before Tolstoj's return, it is obvious that Tolstoj had considerable expectations regarding the publication of his writings in Soviet Russia and that he believed Voronskij could be of great assistance. Yet after Tolstoj's return, no known correspondence between the two took place. Three years elapsed after Tolstoj's repatriation before Voronskij saw fit to reconsider Tolstoj in detail.

5.3.2.2 The portrait

As shown in diagram 5.1.3 and in appendix 7.3, the portrait entitled "Aleksej Tolstoj (Žuravli nad Gnilopjatami)" was first published in *KN* 1926#9(44):194-208. Although illiteracy by 1926 had been reduced to nearly 50% and the economy had improved as noted in the introduction, Voronskij's pessimism concerning Soviet literature had become evident. By 1926 his literary aesthetics had broadened to include 7 parameters, as shown in diagram 4.3.1, article 4.2.14 (1927). We would accordingly expect to find these 7 parameters in this portrait. Whereas I treat A.Tolstoj as a fellow traveller, Voronskij - as explained in 5.2 - viewed him as a pre-October writer. His Di-score would accordingly be in the range between the Pg-score for fellow travellers and pre-October writers outlined in diagram 5.2.1.

⁸³ Surkov 1972(VII):542-547; Terras 1991:571-572; Kasack 1992:1313-1314.

⁸⁴ Voronskaja 1997: 81.

The portrait consists of 27½ pages⁸⁵ and is sub-divided into 6 untitled, numbered chapters. In chapter I Voronskij credits Aleksej Tolstoj's depictions of landowner-Zavolž'e (a reference to the cycle *Zavolž'e* 1909-11) as juicy, rich and still enthralling. The subtitle is a reference to the first epigraph taken from A.Tolstoj's *Čudaki* (1911): "Oh cranes, cranes in the autumn sky above Gnilopjaty". The other epigraph is from A.Tolstoj's *Lunnaja syrost'*: "A pity, pity to dream of what cannot be". Voronskij finds that Tolstoj's novels and stories of Zavolž'e are artistic obituaries of a degenerated landowner aristocracy. Though written at times with sympathy and insight, Tolstoj's verdict is interpreted as clear. In parts Tolstoj, in Voronskij's opinion, also offers vivid descriptions of people outside the proprietary estate: the kulaks, merchants, the new city with stock exchanges, avarice, conflicts, prostitutes, restaurants and markets. Qualifying his earlier opinion - cited above - of *Choždenie po mukam*, he now sees Tolstoj's writing about pre-revolutionary intellectuals as a succinct and artistic portrayal of the profligacy and spiritual waste of those times.⁸⁶

He credits the 46-year old Tolstoj's artistic acumen and psychological insight in communicating egotism, mistakes, distortions, meanness and existential despair. Yet Voronskij sees the author's renderings of February and October 1917 as far less successful, and adds that Tolstoj's attempts to penetrate the revolutionary underground are complete failures. Still, in Voronskij's view it is only A.Tolstoj and Prišvin among the generation of pre-revolutionary writers who manage to relate to contemporary realities. He even finds that A.Tolstoj deals with Soviet reality with great circumspection and care.⁸⁷ He sees this as indicative of the old-school-of-writers' problems in reflecting revolutionary Soviet Russia. Thus he states that it is not coincidental that A.Tolstoj's work over the last years - *Ačlita* (1922), *Bunt mašin* (1924), *Sojuz pjati* (1925), *Giperboloid* (1925-27) - dedicates so much attention to the fantastic, to fairy tales. Voronskij dislikes Tolstoj's willingness to dwell on today's Paris and Berlin, with bar and restaurant scenes, with coquettes and billionaires, with

⁸⁵ Voronskij 1928b:128-155.

⁸⁶ *ibid.* pp.130-131.

⁸⁷ Voronskij was not averse to seeing A.Tolstoj as a fellow traveller and not only as a pre-October writer.

"ours abroad". In this respect he views as most successful the "ours abroad" in *Ibikus* (1924), where Tolstoj is seen to be in full command of his subject matter. His novels *Giperboloid* and *Aĕlita* are engaging and are superior to contemporary writing by other Soviet writers on similar themes. Yet Voronskij's impatience with A.Tolstoj is evident when he states that this is still not commensurate with Tolstoj's talent; his protagonists are often schematically conceived, devoid of Tolstoj's uniqueness and vivacity. Paris, London, New York are not this writer's home ground, Voronskij states, and it is sufficient to compare them to *Detstvo Nikity* (1919-20), which Voronskij rates as the best work A.Tolstoj has ever written.⁸⁸

The reason is clear: here Tolstoj is considered to be on home ground. *Golubye goroda* (1925) illustrates, according to Voronskij, that A.Tolstoj is at his best when he writes about what is close and near; as soon as he distances himself he dissipates into fantasies. Thus in *Aĕlita*, Voronskij asserts, it is not Mars and the Martians who are interesting, but the Red Army soldier Gusev. Similarly, in *Giperboloid* it is the Soviet detective Šel'ga who is viewed as most intriguing, and Voronskij adds that this is apparently the first Soviet detective who is not a Nat Pinkerton or Sherlock Holmes.⁸⁹

In chapter II Voronskij adduces that the best in Tolstoj's work remains daily life (*bytovoe*). With real artists, though, this is not an end in itself; rather it is a means of transmitting the artist's emotions and thoughts. Daily existence is a shell; once removed one will find in a great artist's work a kernel which gives the artist a unique quality. If no core is in evidence, then what we have is only a talented "collector of facts". Voronskij reiterates that the writer must possess a theme. Anticipating 4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927), he affirms that the artist-writer has an inherent double vision; he is capable, as Lev Tolstoj was, of "removing the layers"; he can see what others do not. Does A.Tolstoj possess this double vision, Voronskij enquires? Leaving this point open, he notes that main protagonists have one trait in common:

⁸⁸ *ibid.* p.132.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

[...] oni - mečtатели i fantasty. Oni život obmannym. Odni iz nich verjat v čudesnoe, ždut neobyčajnogo i nesbytočnogo, u drugih nadeždy bolee žitejskie, no i te i drugie oderžimi mečtatel'nost'ju. Èto ob"edinjaet personažej Tolstogo, nesmotrja na različija v ich social'nom položenii, v vozraste, v charakterach, v duševnyh svojstvach i v kačestvach. Mu žiki, pomeščiki, intelligenty, buržua, revoljucionery, krasnoarmejcy, imperatrica, milliardery, iskateli zolota, diktatory, obyvateli, oficery - vse oni obol'sčeny kakoj-nibud' navjazčivoj ideej, oni fantazirujut, oni ispytali sladost' i otravu privorota. [...].⁹⁰

Citing several examples, Voronskij finds it paradoxical that while many of Tolstoj's protagonists are dreamers, Tolstoj himself does not seem to have a single dream in life; rather, Voronskij considers him a pessimist.

In chapter III Voronskij states that the usual ending in Tolstoj's stories, novels and dramas without exception is unhappy and tragic. Thus dreams, ideas and phantasms in a sense are his real protagonists. But his dreamers and fantasizers do not fare well, irrespective of the grandness or triviality of their dreams. Reality, though, is in Voronskij's view treated more often than not in Tolstoj's work as something mean, broken, vulgar, stupid and even meaningless.⁹¹

Invoking the first epigraph, Voronskij describes the wonderful cranes flying high in the autumn sky above Gnilopjaty, a peculiar country inhabited by semi-humans, full of marvels. The amorphous and ubiquitous inhabitants of Gnilopjaty, who survive wars and revolutions, are the opposites of dreamers. Citing several cases of Gnilopjaty from Tolstoj's early work, he adds that they also flourish in his post-revolutionary work, e.g. *Ibikus* and *Azef*. A typical trait in Tolstoj's authorship, Voronskij propounds, is that all realizations of ideas irrevocably lead to loss, or the idea assumes ridiculous proportions. Nonetheless, he emphasizes that

[...]. Dvojnoe zrenie u Tolstogo est'. On chorošo vidit goluju mečtatel'nost' i ponimaet tolk v žiznnoj čepuche. [...].⁹²

⁹⁰ *ibid.* p.133 ([...] they are dreamers and fantasizers. They live in deception. Some believe in miracles, await the spectacular; others have more concrete hopes, yet both are consumed by reveries. This unites the protagonists of Tolstoj, notwithstanding their differences in class, age, character, intellect. Peasants, proprietors, intellectuals, revolutionaries, Red Army soldiers, empresses, billionaires, gold seekers, dictators, philistines, officers - all are tempted by some kind of obsession; they fantasize; they have experienced the sweetness and poison of the potion of love [...]).

⁹¹ *ibid.* pp.137-138.

⁹² *ibid.* p.140 ([...] Tolstoj has double vision. He sees clearly barren reveries and understands the meaning of life's trifles. [...]).

More interesting, though, in Voronskij's view, is how Tolstoj seeks to resolve the clash between marvel and reality. Tolstoj's reveries are contrasted with realistic literature of the revolution. Though Tolstoj is seen to be a great artist in works like *Choždenie po mukam*, *Neobyknovennye priključenija Nikity Roščina*, Voronskij is critical because several of his early protagonists impute to the revolution some of the senseless traits of the Gnilopjaty: the revolution occurs as an unexpected, incomprehensible chaos. This tendency is seen to have abated in Tolstoj's post-revolutionary work where he is more concerned with social issues.⁹³

Voronskij praises Tolstoj's assiduity in depicting ideologues and practitioners of contemporary fascism with its Nietzschean extreme individualistic belief in the superhuman. Thus the Russian fascist engineer Garin in *Bunt mašin* dreams of controlling all the values on earth. Voronskij adds drily that such fanatics usually succumb to worker rebellions and revolutions. In confronting fascism, he notes, the revolution is no longer meaningless chaos but an organized goal-oriented and indispensable fact. Tolstoj, in Voronskij's view, remains merely a benevolent bystander, an artist who has belatedly understood the necessity of the revolution. Yet the revolutionary solution is not seen to impress Tolstoj; this is not how he seeks to resolve the opposition between ideal and reality. His art is driven by other sentiments and thoughts, Voronskij observes.⁹⁴

In chapter IV, Voronskij recommends that Tolstoj desist from reveries, accept a meaning behind life's externalities. This should not be so difficult: having repeatedly shown that marvels, dreams and ideals are all transitory and often detrimental, he has also shown that the genuine is to be found in love between man and woman, in love of nature, of children, in simple human relations, e.g. in Roščin's declaration of love to Katja concluding the first volume of *Choždenie po mukam*. Yet Tolstoj has not drawn the correct conclusions, Voronskij complains.

Voronskij lists some other examples: In *Aělita* Gusev attempts to lead the Martian rebels and unite Mars with the RSFSR. Engineer Los' observes all this condescendingly, because to him the most important is *Aělita*, the voice of love and

⁹³ *ibid.* p.141.

⁹⁴ *ibid.* pp.142-143.

goodness. In *Bunt mašin* the worker-machines riot and destroy Morej, but it is the rebirth of Adam and Eve, not their rebellion, that secures the renaissance of the world. The old Pul' who produces protoplasma-humans loses his mind while Eve augurs salvation. In a key passage where the Bible and truth are introduced, Voronskij compares Tolstoj's basic message to the Old Testament:

[...]. Tolstoj kak by govorit nam: est' drevnij zakon žizni - plodites', razmnožajtes', trudites', napolnjajte zemlju, obladajte eju. Vot - zavet zavetov. Očarovanija, fantazii, mečtanija obyčno uvodjat čeloveka v storonu ot éтого zaveta [...].⁹⁵

In consequence, Voronskij infers, Tolstoj can only accept revolutions, the war of millions for the sake of good purposes, if they confirm this truth of life. Tolstoj's solution to the dichotomy between the ideal and reality is thus consistent, Voronskij observes, with his artistic conception of the world. His whole authorship repeatedly illustrates his unique sensitivity to the charm of simple human relations, nature, love, of small items, of an uncomplicated and joyous way of life. Voronskij cites *Povest' o mnogich prevoschodnyh veščach (Detsvo Nikity)*, which he rates as masterful and simple. Tolstoj has written lovingly, simply, significantly, profoundly and engagingly about these themes in a way that elevates them above his thematic novels. Children and simple things are Tolstoj's most succesful themes, together with the themes of love, woman and nature. Is this sufficient from a great writer?, Voronskij queries.⁹⁶

In chapter V he answers in the negative, finding Tolstoj's solution much too simple. One cannot reconcile the contradiction between the ideal and reality by removing the ideal as Tolstoj does; this is escapism, Voronskij adjudicates. Moreover, Tolstoj's solution of eliminating the marvels because they only lead to death weakens the artist's position. Tolstoj's fallacious philosophy, which Voronskij ascribes to the influence of his formative pre-October period, is also seen as the cause of his inability to find satisfactory answers to the complicated questions he raises. Voronskij believes this defect is apparent in how his novels often end:

⁹⁵ *ibid.* p.144 ([...]. It is as if Tolstoj is telling us: there is an age-old law of life - toil, multiply, replenish the earth, labour, govern it. This is the bidding of the testaments. Marvels, fantasies and reveries usually distract man from this testament. [...]).

⁹⁶ *ibid.* p.146.

disappointingly abrupt, insignificantly, as if deliberately and hastily aborted. Voronskij cites as examples *Čudaki*, *Chromoj barin*, *Choždenie po mukam*, *Aëita*, *Ibikus*.⁹⁷

Commenting on Tolstoj's treatment of "ours abroad", Voronskij believes that Tolstoj became disillusioned with the West, fascism and Nietzsche's ideas of the superhuman, and hence returned to Soviet Russia. Yet he objects to Tolstoj's equally negative attitude to West European landowners and workers alike. Citing *Golubye goroda* as a great story, Voronskij is nonetheless troubled by what he perceives as the indecisiveness of the main protagonist Buženinov in constructing "blue cities". He explicitly warns A.Tolstoj against exaggerating the importance of indecision since this would amount to a crusade against the plan and the construction of socialism.⁹⁸

In chapter VI Voronskij reiterates that the prevailing indifference to artists in Soviet Russia also applies to Tolstoj, who remains controversial among critics but is widely read even among party members.

[...]. A.Tolstoj - redkij talant. Po svoej manere pis'ma on prinadležit k realističeskoj škole klassikov, ona, vopreki meneniju LEFa, daleko ne izžila sebja. Realizm Tolstogo tronut impresionizmom, no v meru, bez krajnostej i bez preuveličenij. U Tolstogo est' dvojnoe zrenie, est' svoja tema. On po-svoemu vidit mir i ljudej. On prekrasno vladeet ruskoj reč'ju. Jazyk u nego legok, prozračen, čist. On slyšit, kak *zvučat* naše rodnoe slovo. Ego obrazy vyrazitel'ny i metki, no oni nikogda ne torčat zanosami, oni ne vyčurny i ne nadumany. [...].⁹⁹

In what amounts to a concluding "whitewash", Voronskij praises Tolstoj's blessed gift of seeing the great in the small and simple and notes that his art is fundamentally light-hearted, permeated by joyous realism, humour without sarcasm and concealed sorrow. His defects can to a large extent be interpreted as a result of

⁹⁷ *ibid.* pp.146-148.

⁹⁸ *ibid.* p.152.

⁹⁹ *ibid.* pp.153-154 ([...]A.Tolstoj is a rare talent. His way of writing adheres to the school of classical realism, which, regardless of what LEF says, is not defunct. Tolstoj's realism has a touch of impressionism, without extremes and exaggerations. Tolstoj has double vision; he has his particular themes. He perceives the world and people in his own way. He has an exceptional command of the Russian vernacular. His language is light, clear and pure. He can hear how our mother tongue *sounds*. His imagery is expressive and accurate, without ever appearing imposed; it is not affected and constructed [...]).

pre-October influence. Voronskij even finds Tolstoj better than the imagists and recommends that younger writers emulate Tolstoj's style and language. His ability to universalize his characters permits them to continue to speak to the reader. Voronskij rates Tolstoj as nothing less than the most engaging narrator in contemporary Soviet Russia, based on the best West European traditions. Replicating his pessimism from 4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925) and anticipating 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitatel'" (1927), he finishes by deploring that, in Russia and in Soviet Russia, the art of narration has never been considered interesting and has never been encouraged. In this perspective he finds that A.Tolstoj and Kuprin have introduced an instructive and engaging European and American manner in Soviet art.

At first glance Voronskij's reservations and hopes with regard to Tolstoj's authorship are expressed in diagram 5.3.3 below through the negative ideological Di-scores on parameters 1-4 which are contrasted by the positive scores on the artistical parameters 5-8. Tolstoj's Di-score deviates some from the Pg-score for fellow travellers, especially parameters 1 and 6 although only parameter 6 shows a significant discrepancy as I have defined this term. By comparison Sejfullina's Di-score deviates from the fellow traveller Pg-score on parameters 2,5 and 6. Of these the deviations on parameters 5 and 6 qualify as significant discrepancies.

5.3.3 A comparison of the Sejfullina and Tolstoj portraits ¹⁰⁰

Parameters:	Pg-score	Di-score	
	Fellow travellers	L. Sejfullina	A.Tolstoj
1) October Revolution	0	+1	-2
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	-2	0	-2
3) Soviet society	-1	-1	-2
4) Slavophilism	0	-1	-1
5) Russian literary heritage	+2	-1	+3
6) Realism	0	+4	+3
7) Psych. character portrayal	+3	+4	+2
8) Language mastery	+5	+4	+5

Diagram 5.3.3

All in all the noted deviations and significant discrepancies are not in my

¹⁰⁰ This is an adaptation of my paper "Aleksandr K.Voronskij: His Literary Portraits 1921-28" delivered to the XIV Conference of Nordic Slavists, Helsinki, 17-23 August 1997 (Vaagan 1997a).

judgement sufficient to question Sejfullina's or Tolstoj's grouping as fellow travellers.

One difficulty in comparing these two portraits is that they were composed in 1924 *and* 1927-28 (Sejfullina) and 1926 (Tolstoj). The additions from 1927-28 to the Sejfullina portrait deal as noted mostly with ideology (superfluous man). Yet all 8 parameters are present in both portraits, which is another way of saying that Sejfullina in 1924 had made a particularly favourable artistic impression on Voronskij.

More specifically Voronskij believed that Sejfullina was positive in her own way as far 1) The October Revolution was concerned, which contrasted with the perceived negative attitude of A.Tolstoj, irrespective of his return in April 1923. With regard to 2) The RKP (b)/VKP(b), Voronskij comments in some detail on the ambiguity he detects in the writing of Sejfullina, whereas Tolstoj again is viewed as negative. With respect to 3) Soviet society, Sejfullina sees everyday life as bleak and grey; she has no illusions, and Voronskij believes this is expressive of the writer's own attitudes. In a similar vein he clearly believes that Tolstoj is alienated in contemporary Soviet Russia. In terms of 4) Slavophilism, neither Sejfullina nor Tolstoj are seen to advocate a return to the past; on the contrary both are credited with addressing contemporary issues, although this is not to say that Voronskij accepts the way in which they do this.

Being older than Sejfullina, Tolstoj is more influenced by 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, while Sejfullina is considered to be a 100% post-October writer who, moreover, represents something completely new in Soviet literature. Paradoxically, in the portrait of Sejfullina Voronskij makes comparisons with several classical Russian writers, while in the Tolstoj portrait not a single classical writer is mentioned. Turning to 6) Realism - and the extent to which these two writers adhere to literary realism - it is clear that Voronskij views both as realists: Tolstoj is seen to belong to the classical realist school despite his penchant for the fantastic, whereas Sejfullina is simply described as a literary realist.

Sejfullina, more than Tolstoj, to some extent succeeds in giving convincing 7) Psychological character portrayals, thereby overcoming the schematism and one-dimensional character portrayals so frequent among less gifted authors. Voronskij vacillates in his assessment of Tolstoj's vast character gallery. He credits Tolstoj for

his vivid picture in *Choždenie po mukam* of all kinds of pre-revolutionary personal depravities, but briskly brushes aside Tolstoj's attempts to probe into the revolutionary underground. Tolstoj's post-revolutionary dreamers are interpreted by Voronskij as expressions of Tolstoj's ideological aberration and escapism, reflecting his inability to come to terms with contemporary revolutionary realities. Both authors, but particularly Tolstoj, are seen as exponents of Russian 8) Language mastery.

In conclusion, Voronskij was very enthusiastic in 1924 about Sejfullina. The addition from 1927-28 primarily confirmed his general pessimism at that time. In 1926, when his own difficulties and ideological pessimism had become evident, he found Tolstoj ideologically negative; yet to some extent Voronskij sought to counterbalance this by emphasizing Tolstoj's artistic merits. It is fair to say that as far as the ideological parameters 1-4 are concerned, Voronskij rates Sejfullina somewhere between neutral and negative, while he sees Tolstoj as ideologically negative. By contrast, Voronskij rates both, especially Sejfullina, very positively with regard to the artistic parameters 5-8. In both portraits, the ideological parameters take precedence. The artistic parameters 5-8 typically come at the end of both portraits, as an afterthought.

Finally, with reference to Christianity, this element does play a role as shown through one quotation in the Tolstoj portrait. Although spatially limited this is an important reference, since Tolstoj's "message" is equated with the Old Testament. This is apparently negative from Voronskij's point of view. In the Sejfullina portrait Christianity plays no evident role. With regard to the key concepts of aesthetics, beauty and truth, "estetika" and "prekrasnyj" occur twice and "pravda" once in the Sejfullina portrait but not significantly.¹⁰¹ In the Tolstoj portrait "estetika" is absent, "prekrasnyj" occurs once though not significantly,¹⁰² whereas "pravda" features twice in the guise of "pravdivyj" to credit Tolstoj's style and substance.¹⁰³ These occurrences, or rather the lack of them, are illustrative compared to especially Proust/Hamsun.

¹⁰¹ Voronskij 1928b:446-447, 451, 460.

¹⁰² *ibid.* p.136.

¹⁰³ *ibid.* pp.145,147.

5.4 Proletarian writers

Voronskij's portraits of Libedinskij and Fadeev are brief, and there is no known correspondence between Voronskij and them. Neither appeared in *KN*, and in contrast with e.g. the Sejfullina portrait Voronskij did not bother to update and expand their portraits. Still, the portraits are surprisingly positive as compared with Voronskij's generally negative group portraits of proletarians. This suggests that he did not select Libedinskij and Fadeev in order to crucify proletarian writers; for this purpose he could have selected others.

5.4.1 Jurij Libedinskij (1898-1959)

Jurij Nikolaevič Libedinskij was an active member of the Oktjabr' group, and became a central figure in MAPP and RAPP, eventually also in the Union of Soviet Writers. He was one of Voronskij's main adversaries.¹⁰⁴ They had no known correspondence.

5.4.1.1 The portrait

The portrait as noted earlier had first appeared as part of a group portrait in *KN* 1923#1(11):299-303 comprising also Arosev and Tarasov-Rodionov. As diagram 4.3.1 shows, in 1923 Voronskij had not fully employed the whole range of parameters 1-8. As this portrait confirms 7) Psychological character portrayal and to a large extent 8) Language mastery were in particular two considerations he seemed to underestimate at this point. The Pg-score for proletarian writers in diagram 5.2.1 means that one could reasonably expect a Di-score in this range.

The brief portrait just exceeds 7 pages and is without characterizations.¹⁰⁵ Its brevity is partly explained by its limited focus: it only deals with one work, the 25-year old Libedinskij's literary debut, the novel *Nedelja* (1922). One single final line was added some years later: "the latest things of Libedinskij *Zavtra* (1927) and

¹⁰⁴ Surkov 1967(IV):177-178; Terras 1991:566; Kasack 1992:654-655.

¹⁰⁵ Voronskij 1929a:240-247. The portrait as it appeared in Voronskij 1963 contained an additional 4 pages with introductory reflections on the 6 years since the revolution and the party's achievements. These were not included in Voronskij 1929a:240-247 or in Voronskij 1982: 143-147 and 1987a:313-317.

Kommissary (1925) are unfortunately very weak".¹⁰⁶ The portrait notes initially that the story *Nedelja* had been printed in the almanac *Naši dni* 1922#2, edited by Voronskij. He finds that *Nedelja* calls to mind Arosev, as far as its theme, approach and atmosphere are concerned. Next to Arosev, whom Voronskij had portrayed very favourably,¹⁰⁷ he views the novel, despite its artistic shortcomings, as "a second joyous gift to communists", which signifies that "we, communists" gradually are gaining "ideologically and artistically" on our enemies.¹⁰⁸ *Nedelja* is seen to be refreshingly free of artificiality and affectation. In fact the author is seen to be so overwhelmed by life's richness that he at times has problems in absorbing it all. The story reportedly can be read with unflagging interest; it is credited with soft, lyrical qualities coupled with the terrible realities of fierce revolutionary warfare featuring the "leathered people" (Bolsheviks) who demonstrate the "categorical imperative" of "Rebellion and Victory", "the New Testament" and "sacred texts", in Voronskij's stilted and quasi-religious phrasing.¹⁰⁹

Voronskij recapitulates for his readers the Siberian setting, main civil war events and protagonists involved. As compared with the civil war period described in the introductory part 1, we need only note that Voronskij defends the Bolshevik cause and justifies their harsh retaliation measures.¹¹⁰

Of more interest are Voronskij's comments on Libedinskij's main protagonists. Martynov, a young intellectual, is seen to be analytical and pensive. He has entered the party during the revolution, works honestly, believes in the cause of the party, and dies heroically fulfilling his obligations. Yet he is continuously brooding over the fate of communism, the revolution and mankind. As a former landowner's son he is confronted by problems in the party, and matters are further aggravated by his love

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* p.247. Voronskij expanded slightly his negative appraisal of *Zavtra* in the group portrait "Prozaiki i poëty *Oktjabrja* i *Molodaja gvardii*" in *KN* 1924#2(19):288-306, e.g. terming *Zavtra* "a step backwards", and criticizing Libedinskij's rejection of NEP, cf. Voronskij 1929a:109-110 and also 5.1.2

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *KN* 1923#1(11):293-299.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.* p.240.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.* pp.240-241.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.* pp.241-242.

for a girl from his old milieu who has indulged in mysticism. Then there is Anjuta Simkova, a party member who works incessantly, is honest and sensitive. She acknowledges that her tough appearance conceals an insecure and weak interior. She speaks of the ragged, hungry and abandoned children, of men at railway stations, speculators, commissars in riding breeches, about party formalism. Voronskij introduces us also to the snub-nosed *čekist*, the adolescent Surikov, seasoned by the revolution. His letter describing executions (shootings) are seen by Voronskij as the best parts of the entire story, "real and written in blood".¹¹¹ Surikov worked as if transfixed, yet suddenly became aware of how terrible the executions were. Voronskij states that it is a good thing there are *čekists* like Surikov, who call to mind Arosev's protagonist Klejner and his warning that one should not desecrate. The commander Karaulov, a simple and honest man of battle, philosophizes that when sober it is essential to avoid tears; when drunk it does not matter. Even the seasoned veteran Robejko, whose emaciated body is in the last phase of tuberculosis, persists in leading the work and has fits of loneliness, sorrow and abandonment.

Voronskij deduces that with Libedinskij the revolution and the party take precedence, and all trivial, private matters are relegated to insignificance. The cause of the revolution and the party are seen as all-consuming to Libedinskij: "The revolution is the most demanding and pitiless goddess; she demands everything"¹¹² He rhetorically adds that the party in this situation assumes the proportions of a detachment of red knights, "like cement they strengthen and unite the human sand grains; with a caring and maternal hand the red knights forge red glowing and lethal arrows to defeat the enemy".¹¹³ Voronskij no doubt agrees that revolutionary transformation also entails considerable personal discomfort, but he seems ready at this stage to accept the cost. Thus in response to allegations that the party suppresses the personality, Voronskij supports Libedinskij, and in effect propounds the cause of what later became termed *Homo Sovieticus*:

¹¹¹ *ibid.* p.243.

¹¹² *ibid.* p.244.

¹¹³ *ibid.*

[...]. Buržua, meščane govorjat: partija podavljajet ličnost', koverkaet, ona obezličivaet. Da, ona podavljajet nenužnoe, prošloe, mertvoe, vrednoe, obyvatel'skoe, nakonec, prosto nesvoevremennoe, - i ona sozdaet, tvorit novuju ličnost', to, što idet ot grjaduščego, što žiznenno i neobchodimo dlja pobed. [...].¹¹⁴

Accordingly, the party is seen to transform average people into heroes. With Libedinskij, Voronskij finds, communists are heroic not due to personal qualities, but because the revolution has occasioned their qualities; the revolution has infused them with party spirit and seasoned them in battle. Exemplifying these assertions with protagonists from *Nedelja* and simultaneously anticipating Bolshevik qualities asserted in 4.2.10 "Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna (1925), Voronskij finds that personal sacrifice in *Nedelja* becomes insignificant, commonplace, without "the slightest *eserovčāna*, *kerenščāna* - devoid of self-assertion and egotism and full of the practical heroism which typifies Bolshevism". He concludes that, since the party always has first priority with Libedinskij, it is therefore the real main protagonist in *Nedelja*.

Voronskij credits "comrade" Libedinskij for having succeeded in rendering positive characters like Klimin, Robejko, Gornych, Stal'machov, Karaulov and others. This sets Libedinskij apart from many other writers whose positive protagonists are often exaggerated and affected. Libedinskij, in Voronskij's view, is different because one really believes in his protagonists, who come alive. Voronskij credits the RKP(b) for having assisted Libedinskij; it has supplied him with good material; positive characters have been forged by the party and the revolution.

In Voronskij's view *Nedelja* has an engaging plot, which captivates the reader. In comparison with Arosev, Libedinskij is not viewed as a chronicler but as a narrator and his plot is considered to be consistent with his own experiences. Commenting on language and style, Voronskij observes that *Nedelja* is written as "poems in prose, not always in rhyme, but there are no verbal inundations; the story is simple and straightforward". The writer has good and apt nature descriptions of which Voronskij

¹¹⁴ ibid. ([...]. The bourgeois, philistines claim that the party suppresses the personality, distorts and depersonalizes it. Yes, it suppresses the unnecessary, obsolete, defunct, damaging, narrow-minded, ultimately the inopportune; and it creates, forges a new personality, what emanates from the future, what is life-given and indispensable for victory [...]).

quotes several examples. Libedinskij is viewed as quite young and *Nedelja* marks his debut. Voronskij therefore judges it timely to warn against the negative effects of flattering, and he calls on Libedinskij to work hard. Voronskij divulges to his readers that in the first draft manuscript he had noted considerable unnecessary additions. Voronskij condescendingly notes that Libedinskij continuously affixes agitational elements, and like many young writers he commits the mistake of attempting to say everything. Yet the weakest aspect of *Nedelja* in Voronskij's view is its lack of completeness; rather it appears like a collection of pictures and faces united only by common events. Some characters are seen to be superimposed and in effect superfluous. In conclusion, Voronskij cautions that Libedinskij's story has only just been printed but has already met with allegations that it is counter-revolutionary, which pained Voronskij to hear. In a final comment, added later, Voronskij reflects that "the latest works of Libedinskij - *Zavtra* (1927) and *Komissary* (1925) unfortunately are very weak", although this is not substantiated in the portrait. This non-expansion of the portrait is in itself significant. The ensuing hostility between Voronskij and Libedinskij from 1923, described in parts 2-3, probably precluded Voronskij from expanding the portrait of Libedinskij and dealing with his work in a measured manner.¹¹⁵

Voronskij's overall positive estimate of Libedinskij's *Nedelja* is indicated in the Di-core in diagram 5.4.3 discussed later. It should be noted here, though, that based on only one work, Libedinskij's Di-score must count for less than Sejfullina's Di-score which is based on several works. Had e.g. Voronskij expanded his negative view of *Zavtra* and *Komissary*, Libedinskij's Di-score score would surely have been lower on several parameters.

5.4.2 Aleksandr Fadeev (1901-1956)

Aleksandr Aleksandrovič Fadeev joined the party in 1918 and made his literary debut with *Protiv tečenija* (1923) and *Razliv* (1924) before gaining prominence in RAPP 1928-32. *Razgrom* (1927) brought him literary fame. When Voronskij

¹¹⁵ As noted earlier, Voronskij later did comment on *Zavtra* in the group portrait "Prozaiki i poëty *Oktjabrja i Molodoj gvardii*", *KN* 1924#2(19):288-306, cf. 5.1.2.

delivered his defence speech on 18 April 1927, Fadeev spoke up in favour of VAPP and stated there was no room for Voronskij's *KN*, cf. 3.2.10. In 1934 he became member of the presidium of the Union of Soviet Writers and served as its secretary 1939-44, and General Secretary 1946-54. He was also member of the CK VKP(b)1939-56. His prominence in Stalin's literary officialdom ended with his suicide in 1956.¹¹⁶ There is no known correspondence between Fadeev and Voronskij.

5.4.2.1 The portrait

The portrait, which is a review of the 26-year old Fadeev's successful novel *Razgrom* (1927), first appeared in *KN's* popular biweekly version *Prožektor* (1927#7:20-21) at about the same time Voronskij left *KN*,¹¹⁷ and also in Voronskij 1927b. At this late stage his literary aesthetics embraced the full range of parameters 1-8 in diagram 4.3.1, as this portrait confirms. As with Libedinskij, the proletarian Pg-score could be expected to be approximated by the Di-score.

It consists of 8½ pages without chapterizations.¹¹⁸ Voronskij's reasons for selecting Fadeev for portrayal are stated indirectly when he declares initially that the novel is written by a young, gifted writer, and that it moreover does not fall into the usual mold of countless stories and novels written by proletarian writers. Thus seeing *Razgrom* as an exception, Voronskij recommends that proletarian literature seek to do as Fadeev has done. Referring obliquely to his views on proletarian literary hegemony in 4.2.15 "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej" (1927), he states that the sooner proletarian literature copies Fadeev's example, the sooner it will acquire its "hegemony" organically, and not "mechanically"

He acknowledges that the novel's theme - the routing of a partisan detachment by White units - may at first sight appear offensive. Ordinarily stories and novels dealing with the civil war, Voronskij notes, are replete with battle scenes and heroics. The evils of the Whites (Kolčak, Denikin, Dutov) are confronted by the

¹¹⁶ Surkov 1972(VII):875-878; Terras 1985:133-134 and 1991:566; Kasack 1992:325-326.

¹¹⁷ Maguire 1987:275,341-343. Cf. also 7.4.

¹¹⁸ Voronskij 1929a:277-285. Voronskij consistently spells the author's name "Faddeev" as he had done in Voronskij 1927b:161-168.

sound of the International welcoming victorious columns of workers and Red Army detachments. *Razgrom* by "comrade" Fadeev departs from this cliché, Voronskij observes. Though the end is tragic, the fighting scenes are not the author's main preoccupation; rather they are a means to reveal more of the major characters. The author, in Voronskij's view, is primarily interested in the inner world of his protagonists, not their outward conduct.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, the novel does not throw light on the socio-political thoughts and feelings of the partisan detachments of that time. These are omitted, Voronskij believes, because Fadeev approaches man not externally but from within.

In this the influence of Babel' and Vs.Ivanov but first and foremost L.Tolstoj is seen as evident. Not only are Fadeev's form, style, technique and composition derived from L.Tolstoj, Voronskij concludes, but also the Tolstoyan approach to man and to psychology. Fadeev has, he adds, assimilated Tolstoj's way of elaborating psychological material, e.g. in the description of the feelings of the partisan Metelica prior to his execution by the Whites. In Voronskij's judgement these passages reflect the influence of both Tolstoj's sentence-building and outlook on life as well as his method of describing human psychology.¹²⁰

Replicating arguments from 4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927) on Tolstoj's technique of "snjatje pokrovov", he infers that Fadeev has successfully emulated Tolstoj since his characters - unlike the characters of most proletarian writers - evince non-rational qualities; they are intuitive; their minds and their behaviour are influenced by "the subconscious beginning in man".¹²¹

More important, though, in Voronskij's estimate is that Fadeev is in the process of successfully learning from L.Tolstoj to conceptualize living characters. Thus Fadeev is seen to be complying with the existing widespread recommendations to use in contemporary literature the best examples of classical artistic prose and poetry. Voronskij notes that although such recommendations now are commonly accepted, the question of exactly how the classics are to be used remains a moot point.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.* p.278.

¹²⁰ *ibid.* p.279.

¹²¹ *ibid.* p.280.

Refraining from a full discussion of this particular topic, (which he had discussed repeatedly from 4.2.6 "O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach" (1923) onwards), Voronskij here noted that the Russian literary heritage cannot be assimilated unless proletarian writers desist from "their vulgar, primitive and naive conceptualization of their protagonists".¹²²

In Soviet Russia, Voronskij informs readers, multitudes of young writers presume that the bourgeois, the landowner must always be *personally* evil, or idiots, while the workers and communists are always supposedly *personally* hyperpositive. This lack of psychologism, which he had commented on e.g. in 4.2.14 "Pisatel', kniga, čitateľ!" (1927) where also Fadeev had been praised, is described as "simply wrong". Voronskij here cites Gor'kij's old Artamonov (*Delo Artamonovyč*) whose attractive bear-like strength and energy serve to suppress others, and the sick anemic Pavel in Gorkij's *Mat'* who despite his handicap does achieve great revolutionary results. This, Voronskij states, is indicative of how one ought to conceptualize characters, in their full complexity and variety. Yet in Soviet Russia, he deplores, more often than not literary plots are like French crime novels, with patently bad characters counterpoising patently angelic beings. Yet life is far more complex, and in Voronskij's view one of the major traits of genuine artists is their sense of proportion. The classics had this feeling, but it is sadly lacking in contemporary Soviet literature, he notes.¹²³

Voronskij believes that Fadeev is still learning this approach to man from L.Tolstoj. Thus in *Razgrom* two worlds, two living psychological ways of life, are contrasted: the partisan Morozka and the "maximalist" intellectual Mečik. Morozka has a strong grip on life, is full of a primordial, instinctive love of life, elemental collectiveness, simplicity and animal sagacity. Mečik by contrast is egocentric, alienated and hostile to the partisans. All the protagonists - Morozka, Mečik, Varja, Levinson and Metelica - are arranged in chesspiece-like order by the author, too ordered sometimes, Voronskij judges, in their "dynamics and emotional dialectics". The author's intentions are occasionally too obvious, Voronskij objects; particularly

¹²² *ibid.*

¹²³ *ibid.* p.281.

the leader of the detachment, Levinson, despite his harmonious instinct, will and mind nevertheless appears weaker than the other protagonists. Voronskij finds that *Razgrom* is impaired by an element of schematism, but he is confident that Fadeev is on a true and right path of development. Fadeev has succeeded in filling his novel with living people, Voronskij estimates, and he sees the novel as convincing; one believes the author.¹²⁴

At this point Voronskij returns to the ways in which narrow rationalism was defeated in Russian art by L.Tolstoj and Dostoevskij. He stresses the role of the subconscious, which in his judgement remains an immensely important truth. Contemporary Soviet writers must, he states, firmly acknowledge this, while bearing in mind that the contradiction between the conscious and subconscious beginnings in man are not absolute, but relative. Many in Soviet Russia today write about the necessity of strengthening psychologism in artistic literature, he observes. One cannot object to this, but a prerequisite is the assimilation and mastering of the artistic discoveries in this field made by L.Tolstoj and Dostoevskij.

[...]. Sleduet vsjačeski poželat', čtoby chudožestvennyye opyty Fadeeva naši sočuvstvie i sredi drugih pisatelej. Osobeno polezno o nich podumat' tem proletarskim pisateljam, kotorye do sich por ne mogut predolet' šablon. Očen' často èto proisходит s nimi otтого, čto oni priderživajutsja naivno-racionalističeskogo vzgljada na psichiku čeloveka, soveršenno ne učityvaja naličija v čeloveke ogromnoj, instinktivnoj, stichijnoj podsoznatel'noj žizni [...].¹²⁵

Turning to the concept of truth, which he had begun to explore in 4.2.16 "Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve" (1927), Voronskij notes that, provided proletarian writers could overcome the noted shortcomings, they would also recognize another and more important truth: that it is necessary in *belles-lettres* to conceptualize man in all the scatteredness of his thoughts and feelings; that heroes need not be all one-dimensional, and one need not prove their social value on every

¹²⁴ *ibid.* p.282.

¹²⁵ *ibid.* p.283 ([...]. It remains anyway to be hoped that Fadeev's artistic experiences meet with the sympathy of other writers. Especially those proletarian writers who still cannot vanquish clichés would benefit from such reflection. This often happens with them because they hang on to a naive-rationalistic conception of the human psyche, disregarding completely the presence in man of a huge, instinctive, spontaneous, subconscious life. [...]).

page. Yet the recognition of these truths, he concedes resignedly, presupposes the assimilation of a number of other positions.¹²⁶

Fadeev has remained faithful to his class feeling, Voronskij states, and finds that at the base of *Razgrom* lies the assertion that man's individual life only has a meaning and value if it is shared with others, the collective. This assertion is in Fadeev's case devoid of what Voronskij describes as "the all-demanding, vague and undefined Christian-sentimental sacrifice and love to all and nothing." On the contrary, Fadeev's collective is seen as a working collective of miners, and peasants rising to the defence of their legal interests. Readers of Russian classics have always, in Voronskij's estimate, been preoccupied with life's meaning and value. Contemporary writers ought also to ask such questions, he believes. At this point he adds a significant comment in relation to this dissertation's interpretation of his literary aesthetics and his resigned state of mind around 1927:

[...]. Nam rešitel'no ne dostaeť v chudožestve filosofii [...].¹²⁷

Concluding with some reflections on genre and language Voronskij comments that Fadeev's *Razgrom* is called a novel, although calling it a story would be more appropriate. In comparison with his earlier work, Fadeev's writing has noticeably improved. The language is now found to be exact, condensed, without talkativeness and loquacity, and his epithets are seen to be successful and apt. Occasional transgressions are noted and exemplified by Voronskij. Among the novel's insufficiencies Voronskij cites a dry tone, formal language, and what is interpreted as an attempted evasion - unsuccessful - of softness and lyricism.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ *ibid.* p.284 ([...]. In art we decidedly have too little philosophy. [...]).

¹²⁸ *ibid.* pp.284-285.

5.4.3 A comparison of the Libedinskij and Fadeev portraits

	Pg-score	Di-score	
	Proletarian writers	J.Libedinskij	A.Fadeev
Parameters:			
1) October Revolution	+4	+4	+3
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	+4	+5	+3
3) Soviet society	+3	+3	+2
4) Slavophilism	-5	-5	-5
5) Russian literary heritage	-3	-3	+2
6) Realism	+3	+3	+3
7) Psych. character portrayal	-3	+1	+1
8) Language mastery	-1	+1	+1

Diagram 5.4.3

Voronskij's favourable conclusion with regard to the content and direction of both writers' work is illustrated in their Di-scores. Libedinskij's Di-score equals the proletarian Pg-score on a majority of the parameters (1,3,4,5,6) and exceeds the Pg-score on parameters 2, 7 and 8. Of these only the deviation on parameter 7 qualifies as a significant discrepancy. The Fadeev portrait which was published 4 years after the Libedinskij portrait, equals the proletarian Pg-score on parameters 4 and 6, is insignificantly below on parameters 1,2,3 and exceeds the Pg-score on parameters 5,7 and 8. Only the deviations on 5 and 7 qualify as significant discrepancies. The relatively positive Di-scores of Libedinskij and Fadeev must be tempered by the brevity and limited scope (only one work is discussed) of both portraits, as compared with the longer and more broadly conceived portraits of the fellow travellers Sejfullina and A.Tolstoj. Taken together the deviations and significant discrepancies do not, in my view, alter the grouping of Libedinskij and Fadeev as proletarian writers.

Irrespective of the four years separating the two portraits both are *qua* proletarian writers seen to be singularly positive towards 1) The October Revolution, 2) The RKP (b)/VKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. This is largely the case, as we see above, but there are several interesting nuances, especially in the depiction of communists: Libedinskij's *Nedelja* (1922) is seen as more unequivocally favourable in its portrayal of communists. The pre-eminent party is the main character. With Fadeev's *Razgrom*, perhaps partly as a result of the plot (the routing of a partisan detachment by Whites) the party (as well as the Revolution and Soviet

society) remain subdued; indeed, the whole portrait is dominated by Voronskij's attribution to Fadeev of the benign influence of L.Tolstoj.

As expected, neither writer is seen to sympathize with 4) Slavophilism. Neither is seen to adhere to 5) The classical Russian literary heritage. In the case of Libedinskij, no comparisons are made with classical Russian (or foreign) writers, while Fadeev, as mentioned, in several respects is seen as a disciple of L.Tolstoj. As far as 6) Realism is concerned, one would of course expect both to be considered realists, which is largely also the case. In terms of the 2 last artistic parameters, Voronskij's standard objection to almost all proletarian writers from 1923 onwards (the lack of) 7) Psychological character portrayal is visible especially in the later case of Fadeev, whereas in the earlier portrait of Libedinskij he is seen to be able to penetrate and convey the complex psyches of his characters. This difference could be interpreted as a result of Voronskij's heightened awareness to parameter 7 in 1927 as compared with 1924. As for 8) Language mastery, Voronskij does find some faults with Fadeev, while Libedinskij is complimented for his language. Again, this difference could also be seen in the light of Voronskij's stricter requirements of parameter 8 in 1927 as compared with 1924, which is why I have suggested a rating of +1 for both on these two parameters.

Finally, Voronskij does avail himself of concepts like "the New Testament", "sacred texts" and furthermore deifies the revolution. These are small, but telling indices of the influence of Christianity on Voronskij. The Fadeev portrait has no overt references to Christianity. As for the key concepts of aesthetics, beauty and truth Voronskij in the Libedinskij portrait in a rather neutral manner includes 2 references to moral and political truth.¹²⁹ In the Fadeev portrait there are two positive invocations of "prekrasnyj" and two admonishing uses of "istina".¹³⁰

5.5 Pereval writers

In the article "O "Perevale" i pereval'cach", which first appeared in *Literaturnye*

¹²⁹ Voronskij 1929a:242.

¹³⁰ *ibid.* pp.280-281 and 283.

tipy (1925b), cf. 7.4, Voronskij stated that:

[...]. Iz suščestvujuščich molodych literaturnych organizacij Pereval, na naš vzgljad, po tipu javljaetsja naibolee svežež i obeščajuščej organizacij. [...].¹³¹

As indicated in 3.2.9, Pereval was founded during the winter of 1923/24, and 2 portraits from 1923 - Malyškin and Ognev - could be treated as Pereval portraits. Although Voronskij mentioned neither in the quoted article, both later became identified with the group and went on to sign the Pereval-manifesto in 1927, cf. 7.14. I have elected only Ognev's portrait since its greater length in its final version offers more than the portrait of Malyškin. The second writer I would like to include tentatively under the Pereval heading is Klyčkov, whose portrait Voronskij published in 1926. As I shall discuss under 5.5.2 Struve asserted that Klyčkov was associated with Pereval, though not when.¹³² Neither Ognev nor Klyčkov had any known correspondence with Voronskij, cf. 7.5. Yet their frequent appearances in *KN* suggest the probability of such a correspondence.

It is probably not coincidental that Ognev and Klyčkov both were pseudonyms. While there were (and are) numerous personal and social reasons for a writer to choose a pseudonym, the subject matter of both was controversial. The etymology of their pen-names is - as in the case of Pil'njak and Gor'kij - intriguing. Here I can only suggest that Ognev is derived from "ogon" (fire), while Klyčkov could be derived from "klyk" (tooth) or from the verb "klyčit' " (beat, tear). This could suggest a common, thematic ruthlessness. Both died like Voronskij in Stalin's purges in the late 1930s.

5.5.1 Nikolaj Ognev (1888-1938)

Nikolaj Ognev (pseudonym for Michail Grigor'evič Rozanov) had worked in the Moscow child care administration from 1910. After the October 1917 Revolution he founded the first children's theatre in Moscow for which he wrote several plays.

¹³¹ *ibid.* p. 225 ([...]. Among the existing young literary organizations Pereval, in our view, appears to be the most fresh and promising type of organization [...]).

¹³² Struve 1971:229-231.

He continued his work in child welfare institutions in Moscow 1921-24 and adhered to the constructivists before joining Pereval.¹³³ He was a fairly frequent contributor to *KN* 1923-27: *Evracija. Povesť*,¹³⁴ *Pavel Velikij*,¹³⁵ *Videnija. Rasskaz*¹³⁶ and finally the work Masing-Delic finds he is primarily remembered for¹³⁷ - *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva*.¹³⁸

Ognev's appearances in *KN* during Voronskij's editorship indicate that the two did correspond.¹³⁹ Voronskij encouraged Ognev to publish his early stories and he wrote the preface to the first volume of Ognev's collected works.¹⁴⁰ It is hard to believe this could have taken place without correspondence, even if both lived in the same city. Ognev was among those who left Pereval for VAPP shortly after 1927,¹⁴¹ only to succumb in the purges in 1938. In his confession "O Perevale" Voronskij listed Ognev first when recounting Pereval's early history, cf. 3.2.9.

5.5.1.1 The portrait

The portrait, which had been dimensioned in 1923 as only a one-page review of Ognev's *Ščā respubliki*,¹⁴² was in Voronskij (1929) considerably expanded to 16 pages spaced over two numbered, untitled, chapters.¹⁴³ Therefore, based on diagram 4.3.1, I would expect Voronskij to employ the full range of parameters 1-8. Further

¹³³ Surkov 1968(V):386-387; Struve 1971:155; Belaja 1989:5; Kasack 1992:865.

¹³⁴ *KN* 1923#2(12):101-126. Cf. the discussion in Masing-Delic 1992:222-242.

¹³⁵ *KN* 1923#4(14):89-92.

¹³⁶ *KN* 1925#10(35):3-14

¹³⁷ Masing-Delic 1992:222.

¹³⁸ *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva*, *KN* 1926:8(43):167-193; *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva - očerki 2-j*, *KN* 1926#10 (45):68-110, and *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva - 3-j trimestr*, *KN* 1927#1(48):69-97.

¹³⁹ All we have is a letter dated 1926 from a group of writers, including Ognev, to Voronskij, cf. 7.9 footnote 4.

¹⁴⁰ *Sobranie sočinenij*, Vols.I-III, *Federacija*, Moscow 1928-29. Cf. *Literaturnaja enciklopedija*, Moscow 1934 (VIII):235-236.

¹⁴¹ Kasack 1992:865-66; 927-29.

¹⁴² "Literaturnye otkliki. Ob al'manachach Kruga", *KN* 1923#2(12):343.

¹⁴³ Voronskij 1929a:79-95. It was included in Voronskij (1982), but omitted from Voronskij (1987a-b), possibly due to Ognev's seemingly morbid emphasis on corpses and the dead.

one could expect the Di-score to approximate the Pereval Pg-score, cf. diagram 5.2.1.

Voronskij begins chapter I by noting Ognev's seemingly morbid predilection for the dead, for family burial chambers, graves and cemeteries, which he exemplifies with excerpts from several of his pre-revolutionary short stories collected in *Rasskazy* (1925). Even in Ognev's major work, *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva*, Voronskij finds that in the most balanced, fresh and life-confirming passages the deceased, drowned and ghosts feature prominently. In general many living characters, as conceptualized by Ognev, resemble the deceased and Voronskij claims that something vampyirish hangs about his ominous priests. Many of Ognev's characters are seen to bear the imprint of witchcraft and death, and Voronskij finds that Ognev's depictions of nature also have a terrible, graveyard-like atmosphere. Although Ognev manages to write with acumen and suspense about corpses, graves and burial chambers, Voronskij reassures readers that Ognev "of course" is a realist and atheist who does not believe in this subject matter; he only shows its most repellent sides for didactic purposes.¹⁴⁴

Voronskij cites Ognev's idea of two existential forces: a foolish and a wise force.¹⁴⁵ The graves, ghosts, priests and so on anthropomorphize the foolish force ("glupaja sila") in Ognev's fiction. This is drowsy Old Russia, "heavy-bottomed, fleshy and animalistically grunting". Referring to *Ščā respubliki*, Voronskij concludes that one cannot cook the "cabbage of the republic" with the "selfish brute grin" of Old Russia.¹⁴⁶ In order to obliterate it one must muster all one's wisdom, but where is this force of wisdom in Ognev's fiction? Voronskij enquires. Ognev is seen to have a whole gallery of characters who are condemned, dying from awful brute, vegetating egotism. Whether they are protesters, dreamers, or possessed, they have a common element of madness, and therefore they die; an example is Razderišin who believes in the coming of a wonderful new state of Eurasia. Voronskij points out that nearly all Ognev's protagonists, even Kostja Rjabcev, evince some level of insanity. In most of Ognev's early stories the force of stupidity usually defeated the force of wisdom,

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.* p.82.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.* Strangely, Voronskij does not relate Ognev's dichotomy between "glupaja sila i sila umnaja" to Zamjatin's conception of the competing forces of entropy and energy, which it resembles, cf. 5.6.1.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.* p. 83.

and this in Voronskij's estimate explains the dramatics of his early work.¹⁴⁷ Ascribing this dualism to the author's early experience of a confrontation between romantic dreams and reality, Voronskij believes that the author's later "tragic duality" between life and crazy dreams, on the one hand, and brute force is especially felt by Ognev's intellectuals. Here Voronskij identifies the influence of Andreev, Sologub and Belyj. It was typical of Russian pre-revolutionary intellectuals, in Voronskij's estimate, to interpret life as "green ugliness", as a terrible cow or as a rough peasant woman; ideas, the mind and dreams were viewed as spiritless and cut off from life.

Ognev's singularity lies partly in his artistic ability to communicate these sentiments. In addition, Voronskij notes, whereas the older generation of Andreev, Belyj and Sologub accepted the status quo, the 37-year old Ognev does not accept "bovine reality":

[...]. Ognev, naobrot mlad duchom, gorjač, podvižen, on ne hočet ni primirenija s "korov'ej dejstvitel'nost'ju", tak kak verit v nastojaščuju umnuju silu na zemle, - ni primirenija s bezumijem mečty, potomu čto žadno ljubit žizn'. On gotov borot'sja, iskat', "orat' parovoznym golosom", on nenavidit staruju Rus' [...].¹⁴⁸

In chapter II Voronskij turns to the *opus magnum* of Ognev - *Dnevnik Kostja Rjabceva* (1926-27), which deals with the reform attempts in the Soviet school system as seen through the diary of a 15-year old schoolboy, Kostja, beginning on 15 September 1923 and ending on 1 September 1924.¹⁴⁹ Noting that the work deservedly brought Ognev fame, Voronskij recapitulates that *Dnevnik* was reviewed in detail in the Soviet press and it was translated into foreign languages. The primary theme is the children of the revolution, and along with the proletarian authors Belych and Panteleev (*Respubliki Škid*), he sees Ognev as a genuine and exceptional pioneer in this thematic field. Whereas Voronskij considers that *Respublika Škid* to a great

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* pp.83-84.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.* pp.85-86 ([...]. Ognev, on the contrary, is young spiritually, fervent, mobile; he does not want appeasement with "bovine reality" because he believes in a genuine force of wisdom on earth, nor (does he want) accommodation with senseless dreams, because he loves life ardently. He is ready to fight, to seek, to "shout with the voice of a steamships", he hates Old Rus' [...]).

¹⁴⁹ "Ognev" 1927:5ff.

extent consists of "raw material" with several defects, he praises Ognev as an accomplished writer. Ognev's material is seen to be painstakingly selected and verified, which makes *Dnevnik* convincing through its concrete artistic details and verisimilitude. Voronskij adds that, reading *Dnevnik*, he feels strongly the immense cultural benefits and restructuring currently taking place in the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁰

Voronskij finds Ognev has addressed a major topic: the children, those who tomorrow will judge the revolution, about whom more knowledge is needed. Who are they? Where are they going? What are their beliefs and hopes? he enquires. In some detail he discusses the protagonist Kostja, and measures him against the prototype Soviet citizen. Kostja is described as a very self-confident youth, honest and proud, quick and harsh in judgement, one who loves clarity and positiveness: "By conviction I am a communist". Yet Kostja's shortcomings are not concealed; he is naive and very primitive in his judgements, e.g. faulting Shakespeare's Hamlet. Voronskij accepts such shortcomings as realistic in an adolescent's diary and reminds readers that many, having once read Pisarev, would willingly reject Puškin as a feudal offshoot.¹⁵¹ Yet evoking the defects in Soviet *belles-lettres* described in several articles from 4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925) to 4.2.18 "O chudožestvennoj pravde" (1928), he states that many well-known critics and journalists would be well advised to define the sociological equivalent of several writers, scientists and public figures. Voronskij here regrets that in Soviet Russia there is insufficient care in relation to the classical literary heritage. Kostja's rejection of the bourgeois is gladdening, but his erroneous judgement of the classics - typical of the pioneers and Komsomol - must be firmly corrected.

He also asserts Kostja's anti-authoritarianism. Neither family, of which one hears nothing, nor school is seen to have any control of Kostja. In relation to the school authorities Voronskij views Kostja as mistrustful. He finds it necessary to remind readers that most of the school leaders like Nikpetož, Zin-Palna and Elnikitka, conscientiously attempt to free the school from tsarist routines, try to introduce new Soviet standards and methods and establish friendly relations with the pupils.

¹⁵⁰ Voronskij 1929a:88.

¹⁵¹ *ibid.* p.89.

Nikpetož, Zin-Palna and other teachers are described by Voronskij as pre-revolutionary. Though fully Soviet, they have not "organically" assimilated the revolution, he states. They somehow feel they are bystanders. From the second volume ¹⁵² Voronskij is troubled with the disillusionment felt by Nikpetož towards post-revolutionary intellectuals. Those among the Russian intellectuals in favour of the revolution from the beginning, honestly and without ulterior motives, are now seen to be moribund. Thus Kostja approaches Nikpetož for advice, but the latter only feels a lack of confidence from Kostja. Voronskij deduces that this is not a father-son conflict but a deeper conflict, not only in their perspectives on life or attitudes to the revolution, but in their differing psychic constitutions. ¹⁵³

Citing the protagonist Sil'va who writes in her diary that:

[...] naše pokolenie naučilo se ešče drugomu. Ono naučilo se tomu, čto kak žizn' ni strašna, nužno i možno s nej *borot'sja i ee preodolevat'*. *Togda ona stanovitsja vovse ne takoj strašnoj i kak-to daže oboračivaetsja svetlymi storonami* [...]. ¹⁵⁴

Voronskij believes this is the whole point. It explains the passive, resigned "hamletizing" of Nikpetož as contrasted with the action-prone Kostja. With Kostja talk is immediately transformed into action. "He is a small American", Voronskij affirms, calling to mind his pro-American formulations in 4.2.19 "Ob industrializacii i ob iskusstve" (1928).

In Voronskij's view Ognev has correctly diagnosed and described a fundamental human psychic post-revolutionary characteristic. Ognev's protagonists all attempt to conceal their shortcomings through independent action. Moreover, Kostja's socialness, independence, anti-authoritarianism and extreme activity are in Voronskij's opinion generated by October and are its best justification and hope.

The Kostja Rjabcevs are young, brave and hopeful, Voronskij affirms. Yet many threats confront them, he cautions, adding that there is no point in obfuscating

¹⁵² The sequel to *Dnevnik Kosti Rjabceva* was entitled *Ischod Nikpetoža* (1928), although its first edition was published under the title *Kostja Rjabcev v vuze*, cf. Surkov 1968(V):386.

¹⁵³ *ibid.* p.91.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.* ([...]our generation learned that however terrible the world may be, you can and must *fight the world and surmount it. Then it will not at all be so terrible and will even reveal its brighter sides* [...]).

this. Particularly they should beware of standard, formal, cheap optimism, which Voronskij hopes they will overcome. *Ischod Nikpetožu* (1928), which describes Kostja at university, is in Voronskij's view as interesting and substantial as the first part, but it was not yet finished when Voronskij completed the portrait.

In conclusion, Voronskij sees Ognev as a genuine, independent, original and strong artist with his own identity, style and basic themes. Further, he judges him to be wise, cultured and observant, and he sees Ognev to be in harmony with the revolution. Ognev's language and style are credited for nerve, warmth, emotion, unrest, drama and daring and uniqueness. Voronskij finds that Ognev has influenced writers like Pil'njak, Veselyj and others. Ognev also is seen to have a command of themes and to be engaging. Voronskij can only regret that Ognev has still not managed to collect a number of outstanding stories written before the revolution and present them in a more elaborated form. Here Voronskij recommends that his readers acquaint themselves with Ognev's accomplished stories *Bezumnnyj Orlik* and *Soba' čja radost'*, and he also advises Ognev to publish a collection of these stories.¹⁵⁵

The Di-score of Ognev indicated in diagram 5.5.3 below, although lower than the Pg-score for Pereval on several parameters, reflects in my reading Voronskij's positive appraisal of the content and direction of Ognev's authorship. This was also to be among the most positive overall appraisals he wrote of a Soviet writer.

5.5.2 Sergej Klyčkov (1889-1937)

Sergej Klyčkov (pseudonym for Sergej Antonovič Lešenkov) had written mostly poetry, but also some prose, prior to the October 1917 Revolution. He switched to prose from around 1925. In May 1924 he joined 35 other writers, i.a. Pil'njak, Esenin, Zoščenko, Vs.Ivanov, Mandel'stam, Babel' and A.Tolstoj, in a joint letter of protest to the Press Section of CK RKP(b) against alleged *Na postu* vulgarization of literature.¹⁵⁶ Today often considered a peasant poet,¹⁵⁷ his most known works were the three prose novels *Sacharnyj nemeč* (1925), *Čertuchinskij*

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.* p.95.

¹⁵⁶ Alberg Jensen 1979:86; Belaja 1989:4.

¹⁵⁷ Terras 1991:507, 550.

balakir' (1926) - both of which Voronskij reviewed in his portrait - and *Knjaz' mira* (1928). Klyčkov's penchant for pre-revolutionary mythology came under sharp criticism from proletarian critics and also from Voronskij. From 1927 Klyčkov was accused together with Klujev, Esenin and Orešin, of representing "kulak v literature". *Literaturnaja énciklopedija* described him as "odin iz najbolje jarkich predstavitelej kulackoj literatury".¹⁵⁸ He died in Stalin's purges in 1937.¹⁵⁹

No known correspondence exists between Klyčkov and Voronskij. According to a letter Pil'njak-Voronskij: "the poet Sergej Antonovič Klyčkov was a state editorial employee of the printing house Krug and *KN*".¹⁶⁰ When Voronskij delivered his defence speech on 18 April 1927, he included a positive reference to Klyčkov's role in stylistic editing of manuscripts at *KN*, cf. 3.2.10. Maguire mentioned that Klyčkov, next to Esenin and Orešin, in fact was the poet who was most published in *KN*.¹⁶¹ He also referred to Klyčkov as a "peasant poet", while Struve as mentioned earlier confirmed that Klyčkov joined Pereval, but does not state when.¹⁶² As already stated Voronskij grouped Klyčkov as a fellow traveller, not a Pereval writer. Klyčkov is not mentioned in his confession "O Perevale", cf. 3.2.9. Klyčkov did not contribute to the six *Pereval* almanacs 1924-28, nor is he mentioned in studies of Pereval by Glinka and Belaja.¹⁶³ He is not accused of adhering to Pereval in the 1931 edition of *Literaturnaja énciklopedija*. Including Klyčkov under the heading Pereval is thus misleading but allows us to test Struve's proposition against Voronskij's portrait.

Klyčkov frequently appeared in *KN* 1922-26, mostly with poetry, but also with some prose. He was however, absent from *KN* from mid-1924 to late 1925 coinciding

¹⁵⁸ *Literaturnaja énciklopedija*, 1931(V):320.

¹⁵⁹ Surkov 1966(III):606-607; Kasack 1992:543-544.

¹⁶⁰ Dinerštejn 1983:570, letter no. 3, footnote 4.

¹⁶¹ Maguire 1987:356.

¹⁶² Struve 1971:229-231.

¹⁶³ Glinka 1954, Belaja 1989.

with Voronskij's troubles at *KN*.¹⁶⁴

5.5.2.1 The portrait

Voronskij reviewed *Čertuchinskij balakir'* in his portrait of Klyčkov subtitled "Lunnye tumany" in *KN* 1926#10(45):215-224, after Klyčkov had ceased appearing in *KN*. In Voronskij 1928b Klyčkov's portrait consisted of 20 pages arranged into 4 untitled, numbered, chapters. Although it had been expanded slightly with a final paragraph on *Knjaz' mira*,¹⁶⁵ I have dated the portrait as a whole to 1926. Written at this late stage, I would expect based on diagram 4.3.1 the full range of parameters 1-8 to emerge, similar to the Ognev portrait. Further, the Di-score could be expected to approximate the Pereval Pg-score in diagram 5.2.1 provided, of course, the correctness of classifying Klyčkov a Pereval writer.

Voronskij starts chapter I by noting the feeling of sorrow that pervades the novel and infers that the author has sought refuge in an artificial world of the past for his feelings and misanthropy. The novel is seen to be permeated by age-old villages, Old Believers, forest fairy tales, and it abounds in the richest folklore. Though the novel is called *Čertuchinskij balakir'* (*The Jar from Čertuchino*), the main protagonist is the moon. The author's best pages and longest descriptions are seen to be dedicated to the moon, which explains the portrait's subtitle *Lunnye tumany*. The moon is anthropomorphized and is even attributed magic properties. Voronskij finds that in the novel life is strangely transformed by the moonshine: simple village everyday toil is transformed into a magic, ancient saga, and unheard-of miracles take place with the protagonists. Voronskij enquires how a contemporary writer, dedicated to advancing the peasant, does not focus on what he does during the day, during working hours, but instead on what the peasant dreams about in moon fogs? Why, Voronskij asks, does

¹⁶⁴ Various poetry: *KN* 1922#2(6):105-106; *KN* 1922#4(8):89; *KN* 1922#10(14):101-102; *KN* 1923#2(12):140; *KN* 1923#3(13):148-149; *KN* 1923#5(15):150; *KN* 1924#1(18):128-129; *KN* 1924#2(19):99-101; *KN* 1924#3(20):144; *KN* 1924#4(21):138-139; *KN* 1924#5(22):136-138; *KN* 1925#8(33):96-97; *KN* 1925#10(35):111; *KN* 1926#1(36):121. Various prose: *Lysaja gorja*, *KN* 1923#5(15):385-394; *Serij barin'*. *Rasskaz*, *KN* 1925#7(32):19-34.

¹⁶⁵ Voronskij 1928b:6; 302-321. The addition (pp.319-321) is distinguished by a paragraph, which is however omitted without commentary in Voronskij 1987a:232-233.

the writer seek oblivion in moony miracles? ¹⁶⁶

In chapter II Voronskij discusses the ideas underlying the novel, without which the novel is seen to be incomprehensible. He interprets the unbelievable events in the life of the protagonists as manifestations of these ideas. He attributes to Klyčkov a dualism involving the Greek term *hypostasis*, ¹⁶⁷ according to which man is a twofold creation ("dviupostasnaja tvar' "). Voronskij cites the passage in which the protagonist Spiridon explains to his daughter Fekluša the double nature of man: "All is created according to two hypostases: there is flesh and there is spirit". ¹⁶⁸ Flesh and the spirit are different and are continuously at war with each other in man. Flesh, basically evil, prevails on earth together with fate. Occasionally man may seem to decide his own fate, but fate always prevails in the last instance. Fate not only works against man, it is seen to make fun of man, wickedly, at the most crucial moment. Voronskij finds it is not coincidental that Klyčkov anthropomorphizes fate in Ul'jana the witch, a being that is unreliable, ironic, bad, coarse and who patently fails man in his hour of need.

Voronskij notes that Klyčkov lets wicked fate most often mock and interfere in love affairs, which is seen as a reason for Klyčkov's pessimism and misanthropy. The contradiction between body and spirit cannot be resolved in this world. The solution offered by Klyčkov, Voronskij notes, is to eliminate dualism in the afterworld. The struggle between spirit and flesh, which spirit loses on earth, is seen to be won in Klyčkov's thinking by the spirit in the afterworld: here flesh is transformed, unites with the spirit and lives forever. As to whether Klyčkov thus is an Orthodox believer, he states:

[...]. Sergej Klyčkov otricatel'no odnositsja k pravoslavnoj cerkovnosti, no on gromit ee kak "stolover", t.e. kak mistik, na inoj lad i obrazec. V voprose o ploti i duče, o zaplotinnom carstve on sovsem ne dalek ot etoj cerkovnosti - èto jasno

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.* pp.302-304.

¹⁶⁷ In this context the most appropriate understanding of *hypostasis* involves its philosophical and/or theological meanings. Derived from the Greek *hupostasis* ("a standing under"; hupo=under; stasis=a standing), the term *hypostasis* in philosophy means 1) something that underlies something else, or 2) the essence or principle of something. In theology, *hypostasis* means 1) (obsolete) the nature or essence of the Trinity; 2) any of the persons of the Trinity; 3) the essential person of Christ in which his human and divine natures are united (cf. *The Heritage Illustrated Dictionary of the English Language*, International Edition, McGraw Hill, Boston 1975:649).

¹⁶⁸ Voronskij 1928b:305.

vsjakomu, "daže ne obučavšemusja v seminarii". Verit li pisatel' po-ser'eznomu v svoe zaplotinnoe carstvo, udovletvorjaet li ego primirenje protivorečija meždu plot'ju i duchom v boge? V étom možno ves'ma i ves'ma somnevat'sja [...].¹⁶⁹

One reason for Voronskij's doubting that Klyčkov believes in his bodily kingdom is his mockery. He justifies his doubts in that Klyčkov's conjectured paradise, which he expresses as an elision of Plato's ideas with Russian beds, resembles too closely the familiar Russian countryside. Still, he judges Klyčkov's dualism to be seriously felt, as is his belief in evil fate.¹⁷⁰

In chapter III Voronskij relates Klyčkov's dualism to his extreme pessimism with regard to the present and the future. Everything living seems to be afraid of man, in Klyčkov's world. Man is seen to destroy his environment through mechanization and standardization typifying the Age of Iron. Matter prevails over spirit; man surrounds himself with contentment, satiety, pleasures, but suffocates spiritual life. Voronskij notes that according to the author, this is how flesh and spirit interact. Klyčkov, who already in *Sacharnyj nemec* had portrayed a way of life disappearing under the terrible impact of the Age of Iron, is classified as a thorough pessimist and misanthropist. In *Čertuchinskij balakir'* Klyčkov evokes emerald forests, the old mill, the river Dubna, songs, superstition and dances, yet Voronskij reflects that all this has now vanished. The future irrevocably lies in "the Iron Devil", the victory of brazen mechanics and the prevalence of material culture over spirit. The realization that this is taking place explains Klyčkov's view of an alien, incomprehensible and meaningless present and future. This is seen to explain both his feeling of a breach between matter and spirit and his conception of an evil fate deriding man.¹⁷¹

To support his view that Klyčkov's contradiction between matter and spirit is more an emotional and ethical reaction than a conscious choice, Voronskij cites

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.* p.308 ([...]. Sergej Klyčkov comports himself pejoratively to the Orthodox Church, but he fulminates against it like a schismatic, i.e. like a mystic, according to another way and example. On the question of flesh and spirit, the trans-bodied kingdom, he is not at all far away from the Orthodox Church. This is clear to everyone, "even those not trained in a seminar". But does the writer seriously believe in his trans-bodied kingdom? Is his reconciliation of the contradiction between flesh and spirit in God satisfactory? Here one may seriously doubt [...]).

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.* p.309.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.* pp.310-312.

Klyčkov's indifference to gnoseology.¹⁷² Acknowledging the futility of arguing with Klyčkov about his dualism, he affirms that Klyčkov's novel only confirms the truth that partitioning the world into two conflicting hypostases is essentially pessimistic and misanthropic. By contrast, Voronskij prescribes that only life-asserting and joyous materialistic monism which views "soul" or "spirit" as psychic functions of matter, will reconcile the dialectic contradiction which torments Klyčkov.¹⁷³

In support of his view Voronskij claims that "spontaneous materialists" in literature are well-known, citing L.Tolstoj as one. Avoiding comment on L.Tolstoj's religiosity from 1880, Voronskij tells his readers that L.Tolstoj as an artist was a life-glad pagan. Finally conceding Klyčkov some ground, he admits that mechanization entails costs, but the solution lies not in seeking refuge in the past but in the socialist future. Voronskij also informs readers that mechanization is not a product of the Iron Devil but of capitalism, and the Iron Devil also means tractors and progress. Voronskij concludes this chapter by praising Klyčkov's rural descriptions, but noting how difficult it is to disregard rural backwardness and its illiteracy, ignorance, dirt, disease, toil and depravity.¹⁷⁴

In chapter IV Voronskij reflects on literature depicting peasant life. Irrespective of his many ideological objections, he sees *Čertuchinskij balakir'* as a work of "great social significance". Voronskij quotes Gor'kij who in mid-1926 advised him that it was time to show in literature the discord between two approaches to the village, one characterized by poetification and the other by scepticism. This village trend is extremely strong in Soviet Russia, Voronskij notes, distinguishing between two branches: one is represented by Vs. Ivanov, Leonov, Sejfullina, Neverov and partly Pil'njak, and it accepts the October Revolution. Although loving, at times even idolizing, village life they have understood that without the city and without workers the peasant cannot achieve anything. The second branch is seen to be represented by Klyčkov, Kljuev and partly Esenin. Voronskij does not classify these as reactionary in the narrow sense. In their way they support the revolution, he finds, but they

¹⁷² In philosophy, gnoseology involves the theory of cognition (*poznanie*), cf. Ožegov 1988:110.

¹⁷³ Voronskij 1928b:313.

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.* p.314.

remain frightened of the modern, urban age and sentimentalize village life without believing in its restoration. As for Klyčkov,

[...]. Vpročem, derevenskim pisatelem Klyčkova možno nazvat' liš' v očen' uslovnom smysle. Dejstviteľno, i "Sacharnyj nemec" i "Čertuchinskij balakir" otažajut v izvestnoj stepeni čuvstva i mysli gibnuščej patriarchal'noj, "krepkoj", spiridonovskoj derevni, no Klyčkov v celom ne krest'janskij pisatel', vo vsjakom slučae ne pisatel' trudovoj krest'janskoj žizni. Nedarom glavnym geroem ego romana, pomimo mesjaca - cyganskogo solnyška, vystupaet balakir', krasnobaj, lentjaj, neudačnik Petr Kirillyč da Spiridon, kotoryj bol'še sidit v svoem "skitu", čem rabotaet. Očen' mnogo oni spjat, grezjat i voobšče "prochlaždajutsja". Trudovaja derevnja ne pokazana ni v "Sacharnom nemce", ni v "Balakire" [...].¹⁷⁵

This is seen as the basic difference between Klyčkov and former populist (*narodničnaja*) literature, such as that of Zlatovratskij and Gleb I. Uspenskij. In Voronskij's judgement, Klyčkov is much more preoccupied by folklore, intimate, narrow-individual and religious experiences. On the positive side, Voronskij in some brief concluding passages remarks that Klyčkov is exceptionally gifted, and from a purely folkloristic point of view the novel is first class. Neither Mel'nikov-Pečerskij nor Leskov in comparison are seen to have such "bodily feeling" of Rus'. Further, the novel's artistic qualities are judged to be considerable and indisputable. The mother tongue is seen to be wonderfully transmitted in a rare, poetical prose. The author's many refreshing expressions are noted, and Voronskij exemplifies the vernacular's lyrical tones and half-jests. He is less enthusiastic about the character portrayal, since the author is felt to recount, rather than bring to life, his protagonists.¹⁷⁶

In a passage added in 1928, Voronskij welcomes Klyčkov's novel *Knjaz' mira* (1928), which confirms his growth as a writer. Like *Čertuchinskij balakir'* it is written in a semi-realistic form, but here realism prevails over fantasy. Now the everyday life of old village Rus' is described, and the fairytales now only provide a background. Klyčkov's character portrayals have improved, and this is attributed to

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.* p.317 ([...]. Moreover, Klyčkov can only be called a village writer in a very circumscribed sense. Though both *Sacharnyj nemec* and *Čertuchinskij balakir'* reflect the feelings and thoughts of the disappearing patriarchal, "strong", Spiridon-like, village, Klyčkov on the whole is not a village writer, in any case not a writer of village toil. Typically the main protagonist of his novel, apart from the moon - the little gypsy sun - is the garrulous, inert and unfortunate Petr Kirillič, yes, Spiridon, who sits more in his "hermitage" than works. They sleep a lot, dream and in general "languish". The toiling village is shown neither in *Sacharnyj nemec* nor in *Balakir'* [...]).

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.* pp.318-319.

the increased role of realism. Klyčkov's work has become more substantial, Voronskij believes, as a result of the elimination of thoughts on the flesh and spirit, on the ultimate truth, and on man's imminent destruction by the Iron Devil. The novel's language is described as wonderful; Klyčkov has become more selective and balanced with his lyricism.¹⁷⁷

In my reading of Voronskij's portrait, Klyčkov's authorship can be expressed in the negative Di-score specified in diagram 5.5.3 below. This contrasts markedly with the high overall positive Di-score of Ognev, and with the expected Pg-score for Pereval writers. Ognev's Di-score matches the Pereval Pg-score on parameters 5 and 7, is insignificantly below on parameters 1,2, 4 and 6 and insignificantly above the Pg-score on parameters 3 and 8. This confirms in my view Ognev's status as a Pereval writer. As for Klyčkov there are significant discrepancies from the Pg-score on parameters 1,3,4,6 and 7 which confirms that Voronskij did not consider Klyčkov a Pereval writer. As stated earlier Voronskij rejected classifying Klyčkov a village writer in the ordinary sense, instead viewing him as a writer of idealistic, and religiously inclined, folklore.¹⁷⁸ The only other relevant category for Klyčkov would be "pre-October", in which case of course diagram 5.1.3 and the attendant distributions must be altered correspondingly, cf. also 5.8.2.

5.5.3 A comparison of the Ognev and Klyčkov portraits

Parameters:	Pg-score	Di-score	
	Pereval writers	N. Ognev	S. Klyčkov
1) October Revolution	+4	+3	-2
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	+1	0	0
3) Soviet society	+1	+2	-2
4) Slavophilism	-1	-3	+3
5) Russian literary heritage	+2	+2	0
6) Realism	+4	+2	-2
7) Psych. character portrayal	+2	+2	-2
8) Language mastery	+2	+3	+3

Diagram 5.5.3

A striking difference between the portraits - written approximately three years

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.* pp.319-321.

¹⁷⁸ Voronskij 1928b:317.

apart - is the perceived attitude to several parameters. 1) The October Revolution. In the later portrait from 1929 of the 41-year-old Ognev, the author is seen to satirize the rural past. For this reason Voronskij by implication confers on him a positive attitude to the October Revolution. By contrast the 36-year-old Klyčkov is seen in 1926 to seek refuge in the past on account of his dislike and fear of the present - and by implication the October revolution. Neither portrait focusses on any positive or negative portrayal of 2) The RKP(b)/VKP(b). Whereas Ognev's *Kostja Rjabcev* is favourable to 3) Soviet society, Klyčkov is seen as largely negative. In terms of 4) Slavophilism, Ognev is viewed as scornful, while Klyčkov is seen to some extent as a Slavophile folklorist. With respect to 5) The classical Russian literary heritage influence from Solugob, Andreev and Belyj is noted on Ognev, but no antecedents are noted for Klyčkov, who is treated as unique and also as a special kind of village writer. Ognev is an adherent of literary 6) Realism, an atheist satirizing the old bygone days, while Klyčkov's alien and reactionary ideas of hypostasis are characterized as romantic-sentimental folklorism, far from realism. Interestingly Voronskij states that Ognev offers 7) Psychological character portrayals, whereas the protagonists of Klyčkov overall lack such depth. This could be interpreted as a result of Voronskij's own heightened awareness of parameter 7 in the second half of the 1920s. As for 8) Language mastery both writers are credited with excellent command of Russian.

As regards references to Christianity, Voronskij does note Ognev's atheism and his negative depiction of priests, while Klyčkov is seen to be inspired by religious mysticism. In neither case is Christianity viewed positively by Voronskij. In the Ognev portrait there are no significant occurrences of the key concepts of aesthetics and truth but the term "prekrasnyj" is twice invoked to describe Ognev's language and style.¹⁷⁹

In the Klyčkov portrait the repeated use of "prekrasnyj" to describe the moon and Klyčkov's language¹⁸⁰ as well as of "pravda"/"istina" partly to confront the

¹⁷⁹ Voronskij 1929a:83, 94.

¹⁸⁰ Voronskij 1928b:304, 306, 318, 321.

author's worldview¹⁸¹ seen in conjunction suggest that Klyčkov's work made a strong aesthetical impression on Voronskij.

5.6 "Pre-October" writers

The formative years of Zamjatin and Belyj were prior to the October 1917 Revolution, which explains why Voronskij considered them "pre-October" writers. When Voronskij published his portraits of the 38-year Zamjatin in 1922 and the 48-year old Belyj in 1928, both were well into their careers. Neither had any sympathy for Bolsheviks nor communism, although Zamjatin as a former Bolshevik had served time in tsarist prisons. While Zamjatin and Voronskij exchanged several letters, there is only one known letter from Belyj to Voronskij. Significantly, nothing was ever printed in *KN* by either Zamjatin or Belyj but Zamjatin's "Na kuličkach" (1914) was printed in the first issue of the almanac of Krug in 1921.

5.6.1 Evgenij Zamjatin (1884-1937)¹⁸²

As a veteran Bolshevik Evgenij Ivanovič Zamjatin welcomed the October Revolution, but he went on to criticize revolutionary excesses in polemic articles written pseudonymously in journals like Gor'kij's *Novaja žžn'* and Černov's *Delo naroda*. In "Ja bojus" (1921) he even doubted whether real literature had any future in Soviet Russia, and he viewed proletarian literature as retrograde. Since real writers according to Zamjatin were all insane, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels and sceptics, Russian literature only had a future in the past. His vilification by the Bolshevik establishment especially from 1922 onwards can partly be attributed to Voronskij's portrait of him in *KN* that same year. As I have written about in more detail elsewhere, Voronskij in 1922 refused to publish in *KN* the work that Zamjatin today is remembered most for, his masterful novel *My* (1920).¹⁸³ Zamjatin was a very prominent writer and literary figure prior to, and following, the October 1917

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*, pp.306, 312, 313, 320, 321.

¹⁸² This is an adaptation of my article "PS: What is to be done with the novel? Voronskij, Zamjatin and *My*", *Scando-Slavica*, Vol.43, 1997:39-51.

¹⁸³ *ibid.*

Revolution. He was editor of the journals *Dom iskusstv* (1921), *Sovremennyj zapad* (1922-24) and *Russkij sovremennik* (1924). He also translated many foreign works into Russian, and lectured on literature to new aspiring authors. In the spring of 1920 he played a central role in founding the Leningrad section of VSP, of which he remained a board member until 1929, cf. 3.2.8. He was a mentor to the Serapion brotherhood, which emerged as a group in February 1921.¹⁸⁴

5.6.1.2 Correspondence

The published correspondence Voronskij-Zamjatin consists of 5 letters, and there exists at least one unpublished letter, as indicated in 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7.¹⁸⁵ The letters exchanged in late 1922 make it evident why Voronskij selected to portray Zamjatin yet declined to publish any of his work in *KN*: Zamjatin's anti-communism and anti-Bolshevism made him such a political liability that his undoubted great artistic qualities counted for little. Zamjatin's bitterness was palpable in 1922 and he was of course aware that he was to be silenced to death, which his letter to Stalin in 1931 confirms. In Zamjatin's letter to Voronskij we learn that he expects to leave Soviet Russia in the near future, and he thanks Voronskij for assisting in his release from prison. Voronskij was at the zenith of his power in 1922, with direct access to the ailing Lenin and Krupskaja and before the controversies surrounding *voronščina* and *krasnonovščina* set in from 1923.

Zamjatin has elsewhere explained that he was incarcerated twice in solitary confinement, once in 1905-06 and again in 1922, both times in Špalernaja. Moreover, he was exiled 3 times in all, in 1906, 1911 and in 1922.¹⁸⁶ His departure from the Soviet Union in November 1931 was to be his fourth and final exile. He was arrested in the autumn of 1922 together with around 160 other intellectuals, as mentioned in 1.1. Most were issued with Soviet passports and extradited, but Zamjatin - who wanted to leave - was pardoned as a result of the intervention of i.a. Voronskij and

¹⁸⁴ Surkov 1964(II):987; Terras 1985:528-529 and 1991:564-565; Kasack 1992:1432-1435.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Dinerštejn 1983:571ff.; Galuškin 1992; Vaagan 1997b; Ljubimova 1997.

¹⁸⁶ Ginsburg 1970:6.

Pil'njak.¹⁸⁷ Shortly afterwards Zamjatin applied for an exit visa, which was rejected.¹⁸⁸ Voronskij's answer was written immediately after Voronskij had completed his portrait of Zamjatin. He does not conceal his negative appraisal of *My*, which he had received from Pil'njak in manuscript form for possible publication in *KN*. Pil'njak often proposed to Voronskij material for publication and was often at variance with Voronskij in his assessment of manuscripts. The refusal to publish *My* in *KN*, or even in the less prestigious *Prožektor* or *Naši dni*, was part of a more critical official attitude to Zamjatin,¹⁸⁹ who from 1924-25 turned to the theatre. It is therefore not surprising that the later published letters Voronskij sent Zamjatin, in 1923 and 1926, were very brief, since their relationship must have suffered. Yet Zamjatin undoubtedly influenced Voronskij in several ways. With the benefit of hindsight there can be little doubt that Zamjatin was the more politically farsighted of the two. Dikušina, Isaeva believe that within a year of publishing his Zamjatin portrait, i.e. in late 1923, he had become so disillusioned by the opposition he met that he privately shared Zamjatin's pessimism.¹⁹⁰ Nor can it be excluded that Voronskij's preoccupation with intuition and the subconscious was influenced by Zamjatin's earlier interest for similar questions. Zamjatin's lecture "Psichologija tvorčestva" (1919-1920) and the novel *My* (1920) both in a sense emphasize the artistic importance of irrational, psychological elements.

5.6.1.3 The portrait

As shown in diagram 5.1.3 and in 7.3, Voronskij's portrait of Zamjatin in *KN* 1922#6(10):304-323 was his third literary portrait. As we might expect from diagram 4.3.1, Voronskij at this early stage relied on ideological parameters to convey his aesthetical views. Further, the pre-October Pg-score in diagram 5.2.1 could be

¹⁸⁷ Galuškin 1992.

¹⁸⁸ Dinerštejn 1983:571ff and Galuškin 1992.

¹⁸⁹ Vaagan 1997b:40.

¹⁹⁰ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995:27. As shown in 4.2.13 "O tom, čego u nas net" (1925) Voronskij, defining his literary aesthetical credo, without citing Zamjatin's "Ja bojus", nonetheless frankly admits that Zamjatin's pessimism about the future of Soviet literature had been justified.

expected to be more or less matched by Zamjatin's Di-score.

In Voronskij 1928b the portrait ran to 35 pages grouped into 4 untitled, numbered chapters.¹⁹¹ Prior to the portrayal, Voronskij had combined ideological criticism with artistic flattery of Zamjatin in a review in *KN* of the Serapion brethren, including Zamjatin's story "Sever":

[...]. Zamjatin - bolšoj chudožnik i umnyj čelovek...<...>. Oktjabr' bol'no udaril Zamjatina. Takie vešči, kak skazočki *Cerkov'*, *Arapy* s prisvistom i veselym ržaniem perepečatany zarubežnoj émigrantskoj pressoj - i v samom dele, im tam bolee umestno, čem v osaždenom sovetskom lagere. Éto agitki chudščego kačestva. [...].¹⁹²

In his more detailed subsequent portrait Voronskij elaborated his ideological criticism. In chapter I, he discusses the political satires of backward provincial tsarist Russia in the stories "Uezdnoe" (1913), "Na kuličkach" (1914), "Alatyr'" (1915) and "Črevo" (1915). Voronskij affirms that Zamjatin's indisputable talent and intellect cannot compensate for his loss of orientation and alienation in Soviet Russia.¹⁹³ In chapter II he comments on *Ostrovitjane* (1918) and *Lovec čelovekov* (1922), both results of Zamjatin's two years in England. These are seen to be artistically successful, even amusing, satires on the English bourgeoisie. Yet they are judged to be superficial and of limited significance, and they reflect their author's underlying dualistic and pessimistic world view.

[...]. Po chudožestvennomu mirosozercaniju avtora, v mire - dve sily: odna - stremjaščajasja k pokoju, drugaja - večno buntujuščaja, dinamičeskaja. V nenapečatanom poslednem fantastičeskom romane "My" odna iz geroin' govorit: "Dve sily v mire: éntropija i énergija. Odna - k blažennomu pokoju, k sčastlivomu ravnovesiju, drugaja - k razrušeniju ravnovesija, k mučitel'no-beskonečnomu dviženiju" [...].¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Voronskij 1928b:76-110.

¹⁹² Voronskij, *KN* 1922#3(7):267-268 ([...]. Zamjatin is a great artist and a discerning person. [...] October has hurt Zamjatin painfully. Such things as the short tales *Cerkov'* and *Arapy* are reprinted with jeers and laughter by the foreign emigrant press - and actually they are more at home there than in the besieged Soviet camp. This is agitation of the worst kind [...]). It should be added that I consider this review too brief to be considered a group portrait.

¹⁹³ Voronskij 1928b:78-85.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.* p.87 ([...]. According to the artistic world view of the author there are two forces in the world - one strives for calm, the other is eternally rebelling and dynamic. In the unprinted last fantastic novel "My", one of protagonists states "There are two forces in the world: entropy and energy. One leads to

Voronskij believes that Zamjatin's entire authorship can be interpreted as a struggle between entropy and energy. In this sense Voronskij finds Zamjatin to be a symbolist, draping the physical and chemical laws of nature in life's clothing. This also typifies his innovative style, combining modern vernacular with detailed, scientific and geometric imagery. Entropy, the force of inertia, tradition and balance, in its continuous struggle with energy, engulfs it, and only in rare moments does energy rupture the calm surface. These moments of aggravated tension between entropy and energy are the artistic crux of Zamjatin's authorship, Voronskij estimates. He cites several examples, claiming that Zamjatin's perspective is restricted to personal, individual cases, not broader class or social conditions. This largely explains the failures of his protagonists, who succumb to entropy. Furthermore, it shows why Zamjatin is hostile to the post-revolutionary era of collectivism, Voronskij states.¹⁹⁵

In a very long chapter III Voronskij elaborates on what he sees as Zamjatin's faulty perception of the October Revolution. This is seen to have strongly marked his post-revolutionary work, of which "Peščera" (1922) is judged to be the most talented and *My* (1920) the most serious. Voronskij states that Zamjatin's cold and antagonistic attitude to the October Revolution makes one feel that tsarism has temporarily revived, and this pains those who know and appreciate his great talent. He brands Zamjatin's comparison of Bolshevik communism with drastic surgery and socialism with gradual X-ray-based treatment as "extremely unfortunate" and "childish rubbish"¹⁹⁶

Dedicating 7 pages to *My*, Voronskij first contrasts Lenin's reassurance of the presence of socialism with Zamjatin's perceived fear of the present and future in *My*. Elaborating on Trockij's critique of Zamjatin,¹⁹⁷ Voronskij states categorically that

blessed peace, to happy balance, the other to a destruction of the balance, to eternally tormenting movement". [...]).

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.* pp.88-92.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.* pp.93-101.

¹⁹⁷ Trockij (1923:69) had stated that "I daže flegmatik i snob Zamjatin obnaružil u naščej revoljucii nedostatok temperatury" ("Even the phlegmatic and snob Zamjatin has detected an insufficient temperature in our revolution"). Although appearing after Voronskij's portrait of Zamjatin, the articles that made up the first part of Trockij's *Literatura i revoljucija* (1923) dedicated to contemporary

the novel is not a utopia but a political pamphlet on the present combined with prognostics of the future. He ascribes to Zamjatin an antiquated understanding of socialism and proceeds to give a detailed account of the plot in *My*. All in all, Voronskij assesses, the novel produces a depressing and terrible impression; it is a parody of communist society, and this type of vilification is not a new phenomenon. Influenced by Trockij's ideas on the permanent revolution,¹⁹⁸ he is vexed by the female protagonist's accusation that the winners of the 200-year war (the Bolsheviks) had only made one mistake - they believed theirs was the *last* revolution. Voronskij delivers at this point a defence of communism, stating that if Zamjatin e.g. had intended to typify "war communism", then he has ignored the fact that this was not representative of true communism; one must take into consideration external threats, which Zamjatin has ignored, Voronskij adds. Paralleling his previous critique of Pil'njak's primitivism,¹⁹⁹ Voronskij finds it artificial to construct a dichotomy between vegetative, organic life and communism. This implies an idyllization of primordial existence, from which man has progressed.²⁰⁰ He concludes that Zamjatin's motive in writing *My* is narrow individualism. Thus the rebellion from the main protagonist D-503's side is motivated by individual and narrow-minded love for I-313. The end therefore must be pessimistic, Voronskij believes, and he finds Zamjatin in general to be very pessimistic. Weighing Zamjatin's ideology against his artistry, there is little doubt what counts most:

[...]. S chudožestvennoj storony roman prekrasen. Zamjatin dostig zdes' polnoj zrelosti, - tem chuže, ibo vse što pošlo na služenie zlomu delu [...]. Na očén' opasnom i besslavnom puti Zamjatin. Nužno što skazat' prjamo i tverdo. [...].²⁰¹

literature were written mainly in mid-1922, as Trockij states in the introduction (pp.9-10). Thus Trockij's opinion of Zamjatin must have been well known to Voronskij when he wrote his portrait.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Choate 1987:27-37 for an appraisal of Trockij's conception of the permanent revolution.

¹⁹⁹ *KN* 1922#4(8):252-269.

²⁰⁰ Voronskij 1928b:105-106.

²⁰¹ *ibid.* pp.107-109 ([...]). From an artistical point of view the novel is beautiful. Zamjatin has here attained complete maturity - which makes it all the worse, for all this only serves a wicked cause. [...] Zamjatin is treading a very dangerous and inglorious path. This has to be stated straightforwardly and firmly. [...].

Voronskij at this point affirms that communists are the avantgarde and states that in order to secure victory "we" must be fanatical and merciless at this stage of development towards communism. In a very brief chapter IV, he notes Zamjatin's positive stylistic, albeit negative ideological, influence on young writers, especially the Serapion brotherhood. He alleges that the artistic individualism typifying the brotherhood, which he compares to the isolation of the Bible's Jehova, is caused by Zamjatin's damaging influence.²⁰²

Voronskij's overwhelmingly ideologically-based rejection of Zamjatin's authorship is reflected in the Di-score in diagram 5.6.3 below. This was to be the single most negative and severe assessment Voronskij made of any writer he ever portrayed. The discrepancy with the corresponding "pre-October" Pg-score will be commented on later. The only overt reference to religion and the Bible is the noted comparison of Zamjatin-induced individualism and exclusiveness among the Serapion brotherhood with the Biblical Jehova. This shows Voronskij's tendency to rely on (negative) Biblical parallels.

5.6.2 Andrej Belyj (1880-1934)

With his novel *Peterburg* (1916)²⁰³ Andrej Belyj (pseudonym for Boris Nikolaevič Bugaev) confirmed his position as one of the foremost symbolist poets and prose writers before the October Revolution.²⁰⁴ Influenced from the early 1900s by Solov'ev and Blok, he became from 1912 an adherent of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy. Seeing in the October Revolution a mystical religious and spiritual Russian renaissance, he was disenchanted with post-revolutionary developments. Settling in Berlin in November 1921 he returned to Soviet Russia in October 1923, after which he tried to avoid political difficulties and continue to write. The prose of his autobiographical novel *Kotik Letaev* (1922) presaged Joyce's technical

²⁰² *ibid.* p.110.

²⁰³ As pointed out by Terras (1985:46), *Peterburg* (1916) appeared in four subsequent editions. The 1922 edition was 1/3 shorter than the 1916 edition. Voronskij i.a. states that "Simvolizm s bol'šoj bukvy staratel'no udaljaetsja avtorom i v novom izdanii "Peterburga" i v "Kotike Leaeva". Ot éтого ego vešči tol'ko vyigryvajut" (Voronskij 1928b:52).

²⁰⁴ Terras 1985:45-47; Kasack 1992: 128-132.

experimentation. Yet as Voronskij's portrait illustrates, Belyj's symbolist worldview²⁰⁵ set him apart from officially approved literary trends in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia, and despite his technical brilliance and verbal virtuosity he remained a solitary figure on the literary scene. In Voronskij's view Belyj's primary asset was his stylistic innovations in fictional prose, and he therefore saw Belyj as useful in terms of the new realism he advocated.

Though Belyj never appeared in *KN*, Voronskij did publish extracts from his novel *Moskva* in the almanac of *Krug* (1925#4-5). The following year the publishing house *Krug* printed Belyj's novels *Moskovskij čudak* (1926) and *Moskva pod udarom* (1926).²⁰⁶ Voronskij first addressed Belyj's work in "Literaturnye otkliki" (*KN* 1922#2), yet did not return to Belyj's authorship before the portrait appeared in *Iskusstvo videt' mir* (1928a) and in *Literaturnye portrety* (1928b).²⁰⁷

5.6.2.1 Correspondence

Never intimate, they seem to have exchanged only one letter, from Belyj to Voronskij, cf. 7.5 (No.76) and 7.9. Dated 10 January 1927 and signed Boris Bugaev, the letter is brief and formal in tone. It confirms that Belyj had lent Voronskij several books, including Belyj's first novel, the two-volume *Serebrjannyj golub'* (1910).²⁰⁸

5.6.2.2 The portrait

The 47-page portrait of Belyj was the second longest portrait Voronskij ever wrote, cf. diagram 5.1.3. At this late stage and based on diagram 4.3.1 it comes as no surprise that Voronskij employs the full range of parameters 1-8. One could reasonably expect Belyj's Di-score to approximate the pre-October Pg-score in diagram 5.2.1. The portrait is remarkable in its blending of ideology and artistry and to all appearances ideology still prevails over artistry. Grouped into 5 untitled,

²⁰⁵ Belyj 1994, Helle 1992.

²⁰⁶ Dinerštejn 1983:611.

²⁰⁷ Voronskij 1928b:17-63.

²⁰⁸ *ibid.* While Dinerštejn dates the letter 19 January 1927, I found on examination the date to be 10 January 1927.

numbered chapters, the portrait mainly deals with Belyj's prose rather than his poetry. In chapter I, commenting on *Peterburg* and *Kotik Letaev*, Voronskij commends in particular Belyj's ability to communicate his protagonists' childhood reminiscences:

[...]. Ot étič očarovatel'nych kartin, scen, meločej veet žiznennym, čudesnym i osennim, slovno ot antonovki. V nich neobyčajnaja utončenost' ostrota, vyrazitel'nost' i svoeobrazie chudožestvennych vosprijatij soedinjaetsja s naivnost'ju, s prostotoj, graničaščeju s čem-to detskim i neposredstvennym; Belyj bogat imi i ščedr na nich, kak, možet byt', ni odin iz sovremennyh pisatelej. Oni rassypani u nego vsjudu, v ljubom romane, v povesti, v dnevnike v izobilii. To, čto u značitel'nogo chudožnika sverkaet redkim, dragocennym i skupym ukraščeniem, u Belogo razbrosano bez vsjakogo račeta, kak-to samo soboj, kak budto vse éto obyčno. V étič sčastlivych mestach net i nameka na mistiku.[...].²⁰⁹

Yet Voronskij finds that such splendid scenes suddenly vanish, to be replaced by passages in which solitary, abandoned man in his final, mortal despair is surrounded by dark, evil and cold emptiness. Voronskij criticizes Belyj for filtering reality through feverish, miraculous and improbable dreams, through the terrible Biblical visions of the prophet Ezekiel. The sudden introduction of Kant and Ricardo are designed, according to Voronskij, to add a semblance of rationality and logic. The only certain extant point throughout the text is the author; all the rest is hyperbole and phantasy. The protagonist appears occasionally in the crowds, roams along the streets of St. Petersburg, yet the readers remain non-enlightened. Voronskij inquires ironically whether the unknown protagonist perhaps only reveals himself to a select readership through anthroposophic mysteries? To non-enlightened readers only a solitary, sad yet talented man appears, out of touch with his times. Voronskij finds that while Belyj is in full command of the hidden artistic conceptualizations of the most joyful, life-confirming beginnings of existence, this artistic gift is not felt. The successful parts are in Voronskij's view continuously clouded by unnecessary

²⁰⁹ Voronskij 1928b:19 ([...]. A breeze of life, miracle and autumn, as if from green autumn apples emanates from these enthralling pictures, scenes and fragments. Their particular refinement, sharpness, expressiveness and the unique artistic perception blends with naiveté, with a simplicity verging on the childlike and immediate. Belyj is endowed with, and exudes, such qualities as perhaps no other contemporary writer. With him they are everywhere in abundance, in any of his novels, tales, diaries. What in a considerable writer glitters as occasional, valuable and sober embellishment with Belyj is scattered about without premeditation, as if by itself, as if everything were normal. In these happy parts there is no suggestion of mysticism [...]).

presumptions, arid rationalizations, fevers, transcendental symbolism and psychological confusion. Why, Voronskij asks, is this extraordinarily gifted writer so prone to such traumas?

In chapter II, Voronskij notes that Belyj's attempts to evoke childhood sentiments and thoughts in *Kotik Letaev* and in its sequel *Kreščenyj kitaec* (1922) are quite improbable. He sees the protagonist Kotik as conceived entirely according to Rudolf Steiner's ephemeral and astral immersions. In Voronskij's view, the result is dangerous to, and ultimately incompatible with, art. Taking his criticism a step further, Voronskij states that with regard to Kotik's psyche, it is not surprising that his first conscious moments coincide with serious, pathological bouts of visionary ravings.²¹⁰ A second aspect of Kotik's (pathological) psyche is his feeling of uncertainty and despair with regard to the world of reality. The name Letaev (from *letet'/letat'* = to fly) in Voronskij's view symbolizes Kotik's perception that reality seems ready to take off, to disappear into a cosmic-flaming vacuity. Voronskij sees a third peculiarity in Kotik's inability to understand metaphors, i.e. Kotik perceives things literally. Symbols are seen as reality, which in turn leads Kotik to a religious worldview. Kotik regularly and with great ease attributes metaphorical and mythological significance to ordinary objects, but especially to people.

Voronskij attributes to Belyj a belief that the world is composed of "symbols of living reality", the "flaming essence of cosmos". These myths are terrible and carry the fateful imprint of dark primordial times, and their omnipresence is threatening, stormy and chaotic to earthly man's conscious "I". Kotik Letaev lives in fevers, in symbols (*mify*), oppressingly lonesome. Most other characters are repulsive, and in order to save himself from his negative surroundings, Kotik's only refuge lies within the secret world of his inner self.

Voronskij at this point qualifies his negative appraisal, stating that not all of Kotik's impressions can be denigrated into fevers, myths and solitude. Belyj's works

²¹⁰ Though he does not state so explicitly, it is obvious that Voronskij considers Kotik Letaev as an autobiographical extension of Belyj, and he fuses his criticism of Kotik with criticism of Belyj. In doing so, Voronskij lends weight to subsequent biographical interpretations of Belyj's work which emphasize the influence of the author's own emotionally and psychologically troubled childhood on his later work, cf. Terras 1985:45.

dedicated to childhood also contain many glad and joyous scenes, e.g. some of Kotik's reminiscences about his father and the early depiction of Kotik's mother in *Kreščenyj kitaec*. Voronskij believes Belyj has not given a realistic interpretation of Kotik's early conscious childish perceptions, but instead - contrary to logic and rationality - has retrospectively superimposed his own pathological interpretations. In support of this view, Voronskij cites some passages from Belyj's prose and poetry, generalizing that the best work of Belyj is infused with a feeling of doomsday prophecies, imminent catastrophes and human society's death. Thus the poet Dar'jal'skij in *Serebrjannyj golub'* wavers between expecting the Second Coming and fearing that some devil has stolen from heaven the Day of Judgement trumpets. If so, this would unleash on Rus' the dark, obtuse, sluggish forces of the East with devilish, sectarian, Rasputin-like rituals. In *Peterburg*, Voronskij adds, the city appears unreal; it spreads out in a foul haze, confused, incomprehensible. People are not people, but evil dark shadows. The terrible sardine can - the bomb - is seen as a symbol of evil flaming chaos, ready to obliterate. Behind the faces and rationality of senator Ableuchov and his son, who have Mongol ancestry, are concealed the age-old face of the hostile Mongols. Voronskij believes that Andrej Belyj is convinced that mankind is on the threshold of an imminent, great earthquake: a great battle will ensue involving all nations on earth; yellow Asian hordes will cover Europe in blood to revenge Kulikovo. In Voronskij's view Belyj conceives of death as a rupture in the organs of sensation, when man's centripetal sensation is lost, when man is torn to pieces, when the consciousness of lost sensation is all that remains. Turning to Belyj's most recent work *Moskva*, which at the time of writing was not completed,²¹¹ Voronskij finds also here the same motives and themes. Belyj describes Moscow of the 1890s as gradually slipping into confusion and chaos, with crowds running aimlessly around in the streets. While in *Peterburg* the Mongol East was the major threat, in *Moskva* the East and West are both threatened with destruction by the deceptively respectable and cultured Mandro, a foreign representative of a business firm but in reality an agent of the German High Command. Mandro subjects the mathematician Korobkin

²¹¹ Belyj's Moscow trilogy consisted of *Moskovskij čudak* (1926), *Moskva pod udarom* (1926) and *Maski* (1931). Voronskij's comments pertain to the two first titles.

to terrible and pitiless torture. Chaos and madness oppress logic; pandemonium breaks out in Moscow, and a world-wide fire ensues.

Chapter III, which comprises the bulk (nearly 40%) of the portrait's 47 pages, is dedicated to a refutation on ideological grounds of Belyj's symbolism, which Voronskij castigates as non-verifiable and unscientific religious mysticism. He first discusses Belyj's concept of the self, the "I", whose mind (*razum*) Belyj seemingly considers the only auspicious element in a world of chaotic, meaningless confusion. Belyj's rationalism is attributed to his background in the natural sciences; not only Belyj's devotion to Germany is noted, but also his broad interests and reading in Buddhism, Brahmanism, occultism, theosophy, anthroposophy, Kant, Schopenhauer, and even the "rationalist" Ibsen. Voronskij sees Belyj's works as frequently "extremely rational", i.e. the influences of one or several philosophical paradigms is easily detectable. He characterizes Belyj as perhaps the most "cerebral" among contemporary writers in Soviet Russia, and his main protagonists are, significantly, theoreticians and analysts. The Bolshevik Kierko (in *Moskva*) is e.g. very attentive to details, from which he derives irrefutable conclusions.

Yet Voronskij asserts that Belyj - despite his apparent rationalism - remains capricious. Exposed to emotional and psychological traumas as a child, Belyj has in turn been influenced by Solov'ev's prophecies of an onslaught of Mongol barbarians from the East combined with eschatological expectations of Christ's Second Coming, Merežkovskij's prophecies of encroaching chaos and the mysticism of Rozanov. He has dithered from Darwin to Kant, to theosophy, to Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy. This instability is seen as the result of an inquisitive mind, scepticism and analytical restlessness. Belyj's rationalism is therefore superficial, Voronskij judges; he proves sceptical also with regard to man's mind and consciousness. The regularity and paradigmatic harmony to be found in Belyj's world of concepts and theorems is exaggerated, Voronskij affirms, to the extent of being misleading. Belyj's harmony is lifeless and arid; there is no creativity, no blood. This helps to explain, in Voronskij's view, why Belyj's novels always end in the defeat of culture, order and logic by mad, fateful meaningless chaos characterized by unbridled, ubiquitous gorillas and gibbons. Turning to Belyj's worldview and understanding of science, Voronskij finds much to regret. Belyj's symbolism is seen as an advocacy of some

kind of all-encompassing cosmic knowledge that can purportedly be scientifically established. Yet Voronskij is adamant that science has nothing to do with this kind of normative, existential and essentially religious belief.

For all these reasons Belyj's authorship illustrates an incongruity between chaotic and meaningless life, on the one hand, and mind, which is essentially non-creative and separated from reality, on the other hand. The subtitle of the portrait - *Mramornyj grom* - is therefore a contradictory metaphor which illustrates the disharmony Voronskij saw in Belyj's work between calm reason (*mramornyj*) and chaotic noise (*grom*). The one contradicts the other.

In Voronskij's opinion Belyj's symbolism, which he sees as quite different from literary symbolism, is a religious philosophy involving theurgy and anthroposophy: symbolism is Belyj's attempt to resolve the disparity between existence, creativity and cognition. This disparity is apparently only resolved if and when one experiences the mystical presence of an elevated Unity or Logos. To Belyj, Voronskij adds, symbolism involves a religious-ethical normative evaluation of the world, whereas art involves primarily aesthetical norms. The artist introduces ethics into art, but ethics (in art) remain subordinate to aesthetics. Voronskij alleges that a religious understanding of art has never proven useful to the artist, and that Belyj's authorship is a good illustration of this truth. Despite Belyj's gift of Gogolian character portrayal, his profound and convincing psychological character analysis, his rich lyricism and exceptional sense of detail, his verbal musicality; all these often collapse into meaningless confusion of visions, nightmares and dreams.

From a materialist point of view, Voronskij states, Belyj's symbolism therefore must be rejected, and it is of no avail to discuss these matters with Belyj. Symbolism is by definition the opposite of realism yet Belyj treats symbols as immanent manifestations of reality. But although the cross is a symbol of suffering, and the red banner a symbol of the struggle of the proletariat, the cross cannot *be* suffering, and the red banner cannot *be* the struggle of the proletariat. Yet this is what Belyj seems to argue, Voronskij states. Had Belyj been alone in his symbolism, his views could be dismissed. Yet he has many followers and is equipped with his extraordinary power and great talent and therefore, in Voronskij' view, reflects the psychology of large social segments. Belyj's work is thus seen to have great artistic and social

significance.

Voronskij furthermore alleges that Belyj's authorship reveals a tragic and unnecessary breach between existence and consciousness, which is seen as expressive of bourgeois decadence and individualism. Whereas Belyj sees existence as chaotic and consciousness - including scientific knowledge - as incapable of explaining reality, in Voronskij's view man has all reason to be proud of his conscious mind. Only dialectic materialism, Voronskij extols, of which Belyj is regrettably oblivious, can resolve the dilemma in which Belyj is trapped.

In chapter IV Voronskij notes Belyj's attempts in recent years to come to terms with the October Revolution and with Bolsheviks. In the first volume of the unfinished novel *Moskva* the Bolshevik Kierko is portrayed quite favourably. Yet Belyj is still encumbered by his misconception of the 1905 Revolution contained in *Peterburg*. While being an excellent book which has exerted great literary influence, there is in Voronskij's estimate no trace in the book of the 1905 Revolution, which is only conceived from Solov'ev's perspective as a victory of Tamerlane's hordes. Voronskij judges that Belyj's failure to understand the revolution as a social phenomenon is due to his solitude and individualism, which are so abundantly evident e.g. in several of his collections of poetry. Voronskij fails to find any affirmative and positive traces of the motherland, Rus', people and society in "Zoloto v lazuri" (1904), "Pepeľ" (1909), "Urna" (1909), "Korolevna i rycari" (1919), and "Zvezda" (1922). Similarly, in the novel *Serebrjannyj golub'* (1910), the autobiographical protagonist Belyj-Dar'jalskij unsuccessfully "went to the people". Belyj's dislike of the peasantry and ordinary people is compounded by his dislike of the city and factories, and Voronskij reacts to his at times tasteless and anti-artistic depictions of the vernacular of peasants and workers. This failure is attributable, in Voronskij's view, to Bely's loneliness and isolation: the main protagonists in his novels and stories are anti-social, incredibly solitary, and impenetrable to their surroundings. In short, Belyj's symbolism is seen as inimicable with Bolshevism:

[...]. Ėpigrafov k romanu Moskva Belyj vzjal prekrasnye slova Lomonosova: "otkrylas' bezdna - zvezd polna." O bezdne rasskazano Belym mnogo i potrijasajuŝe talantlivo, o zvezdach on tol'ko obeŝčaetsja nam povedat'. Glavnoe prepjatstvie - v ego simvolizme: k ŝoŝaleniju, on u Belogo ne

In a final 6-page chapter V, Voronskij considers Belyj's style and language, of which many supposedly complain, particularly his "unbearable rhythmic prose" but also his artificial word formations and maladroito loans from Dal'. Moreover, his themes are often developed in a cumbersome manner, although Voronskij adds that thematically in his best works Belyj captivates his readers. Voronskij claims furthermore that Belyj's formal shortcomings in his prose and poetry are generic results of his fallacious worldview, e.g. that Belyj avoids simple, static expressions like "stood", "was", "to be" in preference of more process-oriented expressions like "becoming", "arising", "disappearing". Similarly his rhythmic prose contains an inherent contradiction between monotonous mannerism and attempted ease, reflecting his contradictory worldview.

Despite these defects Voronskij gives considerable credit to Belyj as a stylistic innovator, particularly his emphasis on fictional prose, e.g. everyday speech, as an art form. While the quality of music and rhythm in prose and poetry was taken for granted in the works of Puškin, Gogol', Tolstoj and Lermontov, it was, in Voronskij's view, later neglected by the populists and even in some of the early works of Čechov. Writers like Bunin, Gor'kij, Kuprin and Andreev corrected this deficiency, but it was particularly the decadents, modernists and symbolists - and foremost among these Andrej Belyj - who reinstated musicality, rhythm and instrumentation as generic qualities of prose.

Voronskij accedes that Belyj has exerted immense influence on Soviet literature and that he has a role to play in terms of the new literary realism Voronskij advocates. Writers like Pil'njak, Klyčkov, Kaverin and Libedinskij are indebted to Belyj in many respects. Yet he is seen by Voronskij first and foremost as an elitist "writers' writer", only secondarily as a writer for the broad masses.

By attributing to Belyj's authorship a largely negative Di-score (5 of 8

²¹² Voronskij 1928b:58 ([...]). As an epigraph to the novel *Moskva* Belyj has taken the wonderful words of Lomonosov: "an abyss opened - full of stars". Belyj has recounted profusively and in an exceptionally talented way about the abyss, but he has only promised to tell us about the stars. The main obstacle lies in his symbolism; unfortunately with Belyj this is not coincidental. This is a weapon entirely hostile to Kierko [...]).

parameters are negative) as shown in diagram 5.6.3 below Voronskij demonstrated that even as late as 1928 some artistic merit (parameters 5 and 8) could not really compensate for faulty ideology (parameters 1,2,3,4). The even more negative Di-score of Zamjatin (6 of 8 parameters are negative) expressed Voronskij's total disapproval of Zamjatin's post-revolutionary work. The significant discrepancies between Pg- and Di-scores centre on parameters 6 and 7 (Belyj) and 5, 6 and 7 (Zamjatin). In this respect I have the impression that just as the proletarians Libedinskij and Fadeev were portrayed presumably for being "better" than their proletarian group average, conversely Zamjatin - to a less extent Belyj - were selected for portrayal for being "worse" than their group average. The deviations and significant discrepancies do not in my view alter the grouping of Zamjatin and Belyj as "pre-October" writers.

5.6.3. A comparison of the Zamjatin and Belyj portraits

Parameters:	Pg-score	Di-score	
	Pre-October writers	E.Zamjatin	A.Belyj
1) October Revolution	-3	-4	-2
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	-3	-4	-2
3) Soviet society	-3	-4	-2
4) Slavophilism	+2	+2	+2
5) Russian lit. heritage	+3	-1	+1
6) Realism	0	-3	-3
7) Psych. char. portrayal	+3	-1	-1
8) Language mastery	+3	+3	+3

Diagram 5.6.3

Approximately six years separate the two portraits, yet Voronskij seems to appraise the two writers quite similarly in terms of most parameters. The difference is primarily one of degree, with Zamjatin seen as more implacable ideologically than Belyj. There are few deviations in relation to the expected score of pre-October writers as a group. Voronskij in 1922 considered the then 38-year-old Zamjatin to be ideologically alienated, and Belyj ideologically aloof, in relation to 1) The October Revolution, 2) The VKP(b) and 3) Soviet society. Yet in 1928 the 48-year-old Belyj is believed to have made an effort to adapt. As to 4) Slavophilism, this is seen to have influenced both writers' early conception of the revolution, before they

became disillusioned with post-revolutionary developments. With regard to 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, Voronskij does not emphasize this parameter in Zamjatin's case. On the contrary, the modernist Zamjatin is not seen to have been visibly influenced by writers like Gogol', Tolstoj or Dostoevskij (only H.G.Wells is mentioned). Instead he advocated an experimental and allegorical genre, more influenced by romanticism and symbolism than realism. Belyj is identified with the symbolist movement (Solov'ev, Blok) and mysticism (Merežkovskij, Rozanov), but Voronskij sees Belyj's anthroposophical symbolism as distinct from literary symbolism. Neither are viewed as exponents of 6) Realism; on the contrary, Zamjatin is treated as a symbolist-allegorist and Belyj as a religious-mystical symbolist. In a more positive vein, Voronskij credits particularly Belyj for profound 7) Psychological character portrayal, but the credibility of Zamjatin's protagonists such as D-503 suffer from a lack of realism. Turning finally to 8) Language mastery, both are hailed for their virtuosity, but Belyj's stylistic defects are also seen to be considerable. Voronskij's overall conclusion is that in Soviet Russia of 1922 Zamjatin had no future, whereas Belyj in 1928 had a role to play in terms of the new realism Voronskij advocated.

Finally, Christianity does play a role in the Zamjatin portrait as noted, and also in the portrait of Belyj in the sense that he is considered a Christian religious mystic. In both cases this is seen as a negative quality from Voronskij's point of view. In the Belyj portrait there are significant occurrences of the key concepts of aesthetics, beauty and truth or close variants. "Prekrasnyj" is used to characterize Belyj's language,²¹³ "pravda"/"istina" is used twice to reproach Belyj's worldview²¹⁴ and "ëstetičeskij" is called upon 4 times to censure Belyj for equating aesthetics with ethics.²¹⁵ In the Zamjatin portrait "prekrasnyj" makes 3 significant appearances, all to complement Zamjatin's language and work,²¹⁶ while "istina" only occurs once and

²¹³ Voronskij 1928b:19.

²¹⁴ *ibid.* pp.43,49.

²¹⁵ *ibid.* pp.41,46,50.

²¹⁶ *ibid.* pp.96,101,107.

serves to criticize Zamjatin.²¹⁷

5.7 Foreign writers

The only portraits Voronskij dedicated to foreign writers were of Hamsun and Proust. Whereas Hamsun visited Russia and acknowledged his debt to Dostoevskij, Proust had no apparent links with Russia or empathy for Russian literature. Voronskij knew neither of them; there is no correspondence, and he read both only in translation. Since only 2 of his 24 individual portraits were of foreign writers, which motives did he have in selecting Hamsun and Proust? Voronskij must have realized that none of them could have had any sympathy for the Bolshevik cause or Soviet Russia, and in the case of Proust there was an alternative in the communist Nobel laureate of 1921, Anatole France, whom Voronskij several times refers to in his articles. As I shall argue, Voronskij's selection was motivated by specific reasons at the time of writing.

5.7.1 Knut Hamsun (1859-1962)²¹⁸

Knut Hamsun (orig. Knut Pedersen)²¹⁹ had visited Russia in 1899,²²⁰ and his books sold well in Russia in the early 1900s. *Golod* had appeared in Russian in 1892,²²¹ *Pan* in 1901,²²² *Viktorja* in 1904²²³ and *Misterii* in 1910.²²⁴ Hamsun's

²¹⁷ *ibid.* p.76.

²¹⁸ An earlier version of this section was published as a popularized feature article in *Aftenposten*, 9 June 1996: "Hamsun vurdert av Aleksandr Voronskij".

²¹⁹ Voronskij was apparently unaware of Hamsun's original name. By contrast, he probably knew that Gor'kij, Belyj, Ognev and Klyčkov were pseudonyms, yet he does not mention this anywhere.

²²⁰ Hamsun's visit to Russia during the winter of 1899 was described in *I Æventyrland. Oplevet og drømt i Kaukasien* (1903). In the portrait Voronskij (1929:311) states that it was published in Russian in 1906 by the publisher Sablina, under the title *V skazočnoj strane. Perežitoe i peredummanoe na Kavkaze*.

²²¹ *Sult* (1890).

²²² *Pan* (1894).

²²³ *Victoria* (1898).

²²⁴ *Mysterier* (1892).

collected works in 12 volumes appeared in Russian in 1909-10.²²⁵ The staging of several of his plays in Moscow and St.Petersburg by Stanislavskij and Meyerhold from 1907 onwards²²⁶ reflected his cult status in tsarist Russia but *U vrata cartsva*²²⁷ drew severe criticism from Plechanov.²²⁸ In his later work from 1906 onwards Hamsun had become thematically preoccupied with the individual and society, in particular what he saw as the perversion of the Self through contact with society.²²⁹

As early as 1905-1906 Voronskij was apparently familiar with the work of both Ibsen and Hamsun, which he refers to in the first part of his autobiography. He thus lets the protagonist Nina Fedorova in 1906 read both *Pan* and *Viktorja*.²³⁰ Voronskij's portrait appeared in the decisive year of 1925. From this year, as suggested in diagram 4.3, Voronskij's literary aesthetics employed all parameters 1-8. Further, based on diagram 5.2.1, one would expect the Di-score of the portrait to approximate the neutral Pg-score of 0 for foreign writers.

5.7.1.1 The portrait

Voronskij's portrait of Hamsun in *KN* in late 1925²³¹ was his first of a foreign writer. Based on diagram 4.3.1 one could reasonably expect the Hamsun portrait from 1925 to embrace all parameters 1-8, while the Di-score could be expected to

²²⁵ Surkov 1964(II):58. Cf. also Choate 1987:267-275.

²²⁶ Nag 1969,1980,1993; Vaagan 1996.

²²⁷ *Ved Rigets Port* (1895).

²²⁸ Cf. Surkov 1964(II):57-58. Plechanov's article on Hamsun "Syn dr. Stokmana" was first printed in Plechanov's collection of articles "Ot oborony k napadeniju" in St.Petersburg in 1910. The article is based on his earlier article "Genrik Ibsen" from 1906 (Plechanov 1948:770-813) and interprets Hamsun's protagonist Ivar Kareno as a "legitimate son" of Ibsen's dr.Stockmann. Kareno exceeds Stockmann's reactionary misanthropy and his hate towards the proleteriat, according to Plechanov. He reverted to Hamsun in his lecture "Iskusstvo i obščestvennaja žizn", given in Paris in November 1912, which was published in an expanded version in *Sovremennik*, November-December 1912 and January 1913 (ibid. pp.216-272). Here it is stated i.a. that Hamsun's *U vrata cartsva* is a "primer chudožestvennogo proizvedenija, stradajuščego ot ložnosti svoej osnovnoj idej" [...], that Ivar Kareno "učit nenavidet' proletariata" [...] and that he is a "reakционер čistejšej vody" [...] and "liš odna iz raznovidnostej ničšanskogo tipa", and finally that Hamsun personally shares Kareno's opinion of the proleteriat as a "klassom, eksploatirujuščim drugie klassy obščestva" (ibid. pp.244-246).

²²⁹ Surkov 1964(II):57; Thorlby 1969:348.

²³⁰ Voronskij 1927c:223-224, 232.

²³¹ *KN* 1925#8(33):234-246. Cf. also Choate 1987:267-275.

approximate the Pg-score of foreign writers specified in diagram 5.2.1. By 1925, Plechanov's criticism of Hamsun was abated in Voronskij's eyes by the fact that Hamsun was the favourite Nordic writer of Bucharin, who in 1925 assumed a prominent role also in Soviet *belles-lettres*, cf. 2.0. Bucharin's attitude may even have been one of Voronskij's reasons for selecting Hamsun for portrayal. Like the main protagonist in *Golod*, Bucharin had experienced hunger in Christiania during his exile there in 1915.²³²

In Voronskij (1929a) the portrait consists of 24 pages arranged into 2 subtitled chapters, which is rare: "I. Zemljanoj Pan" (The earthly Pan) and "II. Cvetami i krov'ju" (Through flowers and blood).²³³ The portrait was occasioned by the appearance in Russian in 1923-24 of 3 of Hamsun's novels, and is a review of *Soki zemli*,²³⁴ *Ženščāny u kolodca*²³⁵ and *Poslednjaja glava*.²³⁶

In chapter I Voronskij quotes the pastoral calm of *Soki zemli*. He estimates, - perhaps in deference to Hamsun's Nobel prize in 1920 which he does not mention - that *Soki zemli* is probably the most startling artistic work to appear anywhere the last 15-20 years. He informs his readers of a rumour that Hamsun supposedly gave up civilization and became a hermit for a period of 15 years in the Norwegian wilderness. On his return to urban society he wrote *Soki zemli*, *Ženščāny u kolodca* and *Poslednjaja glava*. In order to write *Soki zemli*, Voronskij believes, considerable and profound thought in the the environment of nature is mandatory.²³⁷ His subsequent review of *Soki zemli* fills half the portrait.

Recounting the simple plot of *Soki zemli*, he finds it deals with the most ordinary and commonplace. The conflict between propitious green pastoral life and detrimental city life is acted out in the lives of the protagonists. The main protagonist Isaac is seen in old age as a green pioneer, an earthly Pan, a Biblical patriarch, one

²³² Nag 1988; Kan 1993:35,169.

²³³ Voronskij 1929a:289-313. Surkov 1964(II):58.

²³⁴ *Markens grøde* (1917).

²³⁵ *Konerne ved vandposten* (1920).

²³⁶ *Sidste kapitel* (1923).

²³⁷ Voronskij 1929a:289-290.

who has opened and cultivated the wilderness and made his own Garden of Eden here and now. Although Isaac has parallels in the protagonists of Tolstoj, Balzac, Maupassant, Uspenskij, Čechov, Gor'kij and Bunin, Hamsun's protagonist is unique, and his prototype, in Voronskij's estimate, is evidently a Biblical patriarch. Hamsun's other protagonists are judged to be equally convincingly and exquisitely chiselled. Other aspects of the Biblical style of Hamsun's narrative technique in *Soki zemli* are the calm and epic wisdom which characterize the depiction of even the most terrible events. These calm, mild qualities reminiscent of a fairy tale or saga are seen as the novel's strength and weakness.²³⁸

Such is the magnitude of Hamsun's talent, Voronskij finds, that each of the 460 pages are captivating, irrespective of the trifles they describe. Voronskij assesses that the writer's narrative style - with its simple and naive imagery, clear character portrayals, epic serenity, the element of pastoralism and legend all coalescing to focus thematically on the two themes of mankind and calm - must be classified as Biblical. It is no coincidence that the main protagonist carries the Biblical name Isaac, and that a feeling of convincing necessity accompanies the writer's unfolding of events. Voronskij thus concludes that in *Soki zemli*, Hamsun has proven himself to be a first class realist of Tolstojan dimensions and force.

Reverting to the early Hamsun, the author of *Viktorja*, *Pan* and *Golod*, he describes him as an incorrigible dreamer and romantic, "a prophet of mighty hymns to the hopes and dreams of mankind".²³⁹ Thus the main protagonist in the early work of Hamsun, e.g. the fantasizer Glahn in *Pan* with his abstract pantheism, often anthropomorphizes fates and dreams in conflict with life. A more realistic Hamsun later surfaced in *Benoni* and *Rosa*. Yet the Hamsun who now appears through *Soki zemli*, *Ženščiny u kolodca* and *Poslednjaja glava* has in Voronskij's estimate progressed from a romantic to a realist of Tolstoj's proportions.

In this sense Voronskij senses a parallel between the mature Hamsun and Gor'kij. Both had been late bloomers and progressed from romantics into realists. Both had cultured a unique narrative technique marked by a clear, yet subdued,

²³⁸ *ibid.* p.300.

²³⁹ *ibid.* p.292.

realism. Hamsun - "the new Gor'kij" - had in Voronskij's opinion contributed to Soviet neorealism and had, as Gor'kij, still a lot to teach the younger generation of Soviet writers. Voronskij does not substantiate his remarks here, e.g. to remind readers that in the group portrait from 1923 "O gruppe pisatelej Kuznica" mentioned in 5.1.2, he had indicated Hamsun's influence on Nizovoj and Gladkov.²⁴⁰

Returning to Isaac, Voronskij elaborates on his unity with nature, that he is a genuine peasant, a man of deeds and not words. Isaac's ideas of what constitutes a good life and what happiness is are illustrated by his daily life in harmony with nature, his own Garden of Eden. Yet Isaac's idyllic world has its confines, as Inger's fate reveals:

[...] Čtoby žit' v étom mire nado potušit' žar svoego serdca, kak potušila ego Inger, nado obuzdat' sebja, otkinut' mečtatel'nost', ne dumat' o dalekom i prekrasnom, byt' vernym zemle, ne izmenjat' ej. Zdes' est' svoj nepisannyj, no nepreložnyj zakon žizni: vsjakij, kto ostavljaet zemlju, karaetsja. [...].²⁴¹

It is striking, Voronskij points out to his Russian readers, that this type of novel with its epic calm and fairy-tale-, legend- and saga-like qualities should appear in Russia during the troubled civil war year of 1919.²⁴²

In chapter II Voronskij notes Hamsun's dislike of the industrial age, adducing the negative attitudes of the postmaster in *Žensčiny u kolodca* to "useless" factory workers. This is matched by Hamsun's anti-urbanism. In *Soki zemli* he sees an analogy between the Biblical Jehova punishing violaters of his commandments and earth punishing its betrayers. Hamsun's apparent revulsion to mechanization, industry and urbanization is seen to stem from the narrow, backward confines of Norwegian provincial small town life, which constricted both Ibsen and Hamsun. Therefore, Voronskij concludes that the basic theme in all Hamsun's work is the

²⁴⁰ *ibid.* p.293.

²⁴¹ *ibid.* p.298 ([...]. To live in this world one must quench the fire of one's heart, as Inger did; one must constrain oneself, abandon dreams, not ponder about the distant and beautiful; one must remain faithful to the earth, not betray it. Here is his unwritten but unconditional law of life: anyone who abandons the soil is punished [...]).

²⁴² This may be a mistake, or possibly a reference to a foreign or pirate edition of the book. *Markens grøde* (1917), was first published in Russian as *Soki zemli* as stated in 1923, cf. Surkov 1964(II):58.

innate and unconditional instincts of life in man. The anti-urbanism of *Soki zemli* reappears in *Ženščany u kolodca*, where the disabled and castrated but nonetheless life-assertive Oliver personifies the asphyxiation and stagnation of Norwegian provincial small town life. It re-emerges in *Poslednjaja glava* where the peasant lad Daniel stands out as the only healthy contrast to the death-marked sanatorium confronting its "last chapter".²⁴³

In ideological terms, Voronskij admonishes his readers that Hamsun was impervious to revolutionaries and stresses that his ideology was retrograde and reactionary, seen from the point of view of scientific communism.

[...]. Otsjuda i naivnaja publicistika, bespomščnye rassuždenija, razmyšlenija i domoroščennaja filosofija Gamsuna. A ich u nego ne malo, oni sil'no vredjat chudožestvennoj storone ego proizvedenij i dajut často soveršeno ložnoe osveščenie stol' talantlivo-izobražaemym im gerojam [...].²⁴⁴

Recalling Plechanov's justified criticism in 1910-12 of Hamsun's reactionary ideology, Voronskij is nonetheless willing to credit Hamsun with some doubt concerning his negative view of factory workers. On balance he believes that

[...]. Počeziju krest'janskogo truda, zdorovogo krest'janskogo zemljanogo pionerstva, devstvennuju prelest' lesa, polja i skal, čistotu i prozračnost' neba, neissjakaemost' i polovod'e sil v čeloveke, iznurjajuščuju meločnost' meščanskogo gorodskogo zatchlogo byta - što polnost'ju daet počuvstvovat' i éstetičeski perežit' Gamsun. No Ėdem Gamsuna, neprijazn' k fabričnomu rabočemu, rassuždenija ob ego prazdnosti i bezdel'i, otvratnoe otnošenie k tehnike, k nauke otdajut sil'nym prozaičeskim, kulackim tupym i ograničennym duškom. Otčasti oni napominajut oprostitel'nuju filosofiju L'va Nikolaeviča. V celom oni navejany otstalost'ju Norvegii, zatchlost'ju ee bytogo uklada [...].²⁴⁵

²⁴³ *ibid.* pp.303-306.

²⁴⁴ *ibid.* p.308 ([...]. From this ensues also the naive journalism, powerless meditations and homegrown philosophy of Hamsun. There is quite a lot of it, and it damages the artistic side of his works and often gives a completely false illumination of the protagonists he has so adroitly portrayed [...]).

²⁴⁵ *ibid.* p.310 ([...]. The poetics of peasant toil, healthy peasant pioneering of the soil, the virgin marvel of the forests, fields and cliffs, the purity and transparency of the sky, the inexhaustible and flooding force in man, the wearing pettiness of bourgeois urban stagnant everyday life - this is in full transmitted emotionally and aesthetically by Hamsun. But the Eden of Hamsun, the hostility to the factory worker, arguments about his idleness and inactivity, the revulsion to technology, to science, impart a strong matter-of-fact, kulak-like stupid atmosphere. Partly this is reminiscent of the simplistic philosophy of Lev Nikolaevič. As a whole it is coloured by Norway's backwardness and stuffy daily life style.[...]).

Voronskij finally affirms the considerable influence on Hamsun by Russian writers. Thus he sees traces of Turgenev, such as romantic love and a passion for nature; from Dostoevskij is derived the fantastic and irrational behaviour of the protagonists, and from Tolstoj is derived Hamsun's realism, the masterfully simple language and the prophetic pastoralism. Yet Voronskij is careful not to accuse Hamsun of having copied the three great Russian writers. Hamsun is seen to have his own style typified by a singular humour, a quiet chuckle, a sense of the paradoxical, a rendering of 3rd person dialogue, a basic naiveness, an ability to narrate the terrible and tragic as if these were daily happenings, an amicable tone, the fusion of the romantic with the realistic, "the pure Hamsun neorealism"; these are all part of the artist Hamsun's exceptionally attractive style, according to Voronskij.²⁴⁶

A further quality he lists is Hamsun's charity (*miloserdie*), which he states serves as an example to young Soviet writers in times marked by hostile literary feuds. However Voronskij does not comment on - and probably could not anticipate in 1925 - the early anti-democratic elements in Hamsun's authorship, which later emerged in Hamsun's sympathies for nazism, e.g. the protagonist Nagel's phrasing in *Mysteries* regarding "my blood's subjective logic" or "the worthless majority" or "the chosen and superior, the master humans" as opposed to "those of medium height".²⁴⁷

Voronskij's very high appraisal of Hamsun's artistical qualities is expressed in the Di-score in diagram 5.7.3. With a foreign writer, ideology meant far less than in the case of Soviet Russian writers, and Voronskij's ideological reservations are not allowed to seriously detract from Hamsun's overall stature.

5.7.2 Marcel Proust (1871-1922)

Voronskij reportedly first acquainted himself with French literature through translations of Balzac and Flaubert, sitting in solitary confinement in 1906-7.²⁴⁸ Yet it was Proust who was to affect him most of all the French writers. In his vast cycle

²⁴⁶ *ibid.* pp.311-312.

²⁴⁷ Cf. S.Hansson "Hvorfor ble Hamsun nazist", *Arbeiderbladet* 20.4.96.

²⁴⁸ Voronskij 1927c:245.

À la recherche du temps perdu (1913-27) Marcel Proust set out to resurrect his past life, from childhood to middle age, invoking a gallery of more than 200 personages. The "return to childhood" set its mark on Voronskij's autobiography and his reminiscences during the early 1930s, e.g. *Bursa* (1933a). Proust's odyssey into the past leads the author-narrator to the belief that man's entire past is alive, concealed within, and can be rediscovered through sensory perceptions or art.²⁴⁹

5.7.2.1 The portrait

The portrait *Marsel' Prust (K voprosu o psichologii chudožestvennogo tvorčestva)* appeared almost simultaneously in the 6th almanac of *Pereval* (1928) and in Voronskij 1928a.²⁵⁰ Proust was only the second foreign writer Voronskij portrayed, and the only writer among the 10 analyzed in part 5 who was deceased when Voronskij completed the portrait. In Voronskij (1929a) it ran to a little more than 13 pages without chapterizations.²⁵¹ Essentially the portrait was a review of the first two volumes of *V poiskach za utračennym vremenem*²⁵² and of *Pod sen'ju devušek v cvetu*.²⁵³ As the subtitle suggests, parameter 7 is explicitly invoked. At this stage Voronskij's literary aesthetics played on the full range of parameters 1-8.

Voronskij acknowledged that Proust was difficult to read, that his works lacked plot and action, and that his language, though exquisite, in combination with his roaming verbose prose, made reading him a challenge. Although unknown to most Soviet Russian readers, Proust was well worth becoming acquainted with: Although only a small part of his authorship was available in Russian, Voronskij was in no doubt that Proust could be counted among the greatest writers to appear internationally since the turn of the century. Among his qualities Voronskij noted his

²⁴⁹ Thorlby 1969:626-627.

²⁵⁰ *Pereval* No. 6,1928:341-352. A review of the almanac in *Novyj mir* 1928#12:287-289 is favourable about Voronskij's portrait, but complains about its double publication and sees this as a sign that the almanac lacks original material.

²⁵¹ Voronskij 1929a:314-327.

²⁵² *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913 -). While the title of the whole cycle is *À la recherche du temps perdu*, Vol. I was entitled *Du côté de chez Swann*, cf. Proust 1987-1988, Vol.1.

²⁵³ *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (1919), cf. Proust 1987-1988, Vol.II

profound perception of reality and his ability to simplify complex issues. Acting together with his extremely noble style - a sense of delicacy and substance combined with an absence of coarseness, frivolity, cheap effects and artistic sand castles - these qualities elevated him above most other contemporary writers. To critics of Proust's propensity for details Voronskij asserted that they were only responding to the aesthetical saturation of every paragraph and chapter in Proust's work. The total impression on reading Proust was rather, in Voronskij's opinion, a sense of unity and harmony.

Proust's inordinate perception bordered on the pathological, and Voronskij noted Proust's alleged nervous fits and commented that he had spent the last 10 years of his life in the seclusion of his private rooms. In a lesser writer this would have been detrimental; in Proust's case the gift of genius and culture thrived in view of his ability to get on top of and master his material. In this sense Voronskij contrasted Proust with Belyj, affirming that Proust's world was not fragmented into minute details like Belyj's world. Belyj's sharp and pathological sense of perception was consumed by fragments of reality, which in turn necessitated his superimposition of a symbolist worldview. By contrast Proust was in no need of a superstructure since his realism was self-contained. Proust's artistic method involved a consistent attempt to purify his original impressions and perceptions, to restore to them their original and lost freshness and thereby remove from them subsequent layers of rational and corrective thought. This method simultaneously permitted Proust to overcome his pathological, nervous condition:

[...]. Osnovnaja chudožestvennaja manera Marselja Prusta zaključaetsja v tom, čto on stremitsja v svoich proizvedenijach "otrešit'sja pered licom real'nosti ot vsech ponjatij svoego razuma" v pol'zu neposredstvennogo naibolee "čistogo", ničem ne osložnennogo vosprijatija étoj real'nosti. Zdes' - ključ k chudožestvennomu metodu Prusta, k ego svoeobraziju. [...].²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Voronskij 1929a:317 ([...]. Proust's basic artistic approach consists of attempting, in his works, "to renounce in the face of reality all concepts of his intellect" in favour of the most direct, "pure", and by no means complicated, perceptions of this reality. This is the key to Proust's artistic method, to his originality [...]).

Voronskij also posited that Proust's method was holistic in the sense that it allowed him to generate a happy unity of formerly fragmented impressions: Proust's world was a joyful and harmonious one. A better translation of *V poiskach utračennogo vremeni* would therefore in Voronskij's view have been *V poiskach neposredstvennyh vosprijatij*.

The artist's major task, in Voronskij's view, was to reproduce direct pre-rational perceptions (*vosprijatie*), especially those of our childhood and youth. In this particular field Proust knew no equals, and Voronskij therefore placed him overall at the level of Gogol' and Dostoevskij. Symptomatic of Proust's method was his emphasis of moments of awakening and first impressions on meeting people when the controlling and corrective function of the rational mind was at its weakest and interfered least with perceptive immediacy. Voronskij believed Proust managed to control his pathological immersion in the items and phenomena he so vividly analyzed by generating a naive-realistic, poetically successful, conception of the world:

[...]. Skvoz' složnyj boleznenno-utončennyj protivorečivyj i chaotičeskij vnutrennij mir chudožnika prosvečivaet drugoj - celostnyj, ediniy, prostoj, sočnyj mir veščej i ljudej.[...].²⁵⁵

Proust's genius and magic was such that his exclusion of anything that distracted attention from his direct perceptions was not felt by readers to offend realism. Proust's work was thus realistic and affirmative of life's joy. Post-revolutionary soviet art, which in Voronskij's estimate also contained a strain of naive realism, was often coarse and uncultured and therefore had much to learn from the refined qualities of Proust. As for psychology, Proust surpasses even Dostoevskij's insight into the human mind, to the extent that his books rather than being novels, appear to be psychological reminiscences. But in contrast with Dostoevskij who tears the reader apart with his exaggerations, Proust's prose, despite its tortuous verbosity, ultimately conveys an affirmative, harmonic and joyful picture of the world.

²⁵⁵ *ibid.* p.319 ([...]. Through the complicated, pathologically refined, contradictory and chaotic external world shines another world of items and people - complete, unitary, simple, juicy [...]).

Proust's character gallery embraces a great variety of people, ordinary individuals taken convincingly from everyday life, and others. His protagonists are not active heroes; in fact they seem to accomplish little apart from strolling, conversing and resting. Turning to their social characteristics, Voronskij notes Proust's irony towards the bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectuals, comparable to the documentary qualities of Balzac, Lev Tolstoj and Zola. Yet Voronskij claimed that Proust, despite being a very great writer, was uncritically favourable in depicting his aristocratic family relations. Soviet Russian readers should therefore not forget Proust's aristocratic family background, which regrettably had been omitted from the prefaces of the available works of Proust in Russian. Voronskij also thought Proust's class background could be detected in his somewhat old-fashioned 1700-century complicated syntax, digressions and protracted paragraphs. Attempting to explain Proust's success Voronskij can only conclude that neither the French labour class nor bourgeoisie were strong enough to produce a comparably great writer. Having said this Voronskij nevertheless warns against the simplified conclusion, prevalent in Soviet Russia, that because a given writer has an aristocratic background there is nothing to be learnt from him. On the contrary, in the case of Proust his aesthetical universe is beautiful, profound and affirmative. In particular, his artistic method has great potential, especially for older writers who would be most inclined to search for lost primordial sensations, untainted by subsequent corrective rationality.

The question arises why Voronskij chose Proust and not e.g. the radical Nobel laureate of 1921, Anatole France (1884-1924), who was sympathetic to the Bolshevik revolution and who wrote in communist newspapers. Voronskij had several times mentioned him in his articles, e.g. in 4.2.4 "Na perevale" (1923) and in 4.2.8 "Zametki ob iskusstve"(1926). By selecting Proust and not France it was Proust's qualities in emphasizing the role of the human psyche that attracted Voronskij, not his ideology.

5.7.3 A comparison of the Hamsun and Proust portraits

	Pg-score	Di-score	
	Foreign writers	K. Hamsun	M.Proust
Parameters:			
1) October Revolution	-2	-2	-2
2) RKP(b)/VKP(b)	-2	-2	-2
3) Soviet society	-2	-2	-2
4) Slavophilism	-2	-2	-2
5) Russian literary heritage	+2	+5	0
6) Realism	0	+5	+5
7) Psych. character portrayal	+3	+4	+5
8) Language mastery	+3	+5	+5

Diagram 5.7.3

In diagram 5.7.3 the Di-scores on parameters 6-8 by Hamsun and Proust are significantly above the Pg-score for foreign writers. As such Hamsun and Proust are not typical of foreign writers, which must explain why Voronskij selected them for portrayal and emulation. Significant discrepancies between Pg- and Di-scores are found on parameters 5 and 6 (Hamsun) and 6 (Proust). As regards parameter 5 Hamsun - but not Proust - is credited for his indebtedness to Russian classics. Both writers have negative Di-scores on parameters 1-4 which replicate the Pg-score for foreign writers.

3 years separate the two portraits, but there are distinct similarities. Though not explicitly stated, Voronskij considers both writers to be hostile to 1) The October Revolution, 2) The VKP(b), 3) Soviet society and 4) Slavophilism. Yet Voronskij downplays these 4 important ideological parameters - probably because he was dealing with non-Russians - and instead concentrates on the 4 artistic parameters. With regard to 5) The classical Russian literary heritage, Voronskij notes Hamsun's acknowledged indebtedness in particular to Dostoevskij, Turgenev and Tolstoj . This may be linked to Hamsun's one visit to Russia in 1899. In relation to 6) Realism Hamsun is credited with having contributed to the development of Russian neo-realism. Both Hamsun and Proust, especially the latter, are judged to possess the quality of profound 7) Psychological character portrayal. Turning finally to 8) Language mastery both are seen as great masters of the word, though Voronskij only read them in translation. Voronskij's overall judgement is that both, despite their ideological inadequacies, are worthy artistic examples to emulate for young Soviet

writers.

Regarding Christianity, this is seen to play a strong and positive role in the Hamsun portrait but it is viewed as absent in the Proust portrait. With regard to the key concepts of aesthetics, beauty and truth it is significant that all three make significant appearances in the Proust portrait, e.g. in the expressions "èstetièeskaja syščennost' každyj glavj",²⁵⁶ "ego èstetièeskij mir prekrasen",²⁵⁷ and "charakteristikipravdivy".²⁵⁸ In the Hamsun portrait two of the three key concepts emerge in expressions like "ne dumat' o prekrasnom",²⁵⁹ "o žežde prekrasnogo",²⁶⁰ "èstetièeski perežit".²⁶¹ Seen in combination with the other portraits, it is obvious that Proust and Hamsun in particular met Voronskij's aesthetical requirements.

5.8 Summary and conclusions

I have discussed the application of Voronskij's literary aesthetics presented in part 4 in relation to a selection of 10 of his literary portraits. These have been analyzed with reference to 8 parameters and based on qualitative (interpretative) content analysis. For each of 5 writer groups a benchmark Pg-score was given in diagram 5.2.1 to express what one could generally expect in terms of scores on the 8 parameters. This Pg-score was subsequently compared to each writer's Di-score measuring in my reading the gist of what Voronskij stated in the 10 selected portraits. The relationship between Pg- and Di-scores was viewed as a measure of the level of consistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics. The findings have been summarized in diagram 5.8.1 below in which the Pg/Di-scores are shown. Significant discrepancies between Pg-and Di-scores of 3 or more are given in fat types.

²⁵⁶ Voronskij 1929a:315 (the aesthetical saturation of each chapter).

²⁵⁷ *ibid.* p.326 (his aesthetical world is beautiful).

²⁵⁸ *ibid.* p.323 (the characteristics are truthful).

²⁵⁹ *ibid.* p.298 (not to think about beauty).

²⁶⁰ *ibid.* 308 (the thirst for beauty).

²⁶¹ *ibid.* p. 310 (survive aesthetically).

5.8.1 Summary of Pg/Di-scores

	<u>Parameters</u>							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<u>Fellow travellers</u>								
Sejfullina	0/+1	-2/0	-1/-1	0/-1	+2/-1	0/+4	+3/+4	+5/+4
A.Tolstoj	0/-2	-2/-2	-1/-2	0/-1	+2/+3	0/+3	+3/+2	+5/+5
<u>Proletarians</u>								
Libedinskij	+4/+4	+4/+5	+3/+3	-5/-5	-3/-3	+3/+3	-3/+1	-1/+1
Fadeev	+4/+3	+4/+3	+3/+2	-5/-5	-3/+2	+3/+3	-3/+1	-1/+1
<u>Pereval</u>								
Ognev	+4/+3	+1/0	+1/+2	-1/-3	+2/+2	+4/+2	+2/+2	+2/+3
Klyčkov	+4/-2	+1/0	+1/-2	-1/+3	+2/0	+4/-2	+2/-2	+2/+3
<u>Pre-October</u>								
Zamjatin	-3/-4	-3/-4	-3/-4	+2/+2	+3/-1	0/-3	+3/-1	+3/+3
Belyj	-3/-2	-3/-2	-3/-2	+2/+2	+3/+1	0/-3	+3/-1	+3/+3
<u>Foreign</u>								
Hamsun	-2/-2	-2/-2	-2/-2	-2/-2	+2/+5	0/+5	+3/+4	+3/+5
Proust	-2/-2	-2/-2	-2/-2	-2/-2	+2/0	0/+5	+3/+5	+3/+5

Diagram 5.8.1

My overall conclusion with regard to diagram 5.8.1 is that in a clear majority of cases there is consistency between Pg- and Di-scores. Put differently, there is consistency between Voronskij's views on literary aesthetics in part 4 and their application in the literary portraits in part 5. With regard to the role of Christianity and the key concepts of "ethics", "beauty" and "truth", cf. 5.8.3 and 5.8.4 below.

5.8.2 Consistency between Pg- and Di-scores

A cluster analysis²⁶² has been employed in order to test objectively the results cited earlier in this part concerning the relationship between Pg-scores and Di-scores. First 5 clusters were defined, one for each writer group based on the Pg-scores in diagram 5.2.1. Secondly, all 10 writers were placed in the cluster which his/her Di-scores resembled most. The results are given below in diagram 5.8.2.

The Di-scores of Hamsun, Proust and A.Tolstoj resemble most closely the Pg-score of the foreign writers' group. The Di-scores of Zamjatin, Belyj and Klyčkov

²⁶² The software programme used is Statistical Programme for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 8 for Windows 95

come closest to the Pg-score of the pre-October group of writers. The Di-score of Libedinskij resembles most the Pg-score of the proletarian group of writers. Finally, the Di-scores of Ognev, Sejfullina and Fadeev are closest to the Pg-score of the Pereval group. Interestingly, none of the Di-scores placed any writer among the fellow writer group. It may therefore be concluded that there is consistency between Pg- and Di-scores in a clear majority of cases, i.e. for Hamsun, Proust, Zamjatin, Belyj, Libedinskij and Ognev and to some extent also for A.Tolstoj and Klyčkov in view of the comments made earlier in relation to these two specific writers, cf. my comments to diagrams 5.3.3 and 5.5.3 respectively. The inconsistencies are limited to a minority of two writers - Sejfullina and Fadeev.

<u>Writer</u>	<u>Cluster</u>	<u>Distance</u>
Hamsun	1 (Foreign)	2,472
Proust	1 (Foreign)	3,073
Zamjatin	2 (Pre-October)	2,981
Belyj	2 (Pre-October)	1,491
Ognev	3 (Pereval)	2,160
Klyčkov	2 (Pre-October)	2,494
Libedinskij	4 (Proletarian)	0,000
Fadeev	3 (Pereval)	3,873
Sejfullina	3 (Pereval)	4,509
A.Tolstoj	1 (Foreign)	2,261

Diagram 5.8.2

That the Di-score of Sejfullina gravitates more towards the Pereval group than to the fellow travellers, whereas Fadeev's Di-score placed him among the Pereval and not among the proletarians must be attributed to the normative nature of how I earlier defined the 5 groups in diagram 5.2.1. and the proximity particularly among the fellow traveller, proletarian and Pereval groups. The pre-October and foreign writer groups stand more apart.

5.8.3 The role of Christianity

Diagram 5.8.3 summarizes my comments about the extent to which Christianity (Biblical references, values, imagery) plays any clear ideological or artistical role, positive or negative, for Voronskij's assessment of each writer. One noticeable

difference is that Christianity apparently plays a positive role, both ideologically and artistically, in the portrait of the foreigner Hamsun in 1925. By contrast the Christian element is criticized in the portrait of A.Tolstoj in 1926, and even condemned in the case of Klyčkov in 1926 and Belyj in 1928. Thus it would seem that Christianity, paradoxically, was acceptable from a foreign writer, but not from a writer in Soviet Russia. This adds to the noted element of inconsistency in Voronskij's literary aesthetics as regards Hamsun, but it suggests consistency as far as Soviet Russian writers were concerned.

<u>Writer</u>	<u>Christianity</u>	<u>Positive</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Negative</u>
Sejfullina	No	-	-	-
A.Tolstoj	Yes	No	No	Yes
Libedinskij	Yes	No	No	Yes
Fadeev	No	-	-	-
Ognev	Yes	No	No	Yes
Klyčkov	Yes	No	No	Yes
Zamjatin	Yes	No	No	Yes
Belyj	Yes	No	No	Yes
Hamsun	Yes	Yes	No	No
Proust	No	-	-	-

Diagram 5.8.3

These findings seem to contradict Voronskij's tendency from 1926 onwards to fuse Marxism with Christianity which I found both in his autobiography (part 3), and also in a few of his theoretical articles from 1926 onwards (part 4).

5.8.4 The concepts of "aesthetics", "beauty" and "truth"

Analogous to the conclusions in part 4, the occurrence of one or several of these 3 key concepts in the portraits suggests which development stage Voronskij's literary aesthetics had attained. Their occurrence also indicates Voronskij's overall reaction to the authorship examined in the portrait. Having said this it should be noted that the concepts could be used both in support of or to attack a given writer's work. In this perspective it is interesting that in the Sejfullina and Tolstoj portraits none of the key concepts make what I would rate as a significant appearance. This contrasts most markedly with the Proust and Hamsun portraits. It is illustrative that it is only in the Proust portrait from 1928 that all three concepts occur and are used positively. This confirms the proposition that by 1928 Voronskij's literary aesthetics was fully

conceptualized. To some extent the key concepts also emerge in the Belyj and Zamjatin portraits, but largely negatively. As for the Libedinskij and Fadeev and also the Ognev and Klyčkov portraits, their occurrences in these portraits leave room for various interpretations.

PART 6: MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Based on the objectives, material and approach presented in part 1, I noted in part 2 that post-Petrine Russian secular thinking was typified by a dilemma, long familiar in Western aesthetic thought, between utilitarianism and *l'art pour l'art*, which Marxism did not resolve. In part 3 which embraces also appendices 7.1-7.15, I offered in the absence of a biography a detailed survey of Voronskij's life, career and writings, including some unpublished material, to provide a background to his understanding and handling of this dilemma.

With regard to his autobiography, and on the basis of a hermeneutical approach to the title and double narrator, I concluded that its timing and contents were in response to the difficulties and opposition he confronted. The autobiography can be interpreted as an attempted synthesis of the two major value and belief systems he assimilated in his lifetime - Marxism and Christianity.

In part 4, defining Voronskij's literary aesthetics in terms of 8 parameters and employing qualitative content analysis, I concluded on the basis of 20 of his most central articles on literary aesthetics 1921-28 that these reflect a) a gradual realization that artistic elements were at least as important as ideological in order to generate great literature; b) a gradual disillusionment paralleling events in his career and life, about Soviet Russia and its literature which expressed itself ultimately in his equation of beauty with truth. His literary aesthetical views were not seen to amount to a theory of literature.

In part 5 I addressed the applied side of his literary aesthetics by selecting 10 of his literary portraits 1922-29 grouped into 5 writer categories. Using the same 8 parameters defining his literary aesthetics and also here qualitative content analysis, I found the same blending of ideological and artistic parameters and an increased emphasis with time on artistic parameters. Developing the concepts of Pg- and Di-scores, I found a large measure of consistency for most writers and writer groups between Voronskij's literary aesthetical views in parts 4 and 5. The findings were tested and largely verified by statistical cluster analysis.

Christianity was seen to have played a positive role in Voronskij's autobiography and in some of the articles from 1926 onwards, especially in 4.2.18

"O chudožestvennom pravde" (1928). Yet with the exception of the foreigner Hamsun this was seemingly contradicted in the portraits. Thus Christianity was judged to be seen negatively in the portraits of A.Tolstoj, Klyčkov and Belyj. While one thus may cite the autobiography and a few of the articles on literary aesthetics in support of Voronskij's tendency to fuse Marxism with Christianity from 1926 onwards, the portraits do not lend themselves to such an interpretation. The key concepts of "aesthetics", "beauty" and "truth" made their most significant, positive, appearance in the portrait of the foreigner Proust in 1928, when Voronskij's troubled odyssey in literary aesthetics came to an end.

PART 7: APPENDICES

7.1: A short biography of Aleksandr K.Voronskij (1884-1937) ¹

- 1884 Born 27 August (8 September) ² in the village of Chorošavka, Kirsanovskij province, to a family of clerics. Parents Konstantin Osipovič Voronskij, a village priest, and Feodosija Gavrilovna Voronskaja.
- 1889 His father died (of consumption).
His mother with her 2 children Ljalja and Aleksandr moved to her father's, a village priest, in Dobrinka, Lipetsk region.
- 1900 Finished religious secondary school in Tambov and entered religious seminary.
- 1904 Joined in Tambov the RSDRP, Bolshevik fraction.
His sister Ljalja died (of consumption), only 21 years old.
- 1905 Following seminary unrest, Voronskij was expelled as "politically suspicious".
In July-August, met V.P.Noginyj, Lenins collaborator, in Chorošavka. Underground military Bolshevik activities in St.Petersburg and Helsingfors.
Took part in the newspaper *Vestnik kazarmy* in Helsingfors.
- 1906 Arrested in September, and sentenced to one year's imprisonment.
- 1907 Leadership May-October of Vladimir Bolshevik party organization in the wake of Frunze's arrest.
Arrested October. Met and befriended Frunze in Vladimir prison.
- 1908 In February, sentenced to 2 years' exile to the town of Jarensk, Vologda governate. On the train to Jarensk met his future wife Serafima Solomonovna Pesina, a telegraphist from Melitopol in the Crimea, also sentenced to exile.
- 1910 On return from exile worked in Moscow as secretary in union of tanners. Undercover agitational work. Persecuted by tsarist police moved to Tambov.

¹ Compiled by the author from Dement'ev 1967(I), Efremov 1984, Nurmina 1992, Ovsjannikov 1990, 1992, Černobaev 1992a, 1992b, 1992c, Voronskaja 1992, 1995, 1997, Dikušina, Isaeva 1995 and Choate 1987,1998. This short biography summarizes some of the main events and facts in the life and work of Aleksandr K.Voronskij, and must suffice in the absence of the comprehensive biography Voronskij deserves.

² Voronskij's birth certificate, a copy of which is found in the family archive, cf. 7.6 fr5-it63, states he was born on 27 August (8 September) 1884. Voronskij's correct date of death - 13 August 1937 - only became known in 1989, cf. 7.15. This is why his daughter Galina Voronskaja in her unpublished bibliography (1982) gives 13 October 1943 as the date of death, cf. 7.6 fr4-it43, which was repeated in Voronskij's only published bibliography (Efremov 1984:8). Prior to 1992 the dates of his birth and death were listed variously, e.g. 19 (31) August 1884 - 13 October 1943 in both *Bol'saja sovetskaja enciklopedija* (Prochorov 1971 (V):1092) and in *Kratkaja literaturnaja enciklopedija* (Surkov 1962 (I):1046). *Lexikon der Russischen Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts* gives 19 (31) August 1884 - 13 August 1937 (Kasack 1992:1407). Černobaev (1992b:1) was the first to cite both dates correctly.

- 1911 In May transferred to Saratov. Together with M.I.Ul'janova (Lenin's sister) and S.Kržižanovskij, formed local Bolshevik Saratov party leadership.
From May party work in Evpatorija, Odessa and Nikolaev.
In June published first articles in *Evpatorskie novosti* and in *Jasnaja zarja*, partly under pseudonym "Nurmin".
- 1912 In January, under pseudonym of "Valentin", appointed Saratov delegate to the All-Russian (Bolshevik) Party Conference in Prague. This was to be his only recorded visit outside Russia/SSSR (excepting his stay in Helsingfors 1905 when Finland was still part of Russia). Proposed the launching of new party daily *Pravda*. Candidate to RSDRP Central Committee, but not elected.
Jan-May propagated conference resolutions in Odessa, Nikolaev and Saratov.
In May, arrested in Saratov with 12 other party members, including Lenin's sister. Sentenced in September to 3 years' exile to Kem', Archangel'sk governate
- 1913 During summer, his future wife S.Pesina joined him (voluntarily) in Kem'.
- 1914 In July wrote to Gor'kij and sent two manuscripts for publication under alias "A.Klimskij".
In August, daughter Galina born in Kem'.
- 1915-16 After release in September 1915, worked as cashier in hospital in Zaporož'e-Kamenskoe, Ekaterinoslavskaja governate, subsequently served in Union of Zemstvos on the Western front at Minsk.
- 1917 In February, chairman of the Kajdanovskij soviet of Soldier Deputies, Minsk governate, and service as soldier in Red guards.
In March, participated in All-Russian Meeting of Representatives of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets in Petrograd.
In April, chairman of the Bolshevik faction of the Odessa Soviet.
In May delegate to the 1st (and in December the 2nd), congregation of Soviets at Roumanian front, Black See fleet and Odessa military district (Rumčerođ).
In July, co-editor of the new Odessa Bolshevik daily *Golos proletariata*.
In September, co-editor of the daily *Izvestija Odesskogo Soveta*.
In September-October, political adviser to the military daily *Soldatskaja mysl'*.
In December at 2nd congregation of Rumčerođ elected member of executive committee.
In December delegate to the All-Ukrainian Meeting of Soviets in Charkov.
- 1918 In January member of Odessa revolutionary war committee.
In January, one of 4 delegates from Odessa to the 3rd All-Russian Convention of Workers, Soldiers and Peasants' Soviets in Petrograd. Met and conversed with Lenin, who appointed him Commissar-organizer of Russian-Roumanian affairs in South Russia.
In March evacuated Odessa with 3rd Ukrainian Army in view of foreign

- occupation.
 In June in Saratov received invitation to work in Ivanovo-Voznesensk.
 In June CK secretary Elena D.Stasova appointed him editor of *Rabočij kraj*, Ivanovo-Voznesensk governate.
- 1919 In January succeeded Frunze as local party leader (chairman of Gubkom) in Ivanovo-Voznesensk.
 Member of All-Russian Central Executive Committee (VCIK).
 Leader of local branch of Gosizdat.
 Wrote a number of salutary articles about Lenin in *Rabočij kraj*.
 In March delegate to the 8th convention of RKP (b), and to the 7th All-Russian meeting of Soviets.
- 1920 In April, published brochure "V.I.Ul'janov (Lenin) (On the occasion of Lenin's 50th birthday anniversary).
 In July-August, made inspection tour on behalf of All-Russian Central Executive Committee (VCIK) around Tambov governate to assess peasant riots (Antonov rebellion), due to hunger and harsh Bolshevik food requisition policy.
 In September, addressed distraught letter to Lenin with impressions from visit.
- 1921 In January, having published 370 signed articles in *Rabočij kraj* since June 1918, commenced work at Glavpolitprosvet in Moscow, headed by Krupskaja.
 In February, took part in meeting in Lenin's apartment in Kreml' with Lenin, Krupskaja and Gor'kij. Meeting decided to launch *Krasnaja nov'*. Voronskij appointed chief editor, Gor'kij literary editor.
 In June, the first issue of *Krasnaja nov'* appeared, featuring i.a. Lenin's article "O prodovol'stvennom naloge".
 Literary editor of *Pravda* (1921-1922)
 On 11 September appeared for first time in *Pravda* with article "O chudožestvennom slove v naši dni" (*Pravda* 11 September No.202).
 On 15 September published review in *Pravda* of the new journal *Tvorčestvo*.
 On 16 October Gor'kij, having edited the literary sections of the 3 first issues of *KN* (2 of which had appeared), left Russia. Voronskij assumed also the role of literary editor of *KN*. Starting with the third issue of *KN*, literature dominated.
- 1922 Appointed as Lenin's personal observer in relation to White emigré press.
 On 28 June again appeared in *Pravda* with the article "Iz sovremennykh literaturnych nastroenij".
 In July appointed by Politburo as member of commission headed by Ja.A. Jakovlev to propose how to organize writers and poets in independent societies.
 From July appointed chairman of the co-operative publishing house Krug (until end of 1927)
 Vice chairman of Gosizdat (until 1924)
 In August elected to permanent bureau of Communist Union of Writers. (Kommunističeskoe ob"edinenie chudožnikov slova - KOChS).

- In November, joined the Society of Old Bolsheviks.
Literary editor of *Kul'tura i žizn'* (only 4 issues appeared)
Lectured on literature at various institutions.
- 1923 In February, co-editor of *Prožektor* (with N.Bucharin).
Publication of *Na styke*.
In October, co-signed "Statement of 46" criticizing RKP(b) leadership for inefficiency and incompetence in economic policy.
On 15 December in *Pravda* Stalin condemned "Statement of 46"
On 16 December Voronskij allowed to visit the dying Lenin
- 1924 In March, publication of *Iskusstvo i žizn'*.
Publication of selected articles and commentaries: "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost'", and "Lenin i čelovečestvo".
- 1925 In January took part as co-speaker at All-Union Conference of Proletarian Writers.
In January, replaced by Raskol'nikov as editor of *KN*
In February elected to the board of Vserossijskij sojuz sovetских pisatelej - VSSP (commonly known as VSP)
In late February reinstated in *KN*, but only as editorial board member
In October, Frunze died unexpectedly and Voronskij's obituary appeared in *KN*, cf. 7.13.
Publication of *Ob isskustve*.
- 1926 *Novyj mir* published Pil'njak's *Povest' nepogašennoj lunny*, dedicated to Voronskij, who sent open letter to *Novyj mir* disclaiming the dedication.
Trockij appeared in *KN* 1926#1.
In February, re-elected to the 12-member board of VSP.
Publication of *Literaturnye zapisi*.
- 1927 In January, took part as one of six VSP representatives in the founding session of the Federation of Soviet Writers' Unions (Federacija ob'edinenij sovetских pisatelej - FOSP).
In February, re-elected to 12-member board of Moscow section of VSP.
Voronskij's biography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* (part I) published in *Novyj mir*; also published is *Literaturnye tipy*.
In February, the 6-year jubilee of *KN* was criticized by Press section of CK VKP (b) headed by Gusev for having developed into a political demonstration.
In March wrote letter to chairman of VKP(b) CCK, Sergo Ordžonikidze, explaining his antagonism to VAPP and to FOSP, but denied adherence to opposition.
KN 1927#2 published the Pereval manifesto and an article by Trockij.
Voronskij's attacks on the FOSP in *KN* 1927#4 and #6, the latter an "open letter to t.Gusev".
On 18 April delivered speech of defence at extraordinary session of VKP(b) Press Section. Thereafter relinquished work in *KN* editorial committee.
One of 3,000 Left Oppositionist signatories of "Declaration of the 84."
In July further associated with Left Opposition by being included in statement from Evdokimov, Zinov'ev and Trockij to All-Russian Union

- of Metalworkers.
 In October, publication of *Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna*
 In December, relieved from the post as editor of *KN* where he had not worked since April.
 Relieved from editorial board of *Prožektor*
- 1928 In February, excluded from VKP (b).
 In July, publication of *Iskusstvo videt' mir*.
 In December, publication of *Literaturnye portréty*.
 On the recommendation of his old comrade I.Skorovcev-Stepanov, editor of *Izvestija*, the editor of *Novyj mir* Polonskij started serializing *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj* in *Novyj mir*, issues 1928#9-12.
- 1929 The January issue of *Novyj mir* 1929#1 published the two first chapters of part 3 of *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj* (3 last chapters not published in subsequent issues)
 In January, arrested by OGPU. Again addressed letter to Sergo Ordžonikidze, denying membership in opposition, but admitting sympathy with some of their views.
 Exiled 7 months to Lipetsk, Tambov governate, where he was joined by mother and during school holidays also by his wife and daughter.
 Reportedly in bad health.
 Co-operative printing house Krug merged with Federacija.
 Federacija published *Za žvoj i mertvoj vodoj* (part 2 only).
 In October, returned to Moscow and rejected publicly the Left Opposition by signing a letter drafted by I.N.Smironov and M.Boguslavskij.
 In late October/early November met with Stalin.
- 1930 In March, addressed declaration to CK VKP (b) rejecting the opposition.
 In April re-admitted into party.
 In September, appointed senior editor of literary classics at Goslitizdat.
 Gor'kij accepted to write preface to Voronskij's planned one-volume work of prose writers of the 1860s.
- 1931-34 Publication of *Glaz uragana, Rasskazy, Bursa, Rasskazy i povesti, Tri povesti, Željabov, Gogol'*.
 In August 1934 declined invitation to attend the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers where socialist realism was promulgated as the official Soviet aesthetics.
- 1935 In March, again excluded from VKP (b) on reasons of anti-Soviet and anti-party terrorist Trotskyite activities.
 In May, addressed declaration of innocence to CKK VKP(b).
- 1936 20 June, participated in Gor'kij's funeral in Red Square.
 On 27 August, Stavskij, leader of Writers' Union, published article in *Literaturnaja gazeta* accusing Voronskij of having financed exiled Trotskyites.
- 1937 Arrested 1 February, and accused of "anti-Soviet terrorist activities".
 In February denied charges in 10p. handwritten statement "O Perevale".
 In March, his daughter Galina was arrested.
 17 May, *Pravda* published article accusing Voronskij of having inspired Pil'njak's *Povest' nepogašennoj luny*.

In July signed 8,5p. handwritten statement concerning his alleged Trotskyist activities.

13 August, sentenced to death and executed (shot) same day, cf. 7.15

His wife Serafima Solomonovna Voronskaja and only daughter Galina Aleksandrovna Voronskaja were both arrested in 1937 and sent to labour camps: Voronskij's wife was arrested shortly after his execution and sentenced to 8 years' in labour camps. She spent 6 years in camps in Mordovia and Karaganda, was released in 1943 for reasons of ill-health, and died the same year in Taškent where she had spent her last months living with her sister. On 30 June 1937, his daughter was transferred from Moscow, sentenced to 5 years in labour camps, and subsequently to indefinite exile. Released in 1944 when she married Ivan Isaev, and rearrested in 1949. Daughters Valentina (1945-91) and Tat'jana (b.1951). Galina Aleksandrovna Voronskaja spent a total of 22 years in camps and in exile in Kolyma. She never saw her mother again after 1937.

7.2: Journal articles (reprints in brackets) by A.K.Voronskij 1921-1928¹

Journal	Year 1921		1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927		1928	1929	Total
	a	b						c	d			
<i>Krasnaja nov'</i>	5 ²	7(1)	20	12	9	6	9(1)	1	2 ³			71(2)
<i>Na postu</i>					1							1
<i>Naši dni</i>				1		3						4
<i>Novyj mir</i>									1	1 (*)	(*)	2
<i>Pečat' i revoljucija</i>	3											3
<i>Pereval</i>							1			1		2
<i>Pravda</i>	2	4	1	2(1)		1						10(1)
<i>Prožektor</i>			6	2	4	1	2	5				20
<i>Rabočij kraj</i>	7 ⁴					1(1)	1(1)					9 (2)
<i>Sibirskie ogni</i>										3		3
Various ⁵		3(1)	2	1		1(1)	5(4)	6(2)	8(5)			26(13)
Total	12	15(2)	27	20	14(1)	15(2)	18(6)	3	14(2)	13(5)		151 (18)

a =January -June 1921; b =July-December 1921; c =January - April 1927; d=May-December 1927 (*) As noted in 3.4 and in the bibliography part 2 and some of part 3 of Voronskij's autobiography were serialized in *Novyj mir* 1928#9-12 and 1929#1 and are marked (*).

Diagram 7.2.1

As shown Voronskij published 151 articles 1921-28, of which 18 were reprints. The articles appeared in a variety of journals and newspapers. A few were also published in books by other authors, mostly in 1928. Many of these 151 articles were moreover republished in Voronskij's own 10 books of collected articles 1923-28, cf. 7.4. His preferred journals were his own bimonthly *KN* and its popular, illustrated biweekly version *Prožektor*, and the authoritative daily *Pravda*. Together these account for 101 (3 reprints) articles or 70% of his published articles 1921-28. Almost half - 48% (71, of which 2 reprints) - appeared in *KN* alone, cf. 7.3. The articles of course vary in scope and significance, but his most important articles were published in *KN*, *Prožektor* and *Pravda*. He contributed little to the semi-annual almanac *Naši dni* which ceased publication in 1925, and to the 6 *Pereval* almanacs 1924-1928.

1 The figures are based on the bibliographies by Neživoj (1983) and Efremov (1984), with my own revisions, cf. footnote 1 in 7.3.

2 The first issue of *KN* 1921#1 appeared in June with 5 contributions by Voronskij/ Nurmin/A.V.

3 Voronskij's last contribution to *Krasnaja nov'* was published in the 1927#6(53) issue, cf. 7.3.

4 Voronskij's last article as editor in *Rabočij kraj* appeared 30 June/1 July 1921.

5 Including books by other authors.

7.3: Articles and reviews by A.K.Voronskij in *KN* 1921-1927

My analysis of all 59 issues of *KN* for the 6-year period from June 1921- April 1927 when Voronskij edited *KN* show a total of 71 contributions, ranging from minor 1-page commentaries and reviews to larger multiple book reviews, 30-page literary treatises and portraits, which were all signed "Aleksandr Voronskij" or "A. Voronskij". Such articles are listed below without specifying the signature each time. Occasionally "A.K.", or "A.V." was used (A.V. was his preferred abbreviation in inserted commentaries in articles), in which case I have specified the abbreviation used. In 1921-22 "Nurmin" was used in 7 articles, as indicated.¹

Unsigned contributions, such as the obituary of Dzeržinskij (*KN* 1926#9(44): 118-121) which Efremov (1984:29) attributes to Voronskij without any further explanation, are not included since I believe Voronskij's high public profile precluded anonymous articles by him in *KN*. My estimate of the number of articles by Voronskij is therefore more restrictive than that of Efremov (1984).

His contributions usually appeared in the section "Literaturnye kraja". This gradually became the second section following the untitled main section, while his literary reviews appeared in the section "Kritika i bibliografija", which was usually the last section. After 1923 #4(14) he for some reason ceased to print book reviews under the section "Kritika i bibliografija" and only appeared in the "Literaturnye kraja" section. Below I have listed the relevant section in which his article or review appeared, its title (including subtitle and/or footnote, if any), the signature, the relevant page(s) and in some cases added an explanation in brackets.

His last article appeared in *KN* 1927#6 (53). His most active period as a contributor were the early years 1922-23 when he regularly appeared in all issues of *KN*. He did not, however, appear in 1921#4 as well as in several issues during the later period 1924-27.

¹ The bibliography by Efremov (1984) is the most complete to date on Voronskij, and of course indispensable. Unfortunately it is marred by several misprints, omissions, double listings and even mistakes. It e.g. fails to list Voronskij's article "Klevetniku i spletniku" (*KN* 1923#7(17):291); it fails to list the five brief book reviews in *KN* 1922#5(9) signed "A.K." although attributing to him another article signed "A.K." (*KN* 1923#1, article No.34); it wrongly attributes "Literaturnye zametki" to *KN* 1922#2 (correct is *KN* 1921#2:215-227 and *KN* 1923#1(11):290-305); it wrongly attributes the review "A. Bezymenskij *Kak pachnet žizn'*" to *KN* 1923#2, and it wrongly lists "O Gor'kom" (*KN* 1928#4) as Voronskij's last appearance in *KN*, when in fact this article appeared in *KN* 1926#4(39):200-213 (which Efremov also notes). It moreover attributes to Voronskij the unsigned obituary "Dzeržinskij" (*KN* 1926#9(44):118-121) as well as several articles in *KN* 1921-22 signed "Nurmin" without offering an explanation. As regards "Nurmin", it appears that Voronskij availed himself of his early underground Bolshevik alias in the case of 7 articles in *KN* 1921-22 with a political rather than literary angle. The last time he used this alias was in *KN* 1922#2(6). Thereafter he only used his own name, also in the case of primarily political articles, reflecting his added self-confidence.

The much less detailed bibliography by Neživoj (1983:74-78) is unfortunately also marred by errors: the author e.g. fails to list Voronskij's three articles "Rasspad ideologii" (*KN* 1921#1), "Ot narodničeskogo utopizma k kontr-revolucionnoj kulackoj ideologii" (*KN* 1921#2) and "Process pravych ešerov" (*KN* 1922#4(8)) in his survey of the years 1921-22 (p.74). Moreover, he mistakenly attributes (p.76) the article "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" to *KN* 1926#6 (correct is *KN* 1925#7(32)) and (p.75) the article "Michail Vasil'evič Frunze" to *KN* 1925#3 (correct is *KN* 1925#9(34)).

1921

- #1: 1) Iz zarubežnoj pressy: publicističeskie nabroski: "Yel's o sovetskoj Rossii" ("Rossija vo mgle". Perevod s anglijskogo s predislovijem kn. N.S.Trubeckogo.Rossijsko- bolgarskoe knigoizdatel'stvo, 1921) (pp.285-291).
2) Iz zarubežnoj pressy: kritika i bibliografija: "Ob otščel'nikach, bezumcach i buntarjach" (*Dom iskusstv* no.1, Peterburg 1921, and *Vestnik literatury*, no.3 (27)1921).
3) Leonid Andreev "Dnevnik Satany", pp.295-297, (signed Nurmin) (pp.292-295).
4) "Feliks Gra "Terror" ", Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1920, (signed Nurmin) (pp.301-302).
5) "Raspad ideologii. Sovremennaja nemeckaja mysl'. Sbornik statej". Perevod c nemeckogo. Pod redakciej V.Kossovskogo. Drezden, Izdatel'stvo "Vostok", 1921, (signed A.V.) (pp.302-304).
- #2: 6) Iskusstvo i žizn': "Literaturnye zametki" (pp. 215-227)
"I. Pesni severnogo rabočego kraja" (pp.215-221)
Kryl'ja svobody, Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1919
Krasnaja ulica. Stichi i pesni. Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1920
Snop. Stichi i rasskazy. Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1920.
"II. O dvuch romanach" (pp.221-227)
P.N.Krasnov: Ot Dvuchglavogo Orla k Krasnomu Znameni 1894-1921.
Roman v vos'mi čast'jach, tom. I-II, Berlin 1921(pp.222-223)
Graf A.N.Tolstoj: *Choždenie po mukam*. Roman. *Sovremennye Zapiski*, Paris 1921(pp.223-227).
7) Kritika i bibliografija: "O novoj knige V.I.Korolenko" (V.I.Korolenko "Istorija moego sovremennika", vol.II, parts III-IV-V, Knigoizd. "Zadruha", 1920) (signed Nurmin) (pp.324-327).
8) Iz beloj pressy: kritika i bibliografija: "Ot narodničeskogo utopizma k kontr-revoljucionnoj kulackoj ideologii" (*Sovremennye zapiski*, Paris) (pp.345-346).
9) Iz beloj pressy: kritika i bibliografija: "K évoljucii ruskogo liberalizma" Archiv Russoj Revoljucii, izdavaemyj I.V.Gessenom, vol.1, Berlin 1921 (signed Nurmin) (pp.347-349).
- #3: 10) main section (untitl.): "Iz sovremennyh nastroenij (Po povodu odnogo spora)" (pp.244-255).
11) Belaja pečat': "Pochmel'e. G.Kirdecov. U vrat Petrograda" (pp.352-355).
12) Kritika i bibliografija: "Pečat' i revoljucija" (signed A.V.), (pp.360-361).
- #4: no articles or reviews.

1922

- #1 (5): 13) main section (untitl.): "Sovetskaja Rossija v osveščeenii belogo obozrevatelja" (pp.221-229).
14) Kritika i bibliografija: "Iz čelovečeskich dokumentov" (pp.334-351).

- 15) Kritika i bibliografija: "Istorija moego sovremennika", vol.III (cont.) (signed Nurmin) (pp.314-317).
- #2 (6): 16) "Literaturnye otkliki" (pp.258-275).
17) Literaturnye kraja: "V žurnal'nom mire" (signed Nurmin) (pp.343-350).
- #3 (7): 18) Kritika i bibliografija: "Serapionovy brat'ja. Al'manach pervyj. Alkonost", Peterburg 1922 (pp.265-267).
19) Kritika i bibliografija: "Peterburgskij al'manach. Kniga pervaja", Peterburg-Berlin 1922 (pp.267-268).
- #4 (8): 20) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluëty. I. B.Pil'njak" (pp.252-269).
21) Vnutri Sov.Rossii: "Process pravych ës-ërov", (signed Nurmin) (pp.270-281).
- #5 (9): 22) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluëty" II. Vsevolod Ivanov" (pp.254-275).
23) Kritika i bibliografija: "F.Dan. Dva goda skitanij (1919-1921)", Berlin 1922 (pp.291-293).
24) Kritika i bibliografija: "A.M.Carr-Saunders. The Population Problem - a study in Human Evolution, 1922 Oxford University Press, Clarendon Press (Problema narodonaselenija - issledovanie èvoljucii èlovečestva) Str. 516, Cena 21 šill. (pp.305-307) (signed A.K.).
25) Kritika i bibliografija: "Sidney and Beatrice Webb. English Prisons under Local Government (Anglijskie tjur'mi pod vedeniem mestnogo samoupravlenija), London 1922, Izd. Longmans. Cena 15 šill. (pp.307-309) (signed A.K.).
26) Kritika i bibliografija: "Frederic Bausman "Let France Explain" (Pust' Francija ob"jasnit) London 1922. Cena 10 šill. 6 pensov (pp.309-310) (signed A.K.).
27) Kritika i bibliografija: "Alfred Fabre-Luce. La crise des Alliances. Essai sur les Relations Franco-Britanniques depuis la signature de la Paix 1919-1922 (Krizis sojuza - opyt issledovanija Franko-britanskich otnošenij, so vremeni zaključenija mira 1919-1922) Paris 1922, Izd. Bernard Grosset, Cena 7 fr. 50 sant. (p.310) (signed A.K.).
28) Kritika i bibliografija: "Europe in Convalescence (Vyzdoravlivajuščaja Evropa) London 1922, Izd. Milla and Boon. Cena 5 šill. (p.311) (signed A.K.).
- #6 (10): 29) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluëty. III. E.Zamjatin" (pp. 304-323).
30) Kritika i bibliografija: "Michail Zoščenko. *Rasskazy Nazara Il'iča gospodina Sinebrjučova*", Peterburg, Èrato, 1922. (pp.343-344).
31) Kritika i bibliografija: "Michail Slonimski. *Šestoj Strelkovyj*", Izd. Vremja, Peterburg 1922, (pp.344-345).
32) Kritika i bibliografija "Nikolaj Archipov. *Temnye vody*". Roman. Izdan'e tret'e, Kostry, Moscow 1923 (pp.345-347).

1923

- #1 (11): 33) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye zametki" (pp.290-305).
34) Kritika i bibliografija: "I.A.Hobson. Incentives in the New Industrial

- Order (I.A.Gobson. Stimuljacija pri novom promyšlennom porjadke"), Izd. Parsons Zig., London 1922 (signed A.K.) (p.351).
- #2 (12): 35) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye otkliki . Ob al'manachach Kruga" (pp.333-346).
- #3 (13): 36) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye otkliki. O gruppe pisatelej 'Kuznica' " (pp.297-319).
- #4 (14): 37) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye otkliki: O gruppe pisatelej Kuznica" (okončanie)" (pp.309-334).
38) Kritika i bibliografija: "Ja.Jakovlev. Derevnja, kak ona est'. (Očerki Nikol'skoj volosti). Izdatel'stvo "Krasnaja nov' ", Glavpolitprosvet 1923 (pp.380-381).
- #5 (15): 39) Literaturnye kraja: "Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni, i sovremennost" (pp.347-384).
- #6 (16): 40) Literaturnye kraja: "Na perevale" (pp.312-322).
41) "Na popjatnyj dvor" (pp.357-362).
- #7 (17): 42) Literaturnye kraja: "O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii" (pp.257-276).
43) Literaturnye kraja: "Tov. jubilaru V.Ja.Brjusovu" (pp.289-290).
44) Literaturnye kraja: "Klevetniku i spletniku" (p.291).
- 1924**
- #1 (18): 45) main section (one of three obituaries of Lenin): "Y sklepa" (pp.135-143).
46) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluěty. Sergej Esenin" (pp.271-289).
- #2 (19): 47) Literaturnye kraja: "O gruppe pisatelej "Oktjabr" i "Molodaja gvardija" (pp.288-306).
- #3 (20): 48) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluěty. L.Leonov" (pp.295-305).
49) Literaturnye kraja: "Otvét Vardinu" (pp.306-307).
- #4 (21): no articles or reviews.
- #5 (22): 50) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluěty. I. I.Babel'." (pp.276-291).
51) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye siluěty. II. L.Sejfullina" (pp.291-300).
52) Literaturnye kraja: "Polemičeskie zametki" (pp.309-321).
- #6 (23): 53) Literaturnye kraja: "Literaturnye kraja. Dem'jan Bednyj" (pp.303-328).
- #7/8(24/25): no articles or reviews.
- 1925**
- #1 (26)²: no articles or reviews.
- #2 (27): 54) Literaturnye kraja: "V.Majakovskij" (pp.249-276).
- #3 (28): no articles or reviews.
- #4 (29): no articles or reviews.
- #5 (30): no articles or reviews.
- #6 (31): 55) Literaturnye kraja: "Zametki ob iskusstve" (pp.260-276).
- #7 (32): 56) Literaturnye kraja: "Frejdizm i iskusstvo" (pp.241-262).
- #8 (33): 57) Literaturnye kraja: "Knut Gamsun" (pp.234-246).

² Starting with 1925#1(26), the first page of *KN* no longer listed the serial volume in brackets as indicated, but only the number of that particular year. For practical reasons and for overall clarification, I have retained both enumerations also for the years 1925-27.

- #9 (34): 58 Literaturnye kraja: "Michail Vasil'evič Frunze" (obituary) (pp. 277-279).
 #10 (35): 59 Literaturnye kraja: "O tom, čego u nas net" (pp.254-265).

1926

- #1 (36): 60 Literaturnye kraja: "Ob otošedšem" (obituary of Esenin)(pp.227-236).
 #2 (37): 61 Literaturnye kraja: "Pamjati o Esenine (iz vospominanij)" (pp.207-214).
 #3 (38): 62 Literaturnye kraja: "Larisa Michajlovna Rejsner" (pp.235-236).
 63 Literaturnye kraja: "Chudožestvennaja literatura i rabkory (o prostych istinach i prostom pisatele)" (pp.229-235).
 #4 (39): 64 Literaturnye kraja: "O Gor'kom" (pp.200-214).
 #5 (40): 65 Literaturnye kraja: "Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna" (footnote: "tak nazyvaetsja odin iz romanov Yél'sa") (o novonapostovskich upražnenijach", (pp.195-203).
 #6 (41): no articles or reviews.
 #7 (42): no articles or reviews.
 #8 (43): 66 Literaturnye kraja: "V obščem i celom" - letnij fel'eton" (pp.220-229).
 #9 (44): 67 Literaturnye kraja: Žuravli nad Gnilyopatami " (Aleksiej Tolstoj) (pp.194-208).
 #10 (45): 68 Literaturnye kraja: "Lunnye tumany - (o romane S.Klyčkova i Čertuchinskij balakir"" (pp.215-224).
 #11 (46): no articles or reviews.
 #12 (47): no articles or reviews.

1927

- #1 (48): 69 Literaturnye kraja: "Pisatel', kniga, čitatel'. (Chudožestvennaja prosa za istekšij god)" (pp.226-239).
 #2 (49): no articles or reviews.
 #3 (50): no articles or reviews.
 #4 (51): 70 Literaturnye kraja: "O federacii sovetskich pisatelej" (pp.214-221).
 #5 (52): no articles or reviews.
 #6 (53): 71 Literaturnye kraja: "Ob užasnoj krokodile, o federacii pisatelej i fal'šivych frazach (otkrytoe pis'mo tov. Gusevu)" (footnote: "Sčitaem neobchodnym zametit', čto my ne soglacny s soderžaniem stat'i t. Voronskogo. Členy redkollegii Jaroslavskij i Sorin", (pp.238-249).
 #7 (54): no articles or reviews.
 #8 (55): no articles or reviews.
 #9 (56): no articles or reviews.
 #10 (57): no articles or reviews.
 #11 (58): no articles or reviews.
 #12 (59): no articles or reviews.

7.4: Contents of Voronskij's 10 books of collected articles 1923-1929. ¹ Articles discussed in parts 4-5 are underlined, with their previous printing(s) in brackets

I) Na styke (1923) (352p)

Literaturnye otkliki (KN 1922#2(6):258-275)

Iz sovremennykh literaturnykh nastroenij (Pravda 1922#141, 28 June)

Literaturnye siluety: I. Evgenij Zamjatin (KN 1922#6(10):304-323)

II. Vsevolod Ivanov

III. Boris Pil'njak

V tiskach

Strada

Po povodu odnogo spora

Na novom puti

G.Yél's o sovetsoj Rossii

Ob otščel'nikach, bezumcach i buntarjach

Iz odnogo dnevnika

Stichijnyj bol'sevizm

Pesni severnogo rabočego kraja

G.V.Plechanov (1918-1920gg)

Literaturnaja chronika

Sovetskaja Rossija v osveščeenii belogo obozrevatelja

Starčeskoe slaboume

Pochmel'e

Ot narodničeskogo utopizma k kontr-revoljucionnoj kulackoj ideologii

Social-demokratičeskoe meščanstvo

Rasspad ideologii

II) Iskusstvo kak poznanie žizni i sovremennost'. K voprosu o našich raznoglasijach (1924a) (64p.)

Iskusstvo kak poznanie žizni i sovremennost'. K voprosu o našich raznoglasijach

III) Iskusstvo i žizn' (1924b) (327p.)

I

Iskusstvo i žizn'

Iskusstvo, kak poznanie žizni i sovremennost' (KN 1923#5(15):347-384 and Voronskij 1924a)

O chlestkoj fraze i klassikach (Prožektor 1923#12:14-22)

Na perevale (KN 1923#6(16):312-322)

O proletarskom iskusstve i o chudožestvennoj politike našej partii (KN 1923#7(17):257-276)

Na popjatnyj dvor

¹ Excluding Voronskij's autobiography *Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj* (1927,1929). Efremov (1984:9) lists as Voronskij's earliest books *Tovarišč Frunze* (Arsenij), Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1920 (16p.) and *V.I.Ul'janov (N.Lenin)*, Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1920 (16p.), and also lists *Lenin i čelovečestvo*, Leningrad 1924, which are omitted here.

O gruppe pisatelej Kuznica
Ob Al'manach "Krug"
V večnih bojach
O pisatele i čitatele
Na ogne stradn
Civilizatory

II

Iz sovremennyh nastroenij
Na povodu odnoj vstreči
Na platforme zatjaznogo karaktera Sovetskoj vlasti

III

Belaja pressa
Obrežennye
Miljukov i russkaja revoljucija
Požemu oni pogibli
Pravoslavie i éšery

IV

Političeskie siluěty
Rossija, čelovečestvo, čelovek i Lenin
Lenin
Tovarišč Frunce
Petljura
Boris Savinikov

V

Arabeski
Novye skrižali
Kommunizm, kak ideal rabočego klassa
Čelovečeskoe sliškom čelovečeskoe
Vešči i ljudiš

IV) Ob isskustve (1925a) (62p.)

Ob iskusstve (KN 1925#6(31):260-276)

"Istorija midjan temna i neponjatna" (Naši dni 1925#5:297-304)

O mudroj točke (Naši dni 1925#5:309-314)

Literaturnye zametki

V) Literaturnye tipy (1925b) (244p.)

I

Literaturnye tipy
Vladimir Majakovskij
Sergej Esenin
Demjan Bednyj
Isaak Babel'

Lidija Sejfullina (KN 1924#5(22):291-300)

Leonid Leonov

O grupe pisatelej "Oktjabr" i "Molodaja gvardija"

O "Perevale" i pereval'cach

II

Stat'i

Na raznye temy

Literaturnye zametki

Polemičeskie zametki

Literatura i politika

O 'tekuščem momente' i zadačach RKP v chudožestvennoj literature (*Prožektor*
1924#5:23-27)

VI) Literaturnye zapisi (1926) (167p.)

I

Frejdzizm i iskusstvo (KN 1925#7(32):241-262)

Ob iskusstve (KN 1925#6(31):260-276 and Voronskij 1925a)

O tom, čego u nas net (KN 1925#10(35):254 -265)

Knut Gamsun (KN 1925#8(33):234-246)

Prolazy i podchalimy

Dokuka pisatel'skogo byta

Chudožestvennaja literatura i rabkory

O kritike i bibliografii

Vne žizni i vne vremeni

Sovetskaja literatura i belaja émigracija

II

Ob otošedščem

Pamjati Esenina

Michail Vasil'evič Frunce

Larisa Michajlovna Rejsner

V.G.Korolenko

VII) Literaturnye tipy (2-e izd., dop.) (1927a) (268p.)

Predislovie

I

Evgenij Zamjatin (KN 1922#6(10):304-323 and Voronskij 1923)

Boris Pil'njak

I.Babel'

Vsevolod Ivanov

Leonid Leonov

Lidija Sejfullina (KN 1924#5(22):291-300 and Voronskij 1925)

O grupe pisatelej "Oktjabr" i "Molodaja Gvardija"

O "Perevale" i pereval'cach

II

Sergej Esenin

Majakovskij
Demjan Bednyj

VIII) Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna (1927b) (231p.)

Fel'etony

Mister Britling p'et čašu do dna
Ob užasnoj krokodile, o federaciji pisatelej i fal'sivych frazach
V obščem i celom
Odin oglušitel'nyj aplodisment

Kritičeskie stat'i

O Gor'kom

Žuravli nad Gnilopjatami (O Aleksee Tolstom) (KN 1926#9(44):194-208)

Lunnye tumani (O Sergee Klyčkovve) (KN 1926#10(45): 215-224)

Pisatel', kniga, čitatel' (KN 1927#1(48):226-239)

O federaciji sovetskich pisatelej (KN 1927#4(51):214-221)

O knige Vsevoloda Ivanova "Tajnoe tajnych"

Staroe i novoe (ob A.Fadeeve) (Prožektor 1927#7)

Na chorošej doroge (o M.Svetlove i M.Utkine)

Novikov-Priboj

Versty polosatye

Doloi negramotnost'

Stenogramy

Iz prošlogo (reč' na jubilejnom večere "Krasnoj novi")

Pisatel' i osnovnye élementy ego tvorčestva (iz doklada rabkoram "Pravdy")

Iz doklada o "Krasnoj novi"

IX) Iskusstvo videt' mir (1928a) (216p.)

O chudožestvennoj pravde ("Voprosy chudožestvennogo tvorčestva", *Sibirskie ogni* 1928#1:176-198, signed "Anisimov")

Zametki o chudožestvennom tvorčestve (*Novyj mir* 1927#8:160-169 and #9:177-186)

Iskusstvo videt' mir (O novom realizme) (Voronskij 1928a)

Mramornyj grom (Andrej Belyj) (Voronskij 1928a)

Marsel' Prust (*Pereval* No. 6, 1928; Voronskij 1928a)

Ob industrializaciji i ob iskusstve (Voronskij 1928a)

Desjatiletie Oktjabrja i sovetskaja literatura (*Učitel'skaja gazeta* 1927#11:6-7)

Puti i pereput'ja (Po povodu poslednych veščej L.Sejfullinnoj)

Literaturnyj dnevnik

Zametki o Korolenko

X) Literaturnye portrety (vol. I, 1928b, vol.II, 1929a)

Vol. I (470p.)

Predislovie k vtoromu izdaniju "Literaturnych tipov"

I

Andrej Belyj (Voronskij 1928a)

V.V.Veresaev

Evgenij Zamjatin (KN 1922#6(10):304-323 and Voronskij 1923, 1927a)
V.T.Korolenko
Aleksej Tolstoj (KN 1926#9(44):194-208)

II

Isaak Babel'
Sergej Esenin
Vsevolod Ivanov
Sergej Klyčkov (KN 1926#10(45):215-224)
Leonod Leonov
Vladimir Majakovskij
Boris Pil'njak
Lidija Sejfullina (KN 1924#5(22):291-300 and Voronskij 1925, 1928a)

Vol.II (327p.) (1929a)

III

O Gor'kom
Demjan Bednyj
N.Ognev (KN 1923#2(12):343)
N.Tichonov
Prozaiki i poëty "Oktjabrja" i "Molodoj gvardii"
A.Bezymenskij
M.Gor'kij
I Doronin
A.Žarov
P.Kuznecov
M.Svetlov
Jasnyj
S.Rodov
Prozaiki i poëty "Kuznicy"
V.Aleksandrovskij
M.Gerasimov
V.Kazin
V.Kirillov
A.Makarov
S.Obradovič
N.Poletaev
G.Sannikov
Filipčenko
M.Volkov
F.Gladkov
N.Ljaško
A.Neverov
Novikov-Priboj
P.Nizovoj
P. Jarovoj
O "Perevale" i pereval'cach

A.Arosev
Tarasov-Rodionov
Ju. Libedinskij (*KN 1923#1(11):299-303*)
A.Malyškin
Novikov-Priboj
Larisa Michajlovna Rejsner
Svetlov
Utkin
A.Fadeev (*Prožektor 1927#7 and Voronskij 1927b*)

IV

Knut Gamsun (*KN 1925#8(33):234-246 and Voronskij 1926*)
Marsel' Prust (*Pereval No. 6, 1928; Voronskij 1928a*)

7.5: The correspondence of A.K. Voronskij

Only 154 letters from Voronskij's correspondence have been published, most of them letters exchanged with various writers. Voronskij's biographer estimates that much of his correspondence and his personal archives were destroyed following his arrest and execution.¹ Many non-published letters exist, several are located in the family archive, cf. 7.6. Ovsjannikov e.g. quotes from several letters not included among the 154 letters mentioned above.²

1) Lenin

Voronskij wrote 3 known letters to Lenin. The two first are dated 25.11.1919 and 26.9.1920 and were written while Voronskij was editor of *Rabočij kraj* 1918-20, and the third is dated 21 April 1922 (cf. 7.6 fr3-it12).³

In addition, Ovsjannikov quotes several passages from a letter Voronskij (Valentin) wrote to Lenin in Paris in 1911 prior to the Bolshevik conference in Prague 1912.⁴ He also quotes from a letter written by Voronskij (Valentin) to Lenin after his return to Odessa and Nikolaev in early 1912.⁵

2) Gor'kij

Voronskij's known correspondence with Gor'kij consists of 59 letters and has been published in *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol.10, book 2, 1965:7-79.⁶

3) Various

An additional selection of 83 letters from Voronskij's correspondence with various writers has been published with commentaries by Dinerštejn.⁷ Most of these letters are kept with RGALI, IMLI and with RGB, all in Moscow. A comparison of these 83 letters with the material I have collated in appendices 7.5-7.9, however, shows that this is a significant part, but still only a part of, his available correspondence. I must add here that I have not cross-checked whether letters to Voronskij may be included in publications of all these writers' correspondence. I have only done this in the case of the 10 writers

¹ Ovsjannikov 1992:207; Voronskaja 1997:110.

² Ovsjannikov 1992:131-132.

³ Smirnov 1964(12):213-219 refers to the first two letters, while the third letter is quoted *in extenso*. Cf. also Ovsjannikov 1992:180.

⁴ Ovsjannikov 1992:74-75. His source is Vorobčenko 1986:147-148.

⁵ Ovsjannikov 1990:68.

⁶ As discussed in Vaagan (1998a), at least one letter, possibly two, have disappeared: Voronskij (1987a:56) e.g. relates that an early letter from Gor'kij which he received while in exile in Kem' in 1914, was confiscated in 1916 in Jekaterinoslav. Černobaev (1992a:2) quotes from a letter from Voronskij to Gor'kij written from Kem' 10 July 1914 which is kept at *Archiv Gor'kogo*, but was not included among the 59 letters published in *Archiv Gor'kogo*, Vol. 10, book 2, 1965:7-79. Cf. also Ovsjannikov (1992:128-129).

⁷ Dinerštejn 1983:531-648.

discussed in part 5. In their case I have limited my search to a check of their files at RGALI where I was unable to find any indication of letters they may have exchanged with Voronskij other than those already listed here. My conclusion is that much of Voronskij's correspondence remains to be published, and that this must be a major task for a future *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij* of Voronskij's work.

Sender/receiver	Date
1. Krupskaja/Voronskij to Gosizdat	6.2.21
2. Voronskij to Pod"jačev	9.2.21
3. "	4.3.21
4. "	21.3.21
5. Voronskij to Gosizdat/techn. section	17.4.21
6. Voronskij to Pod"jačev	13.9.21
7. "	14.9.21
8. Voronskij to Kogan	12.10.21
9. Voronskij to Pod"jačev	13.10.21
10. Voronskij to Forš	2.11.21
11. Voronskij to Vol'nov	5.11.21
12. Voronskij to Brjusov	21.11.21
13. Zoščenko to Voronskij	16.2.22
14. Voronskij to Pod"jačev	7.2.22
15. Pil'njak to Voronskij	15.2.22
16. Semenov to Voronskij	22.2.22
17. Pod"jačev to Voronskij	7-27.2.22
18. Voronskij to editors of Gosizdat	27.11.22
19. Nikitin to Voronskij	1.3.22
20. Voronskij to Lunačarskij	2.3.22
21. Voronskij to V.V. Ivanov	22.3.22
22. Nikitin to Voronskij	10-15.4.22
23. Semenovskij to Voronskij	14.5.22
24. A.Tolstoj to Voronskij	19.5.22
25. Zoščenko to Voronskij	Febr-May 1922
26. "	12.6.22
27. Voronskij to Agit-del CK RKP (b)	18.8.22
28. Bubnov to Voronskij	2.9.22
29. Zoščenko to Voronskij	2.9.22
30. Piln'jak to Voronskij	3.9.22
31. "	8.9.22
32. Veresaev to Voronskij	Sept-Oct. 1922
33. Piln'jak to Voronskij/Aseev and others	30.10.22
34. "	Oct. 1922
35. Voronskij to Zamjatin	Oct-Nov. 1922
36. Nikitin to Voronskij	29.12.22
37. Trenev to Voronskij	3.2.23
38. Ėrenburg to Voronskij	9.2.23
39. A.Tolstoj to Voronskij	Febr. 1923
40. Voronskij to Zamjatin	21.3.1923

41. Forš til Voronskij	22.3.23
42. Artamonov to Voronskij	10.4.23
43. Nikitin to Voronskij	11.4.23
44. Voronskij to Vol'nov	17.4.23
45. Polonskaja to Voronskij	23.5.23
46. Prišvin to Voronskij	Spring-summer 1923
47. Tichonov to Voronskij	17.7.23
48. Nikitin to Voronskij	20.7.23
49. Slonimskij to Voronskij	10.8.23
50. Nikitin to Voronskij	21/22.8.23
51. Tichonov to Voronskij	Sept. 1923
52. Nikitin to Voronskij	7.10.23
53. Brjusov to Voronskij	16.10.23
54. Trenev to Voronskij	31.12.23
55. Voronskij to Meščerjakov	3.1.24
56. Prišvin to Voronskij	5.1.24
57. Klejnbort to Voronskij	10.3.24
58. Nikitin to Voronskij	12.3.24
59. Mandel'stam to Voronskij	1924 (?)
60. Babel' to Voronskij	2.5.25
61. Voronskij to Gladkov	May-June 1925
62. Kallinikov to Voronskij	4.7.25
63. Voronskij to Prišvin	22.9.25
64. Annenskij-Krivič to Voronskij	23.9.25
65. Mariengof to Voronskij	28.10.25
66. Voronskij to Prišvin	Dec. 1925
67. Prišvin to Voronskij	Dec. 1925
68. Voronskij to Prišvin	29.1.26
69. Voronskij to Zamjatin	9.2.26
70. Polonskij to Voronskij	13.3.26
71. Voronskij to Prišvin	11.5.26
72. Platonov to Voronskij	27.7.26
73. Voronskij to Prišvin	1.11.26
74. Voronskij to Vol'nov	13.11.26
75. Voronskij to Prišvin	17.11.26
76. A.Belyj to Voronskij	19.1.27
77. Voronskij to Lelevič	27.1.27
78. "	28.6.27
79. Voronskij to Zamoškin	8.7.28
80. Voronskij to Lelevič	18.3.29
81. Voronskij to Gornfel'd	28.3.33
82. Voronskij to Izdat. Academia	July 1933
83. Voronskij to Zamoškin	25.9.34

4) Additional

Galuškin has published a letter to Voronskij from Zamjatin dated late September 1922, (not included above) which I have discussed in *Scando-Slavica*.⁸

5) Unpublished letters

Among the still many unpublished letters are e.g. 2 letters from L.Sejfullina to Voronskij (cf. 7.7, Nos. 1-64-1 and 1-64-2), which are quoted in 5.3.2.2. (I have counter-checked Sejfullina's file at RGALI and found no indication of these letters). I have been informed by RGB that 3 letters, not included above, are filed with them: 2 letters from Voronskij to K.Čukovskij, written in 1926 og 1931, as well as an undated letter to Voronskij from L.Rejsner.

6) Statements

Dikušina, Isaeva quote 4 statements by Voronskij in connection with his party activities: 2 are addressed to Sergo Ordžonikidze dated "19/II-3/III.27g." and "19-29/I.29g.". Of these the first is included in the family archive, cf. 7.6 fr3-it27. A third statement to the CK VKP (b) is dated "12.II.30" and a fourth statement to the KPK CK VKP (b) is dated "19-20/V-35".⁹

Conclusion:

When and if Voronskij's *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij* appear, including all his available correspondence, the material specified in 7.5-7.9 should be included. The family archive listed in 7.6. contains many handwritten letters and transcripts of his letters, several of which remain unpublished. It is highly probable, and remains a task for future research, that e.g. the editorial archives of *Rabočij kraj* contain additional letters from Voronskij's correspondence prior to 1921. As to the period 1921-28 and later, my main conclusion is that only a small portion of Voronskij's correspondence has been published. A large part of his correspondence as editor of *Krasnaja nov'* seems to be either destroyed or kept in archives so far inaccessible to research.

⁸ Galuškin 1992; Vaagan 1997b.

⁹ Dikušina, Isaeva 1995.

7.6: Inventory of the Voronskij family archive ¹

As noted under the introductory list of major abbreviations, acronyms and terms utilized, references to the family archive throughout the dissertation text relate to film reel and item nos. Thus, "Cf. 7.6, fr6-i84" means "confer 7.6, film reel no.6, item no.84".

Film reel no. 2:

The family archive begins towards the end of this film reel under the headings of "Voronskaja" and "Voronskij", as follows:

Voronskaja, Galina Aleksandrovna (1914-1991):

- 1) Various official documents and articles, e.g. on Frunze.

Voronskij, Aleksandr Konstantinovič (1884-1937):

- 2) excerpts from Choate 1987:191ff.
- 3) excerpts from Kuprianovskij 1983.

Film reel no. 3:

- 4) Letter dated 27 March 1989 from Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the Union of SSR to Tat'jana I Isaeva, confirming date and circumstances of Voronskij's death, cf. 7.15.
- 5) Two handwritten statements (confessions) by Voronskij: a) "O Perevale" signed A.Voronskij, dated February 1937 (10p.); b) "Pokazanie A.K.Voronskogo o trockistskoj dejatel'nosti do 1932g." signed A.Voronskij, dated 20 July 1937 (8,5p.).
- 6) Approximately 50 manuscripts and transcripts of articles from Odessa dated July 1917- January 1918 and signed "A.V", "Nurmin" or "A.Voronskij".
- 7) Typed manuscript "Polnoč" by N.Venkstern and P. Žatkin (play in 4 acts based on Voronskij's autobiography, edited by Gl.Grakov, Moscow 1959. Subtitled "P'esa otredaktirovana i napravlena dlja rasprostraneniya Otdelom teatrov Ministerstva kul'tury RSFSR" (98pp.).
- 8) Typed manuscript *A.K.Voronskij - redaktor žurnala Krasnaja nov'*, M.A. thesis by V.A. Snigirev, Sverdlovsk 1977 (97pp.).
- 9) Various newspaper clippings from 1984 about the A.K.Voronskij memorial conference and the centennial celebrations.
- 10) Typed manuscript *Voronskij o sovetskoj poëzii*, M.A. thesis by Efremov, Voronež 1967 (115pp.).
- 11) Glinka 1953 (109pp.).

¹ The family archive consists of a total of 7 reels of 16mm black and white film, Nos. 2-8, filed under *Vozvraščenie* (the society which Voronskij's granddaughter Tat'jana I Isaeva works for, and which is dedicated to the rehabilitation of former political prisoners). It is stored at the Institute of Social History (ISH), Amsterdam. The films were made in 1995 in Russia and given by Tat'jana I Isaeva to the Moscow branch of ISH. The most relevant films for our purposes are Nos. 3-7. In the absence of an official ISH inventory, which is currently being made, I have for the purposes of this thesis made the present preliminary inventory in which only the most relevant items are identified and numbered.

- 12) Various typed and a few handwritten letters, including one from Kem' 1914, two handwritten letters to Lenin dated 25 November 1919 and 26 September 1920 signed A.Voronskij (Valentin), as well as transcripts of letters to Zamjatin, Fedin and Lelevič .
- 13) *Rasskazy i povesti* (1933) (excerpts).
- 14) Various transcripts of Voronskij's articles, e.g. "Juga. Portret" (1931) (14pp.), and "Fragmenty" (1931) (6pp.).
- 15) Typed protocols of joint meetings *Kuznica-Krasnaja nov'* dated May 1924.
- 16) Various typed letters and transcripts of articles signed Voronskij or Nurmin, i.a. one of Voronskij's earliest articles entitled "Publicističeskie nabroski" from *Evpatorskie novosti* 11 June 1911 signed A.V.; several signed Nurmin from *Jasnaja zarja* 1911, and many from *Rabočij kraj* 1918-21, signed mostly A.Voronskij, but also Nurmin, N., Valentin, A.V., Glinskij, and V.G.
- 17) Typed manuscript "A.K.Voronskij (1884-1943) Publicist, literaturnyj kritik, pisatel'. Bibliografija" (Galina A. Voronskaja's bibliography of her father, Moscow 1982, (42pp.). (same as fr4-it42 and fr6-it84).
- 18) "A.Voronskij. Iz knigi Gogol' (K 80-letiju so dnja roždenija kritika)", *Novyj mir* 1964#8:227-237.
- 19) Various photographs, including several groups with Voronskij, from Kem' 1912-15 and from Ivanovo-Voznesensk 1918-20.
- 20) Various photocopies from *Prožektor* 1926.
- 21) Printed article "Lenin i Voronskij" by A.L.Nagaev and N.A.Taktašev, from *Problemy metoda i žanra* (Vypusk 6), Izdatel'stvo Tomskogo Universiteta, Tomsk 1979 (13pp.).
- 22) Typed manuscript "Glavnaja kniga Aleksandra Voronskogo" by professor dr. A.A. Černobaev (1992a) (23 pp.).
- 23) Typed manuscript "Aleksandr K.Voronskij (1884-1937)" by professor dr.A.A. Černobaev (1992b) (3pp.).
- 24) Typed manuscript "Voronskij, Aleksandr Konstantinovič" (vita summary in English) by professor dr. A.A.Černobaev (1992c)(1p.).
- 25) Various abstracts of articles for the A.K.Voronskij 1984 centennial conference
- 26) Typed letter signed Voronskij entitled "Zajavlenie", dated 12 March 1930 (7pp.).
- 27) Typed letter signed Voronskij to Ordžonikidze, dated 19 March 1927 (3pp.). (same as fr5-it71).
- 28) Various photographs from Uljanov family's home in Saratov.

Film reel no. 4:

- 29) Various printed, typed and handwritten documents and letters as well as newspaper clippings about Voronskij's post-humous rehabilitation launched by Galina A.Voronskaja from Magadan from 1956 onwards.
- 30) *Bursa* (1964 edition).
- 31) *Tri povesti*, from Voronskij 1933b (front cover only).
- 32) "Iz rasskazov Valentina", from Voronskij 1932 (typed manuscript, 10pp.).
- 33) Various typed police protocols about Voronskij, some stamped "sekretno", Archangel'sk 1912.
- 34) Various newspaper clippings from the 1980s.

- 35) Various handwritten letters by Voronskij dated 1925, 1927.
- 36) *Problemy literaturnoj kritiki 20-ch godov i dejatel'nost' A.K.Voronskogo*, doctoral dissertation by Evgenij Simenovič Neživoj, Ufa 1988 (382pp.).
- 37) *Ideologičeskaja bor'ba v literaturnoj kritike (metodičeskie ukazanja dlja studentov zaočnogo otdelenija)* Ufa 1986.
- 38) Typed manuscript attached to foregoing item dealing with Majakovskij, pp.127-210, apparently a lecture given by Neživoj for his doctoral dissertation.
- 39) Typed transcripts of interrogation police protocols marked "soveršenno sekretno", Saratov 1912.
- 40) Confirmed archival copy dated 1977 of local Ivanovo-Voznesensk RKP(b) meeting held 16 November 1920 granting Voronskij permission to leave *Rabočij kraj* and be transferred to Glavpolitprosvet in Moscow.
- 41) Confirmed archival copy dated 1977 that the police in Nikolaev, Chersonskij governate, in 1912 permitted A.K.Voronskij to go abroad as delegate of RSDRP to party conference in Prague 1912.
- 42) Typed manuscript "A.K.Voronskij (1884-1943) Publicist, literaturnyj kritik, pisatel'. Bibliografija" (Moscow 1982) (42pp.) (same as fr3-it17 and fr6-it84).
- 43) Typed manuscript "Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij 27.8 (8.9) 1884 - 13.10.1943. Bibliografičeskij ukazatel' " (1982) (23pp.) by Galina A. Voronskaja (brief version of fr3-it17, fr4-it42 and fr6-it84).
- 44) Typed article "Sergo Ordžonikidze v Prage (Vospominanija)" from *Pečat' i revolucija* 1921 (kniga vtoraja) dated 19 July 1936 (25pp.) and signed A.Voronskij.

Film reel no. 5:

- 45) "Bibliografičeskij ukazatel' rabot A.K.Voronskogo opublikovannyh v gazete *Rabočij kraj* 1918-21, 1925 i 1926", by N.V.Kuprianovskij (16pp.).
- 46) Various newspaper clippings i.a. from *Tambovskaja pravda*.
- 47) Photographs of Galina Aleksandrovna Voronskaja.
- 48) Photographs of Tambov seminary.
- 49) Programme dated 1982 of 70-year anniversary of Prague 1912 Bolshevik conference.
- 50) Typed drafts of bibliography of A.K.Voronskij by Galina A.Voronskaja dated 21 December 1971.
- 51) Typed article "Vstreči i besedy s Maksimom Gor'kim" by Voronskij from 1936.
- 52) Handwritten manuscript "Tovarišč Valentin" signed Galina A.Voronskaja, dated 1971.
- 53) Letter from Saratov police marked "soveršenno sekretno" dated May 1912, attached report concerning the arrested A.K.Voronskij.
- 54) Photographs from historical Tambov (same as fr5-it62 and fr5-it70).
- 55) "Oktjabr' v Odesse" brochure published by Odesskaja oblastnaja organizacija obščestva "Znanie", on the occasion of the 60 anniversary of October 1917 Revolution.
- 56) Various correspondence between the Committee for the literary heritage of A.K.Voronskij and many private individuals offering information.
- 57) Typed programme drafts for the 1984 centennial A.K.Voronskij conference.
- 58) Various congratulatory letters to Galina A. Voronskaja on the occasion of the

- 1984 Voronskij centennial conference.
- 59) Typed article manuscript "U istokov literaturnoj dejatel'nosti A.K.Voronskogo (Po materialam gazet *Evpatorskie novosti i Jasnaja zarja*)", by O.Semenovskij, dated 1984 (28pp.).
 - 60) Printed article "Živaja voda revoljucii" by V.Peškov from the journal *Pod'em* 1971#6:120-121.
 - 61) Photographs from brochure of Lenin's office and living quarters in the Kremlin.
 - 62) Photographs from historical Tambov (same as fr5-it54 and fr5-it70).
 - 63) Voronskij's birth certificate, Chorošavkaja church registry, dated 27 August 1884.²
 - 64) Typed manuscript "Ėstetičeskie vzgljady A.K.Voronskogo" by V.D.Leleko, dated 1979 in accompanying letter from author (27pp.).
 - 65) Handwritten letter from A.K.Voronskij dated 19-21 April 1922.
 - 66) "A.K.Voronskij v Ivanovo-Voznesenskoj pečati (1918-26). Bibliografičeskij ukazatel'". Published by Ministerstvo vyšego i srednego special'nogo obrazovanija RSFSR, Ivanovo 1979 (23pp.).
 - 67) Typed manuscript "A.K.Voronskij v perepiske s sovetскими pisatel'jami" by E.A.Dinerštejn, undated (49pp.).
 - 68) Letters by Dement'ev and Galina A. Voronskaja dated 1973 to authorities arguing for the reprinting of Voronskij 1963.
 - 69) Letter by Dement'ev and Galina A. Voronskaja to CK KPSS dated 13 February 1973 arguing for the reprinting of Voronskij 1963.
 - 70) Photographs of historical Tambov (same as fr5-it54 and fr5-it62).
 - 71) Typed letter signed Voronskij to Ordžonikidze, dated 19 March 1927 (3pp.) (same as fr3-it27).
 - 72) Excerpts from R. Maguire's *Red Virgin Soil* (1968) (table of contents and preface).
 - 73) Article "Stranicy biografii A.K.Voronskogo", by P.V.Kuprijanovskij from *Russkaja literatura* 1982#4.

Film reel no. 6:

- 74) Printed programme for 1984 centennial A.K.Voronskij conference.
- 75) Various newspaper clippings and conference exhibits.
- 76) Typed manuscript "A.K.Voronskij i sovet'skaja literatura", by IMLI, Gor'kij Archive (undated).
- 77) Typed drafts for Voronskij's bibliography.
- 78) Typed manuscript "Glavnyj organizator literaturnoj žizni (A.K. Voronskij i ob"edinenie sil sovet'skoj literatury)" probably written by Galina A.Voronskaja, undated (15pp.) (Handwritten note at top of front page: "V archiv Galiny A.Voronskij - pervaja redakcija doklada").
- 79) Typed manuscript "Ja budu zaščičat' točku zrenija Lenina" by V.Vorobčenko, published according to attached letter from author in the Moldavian weekly *Kiev* (?), undated (14pp.).
- 80) Typed inventory of Voronskij's books retained by family.

² This corresponds to 8 September 1884 in the Gregorian calendar, cf. the preface.

- 81) Various typed draft manuscripts of Voronskij 1987a.
- 82) Various documents and letters from 1908-10, including tsarist police reports stamped "secret".
- 83) Typed letter from Galina A.Voronskaja to General Secretary Jurij Andropov, KPSS, dated 1983.
- 84) "A.K.Voronskij (1884-1943) Publicist, literaturnyj kritik, pisatel'. Bibliografija" Moscow 1982, (44pp.) (same as fr3-it17 and fr4-it42).
- 85) Various typed and handwritten letters, newspaper clippings, opinions and reviews regarding forthcoming Voronskij 1987a.
- 86) Typed contract with publisher and correspondence regarding Voronskij 1987a.
- 87) Various typed letters dated 1911, including tsarist police reports, protocols.

Film reel no. 7:

- 88) Typed review of V.I.Vorobčenko: "Publicist-leninec/Revoljucionno-publicističeskie dejatel'ost' A.K.Voronskogo v 1911, 1917-18gg". Rukopis' 1986. Signed dr.V.M. Akimov, dated 14 May 1985.
- 89) Various newspaper clippings as well as typed and handwritten letters from 1980 onwards.
- 90) Photograph of imprisoned Bolsheviks, including Voronskij (1912).
- 91) Typed tsarist police report stamped "secret".
- 92) Handwritten correspondence Gor'kij-Voronskij (filmed in May 1979 at Archiv Gor'kogo/IMLI).
- 93) Various photographs from Saratov, including one of the arrested Voronskij (1912).
- 94) Handwritten letter from Voronskij to his mother Feodosija Gavrilovna Voronskaja, sent from Kem' dated February 1915.
- 95) Various tsarist police reports dated 1912.
- 96) Photograph of Bolsheviks (1908).
- 97) Photograph of Voronskij and his mother Feodosija G.Voronskaja (1929).
- 98) Photograph of memorial stone at Butovo(1994).
- 99) Photograph of emaciated Voronskij (1937).
- 100) Photograph of Voronskij as student (1904-05).
- 101) Photograph of Serafima Solomonovna Pesina-Voronskaja (c.1930).
- 102) Photograph of Voronskij, his mother and his wife (1929).
- 103) Photograph of Pil'njak and other writers, with dedication.
- 104) Photograph of Galina Aleksandrovna Voronskaja (1937).
- 105) Photograph of Voronskij in February 1927 at 6-year anniversary of *Krasnaja nov'* surrounded by many participants all in front of a banner "Vsesojuznyj sojuz pisatelej".

The film from this point onwards contains material relating to Galina Voronskaja's husband Ivan Stepanovič Isaev (1907-1990) and their daughter Tat'jana Ivanovna Isaeva (b.1951). which is not essential to our context. Film reel no.8 continues with the latter.

7.7: Fund 62 (A.K.Voronskij), IMLI, Gor'kij Archives ¹

(On cover page:)

"Voronskij, Aleksandr K. (1884-1943)
Russian Soviet critic, publicist,
editor of the journal *Krasnaja niva* ²

Inventory 1

Literary productions, correspondence
and a photograph of A.K.Voronskij
1922-1934
22 units stored
6 pages"

(On page 1:)

"Fund No.62
Voronskij Aleksandr Konstantinovič (Nurmin)
(1884-1943)
Soviet critic, publicist, editor of the journal *Krasnaja niva* ³

Inventory No.1

Monograph about N.V.Gogol', feuilleton, opinion, obituary,
correspondence with writers and a photograph

No.	Inv.No.	Name of item	Dates	Pages
1.	P-8161	Larisa Michajlovna Rejsner Obituary Printed text and typed	1926	2
2.		Gogol' Monograph Life of remarkable people Moscow Typed text with corrections.	1934	255

¹ The present list is translated and based on a copy I made on 21 October 1997 of Voronskij's file (fund 62) in the manuscript section (Otdel rukopisej) of IMLI, Archiv Gor'kogo.

² This must be a printing error; it should of course read: *Krasnaja nov'*.

³ Cf. footnote 1 above.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 3. | 948 | Opinion of the poem by
I.S.Rukavišnikov "Jarilo"
Handwritten. | undated | |
| 4. | 545 | The deafening applause or
the red chairman
Literary feuilleton-parody
Proof with author's corrections. | undated | 7 |
| 5. | | Voronskij, Aleksandr Konstantinovič
Notes to Enukidze, Avelie Sofronovič. | 5 Jan. 1924 | 1 |
| 6. | | Voronskij, Aleksandr Konstantinovič,
Ljaško, Nikolaj Nikolaevič,
Ivanov, Vsevolod Vjačeslavovič and
others.
Sample signatures of the members of the
leadership of the artel of writers "Krug"
Moscow
In 2 versions. | 1923 | |
| 7. | | Babel' Isaak Ėmmanuilovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Kiev
Handwritten. | 2 May 1925 | 1 letter,
1 page |
| 8. | P-16
732-739 | Zamjatin, Evgenij Ivanovič
Letters to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Petrograd, Feodosia
Handwritten. | 1922-1923 | 3 letters,
5 pages |
| 11. | | Mariengof, Anatolij Borisovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Moscow
Handwritten. | undated | 1 letter,
2 pages |
| 10. | | Ivanov, Vsevolod Vjačeslavovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Petrograd
Handwritten. | 24 Febr. 1922 | 1 letter,
1 page |
| 9. | | Zoščenko, Michail Michailovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr | 16 Jan. 1922 | 1 letter,
1 page |

- Konstantinovič,
Handwritten.
- | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 12. | 368-366
369-370 | Pil'njak (Vogau) Boris Andreevič
Letters to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Šarlottenburg, Kolomna
The letter of 18.11.1923 is
typed and signed by the author. | 1922-1923
and undated | 5 letters,
5 pages |
| 13. | 361,362 | Pil'njak (Vogau) Boris Andreevič
Letters to Aseev, Nikolaj Nikolaevič
and to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Handwritten. | 1922 | 2 letters,
2 pages |
| 14. | | Prišvin, Michail Michajlovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Handwritten. | 1923 | 1 letter,
1 page |
| 15. | | Sokolov-Mikitov, Ivan Sergeevič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Kislovo, Smolensk gubernate
Handwritten. | 17 July 1925 | 1 letter, |
| 16. | | Trenev, Konstantin Andreevič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Handwritten. | 1923 | 1 letter,
1 page |
| 17. | | Fedin, Konstantin Aleksandrovič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Kislovo-Vjažnoe, Dorobužnyj region
Handwritten. | 2 Aug. 1925 | 1 letter,
2 pages |
| 18. | 184-185 | Forš, Ol'ga Dmitrievna
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Handwritten. | 1923 | 2 letters
3 pages |
| 19. | 1167-1168 | Šiškov, Vjačeslav Jakovovič
Letters to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Petrograd | 1923 | 2 letters
3 pages |

- Handwritten.
- | | | | | |
|-----|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 20. | P-55-878 | Četverikov, Dmitrij (Boris Dmitrievič)
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Petrograd
Handwritten. | 1924 | 1 letter,
2 pages |
| 21. | | Ėrenburg, Il'ja Grigor'evič
Letter to Voronskij, Aleksandr
Konstantinovič,
Paris
Handwritten | 27 Jan.
no year given | 1 letter,
1 page |
| 22. | | Voronskij, Aleksandr Konstantinovič,
Photograph ⁴ | undated | 1 photo
1 page |

All in all in the present inventory there
are 22 items stored

The inventory has been compiled by
junior scientific collaborator L.K.Kuvanovna,
9 March 1964".

⁴ This is the familiar picture of Voronskij taken in Lipetsk in 1929, cf. Voronskij 1987a and 1987b.

7.8: Correspondence of *Krasnaja nov'* 2-8-1, prospectus 1928, IMLI, Gor'kij Archives ¹

<u>File no.</u>	<u>Description:</u>
1-1-1:	Letter dated 20 March 1923 from Raisa O.Ajzman, Petrograd to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 1 page.
1-13-1:	Letter dated 8 February 1923 from I.Ė.Volnov to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 3 pages.
1-14-1:	Letter dated 18 February 1925 from A.V.Vysockij, Kostroma, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 4 pages.
1-15-1:	Letter dated 192? from I.A.Gruzdev, Petrograd to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten.
1-16-1:	Letter dated 8 December (no year given) from A.A.Demidov to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 2 pages.
1-18-1:	Letter dated 21 May 1924 from A.Drozdov, Zaraisk, Rjazanskaja governate to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 1 page.
1-20-1:	Letter dated 9 October 1923 from B.M.Zavodovskij to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 1 page plus 1.
1-21-1:	Letter dated 14 March 1923 from E.I.Zamjatin, St.Petersburg (sic) to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 1 page.
1-21-2:	Letter dated 23 March 1923 from E.I.Zamjatin, Petersburg, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij Handwritten. 1 page.
1-21-3	Letter dated 1923 from E.I.Zamjatin to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij

¹ The listed files were presented to me by the librarian of The Gor'kij Archive, IMLI, as a complete list of what IMLI retains (excluding the 22 items listed in 7.7) of the editorial correspondence of Voronskij at *Krasnaja nov'*. The list was compiled by the author on 21 October 1997.

Handwritten. 2 pages.

- 1-26-1: Receipt dated 10 March 1922 from Vs.Ivanov to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij, for the novel *Golubye peski* and the amount of 10 million roubles. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-2: Letter dated 10 March 1922 from Vs.Ivanov, Petrograd, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-3: Letter dated 11 March 1922 from Vs.Ivanov, Petrograd, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-4: Letter dated 15 May 1922 from Vs.Ivanov, Petrograd, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-5: Letter dated 15 June 1922 from Vs.Ivanov, Petrograd, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-6: Letter dated 1922 from Vs.Ivanov to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-7: Letter dated 28 January 1923 from Vs.Ivanov, Petrograd to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-26-8: Letter dated 23 March 1923 from Vs.Ivanov, Sevastopol', to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij. Handwritten. 1 page.
- 1-36-1: Letter (undated) from Osip Mandel'stam, Leningrad, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-48-1: Letter dated 2 Aug. 1923 from O.N.Avdeevič, Berlin, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-64-1: Letter dated 26 June 1923 from L.Sejfullina to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-64-2: Letter dated 17 July 1925 from L.Sejfullina to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.

- 1-72-1: Letter dated 10 August 1923 from M.L.Slonimskij to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij
- 1-79-1: Letter dated 19 May 1922 from A.N.Tolstoj, Kurfürstendam, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-79-2: Letter (dated 1923) from A.N.Tolstoj, Berlin, to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-80-1: Letter dated 8 March 1923 from K.A.Trenev to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-80-2: Letter dated 3 February 1923 from A.K.Trenev to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-80-3: Letter dated 4 September 1923 from A.K.Trenev to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-86-1: Letter dated 13 September 1927 from The All-Union Organization of Worker and Peasant Writers "Pereval", Central and Moscow Soviet No.84, to the Press Section of the CK VKP(b), signed by Mich.Barsukov, D.Gorbov, Mich.Golodnyj, A.Ležnev, I Evdokimova, B.Guber.
- 1-94-1: Letter dated 13 January 1922 from I.G.Ėrenburg to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-94-2: Letter dated 9 February 1923 (23?) from I.G.Ėrenburg to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.
- 1-94-3: Letter dated 13 May 1922 from I.G.Ėrenburg to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij.

7.9: Entries under "A.K.Voronskij"¹ in the alphabetical card index system of RGALI (Russian State Literature and Art Archives)²

The 68 entries³ under "A.K.Voronskij" in drawer no.45 include 17 card entries where Voronskij is only referred to in correspondence between, or in works by, other people. These are not my primary concern below. Many of the 51 entries relating to material by, or sent directly to, A.K.Voronskij, refer to documents listed under the next appendices 7.10 (A.K.Voronskij) or 7.11 (*Krasnaja nov'*), e.g. entry no.4 below which can also be located in 7.11 (*Krasnaja nov'*), under "II/4 Articles, reviews, notes, units 1512-1608": *Iz sovremennyh nastroenii* (Po povodu stat'i tov. N.Jarko i dr.) 1921-22, fund 602 (*Krasnaja nov'*) fund 1, opis' II, ed. chran. 1526." Excluding such "double" entries, I have sampled and translated below - in order of appearance - some of the more interesting remaining entries:

"Bursa". Story. 1933 typed	Fund 613 TICHL inventory 1, item 698
"Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj. Vospominanija". Otryvki". 1927-29. Typed.	Fund 2863, inventory 1, item 698.
"Iz prošlogo". Stenogramma reči. 1927.	Fund 1100, inventory 1, item 64.
Portret i perspektivy žurnala LOKAF. 1931.	Fund 618, inventory 1, item 3, p.25
Letter to the publishing house 2, "Federacija" about the re-publication of the book "Za živoj i mertvoj vodoj" 17.1.31.	Fund 625 "Federacija", inventory 2, item p. 62
Polonskij, Vja.P. Letters to Voronskij Typed. Copies. 13.3.1926-29.4.1928.	Fund 1328 Polonskij, inventory 3, item 109

¹ There were no entries in the alphabetical card index system under Voronskij's major pseudonyms as a writer: "Nurmin" or "Anisimov".

² In addition to its alphabetical card index system, the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art has individual, thematically arranged, "funds" (files), cf. 7.10 and 7.11.

³ One of the entries is a mistake: "Voronskij, V.P." (author of the sketch) "Gore-udarnica" (1933). Fund 656 Glavrep. kom., inventory 1, item 646". Voronskij' grand daughter Tat'jana I. Isaeva agrees that this must be a mistaken attribution.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Letters to Gladkov, F.B.
Not earlier than 1922-1925.
2 letters, 2 pages | Fund 1052 Gladkov, inventory 5, item 321 |
| Letters to Zamoškin, N.I.
9.7.1928-25.11.1934 (4 letters) | Fund 2569 Zamoškin, inventory 1, item 99 |
| Letter to Kogan, P.S.
12.10.1921 (1 letter, 1 page) | Fund 237 Kogan, inventory 1, item 24 |
| Andrej Belyj. Letter to Voronskij.
10.1.1927 | Fund 33 Belyj, inventory 6, item 14 |
| Letter from the publishing house
"Rabotnik prosveščenija" to Voronskij
about the writing of an article for the
volume "Russian 20th century literature"
19.12.1927 | Fund 2208 Černik, inventory 2, item 544,
p.92 |
| Letter from a group of writers to
A.K.Voronskij. 1926. Typed. Copy. | Fund 370 Ognev ⁴ , N., inventory 1, item
122 |
| Plan for the creation and project of a
new series "Selected works of
contemporary Russian literature",
edited by V.P.Polonskij and A.K.
Voronskij. Typed with corections by
V.P.Polonskij. Undated (1920s). 3p. | Fund 1328 Polonskij, inventory 3, item 264 |
| Contract with the publishing house
"Nedra" concerning the publication of
the story "Glaz uragana". 19.11.1930 | Fund 1303 "Izd. Nedra", inventory 1, item
15, pp.39-43 |
| Kanatčikov, S.I. Review of the stories
and the first part of the reminiscences
of A.K.Voronskij. 23.11.1930,
30.12.1932. | Fund 625 "Federacija", inventory 1, item
102, pp.56-60 |
| Photograph of writers, Lipetsk region
Bibliographic collection. | Fund 1345 Sobranie, inventory 7, item 27
p.241a |

⁴ Cf. part 5 for Ognev. On 22.10.97 I cross-checked his fund 370, but did not find any letters to or from Voronskij. There were 35 registered letters from Ognev to others, mostly from the 1930s, and 27 registered letters to Ognev, also mostly from the 1930s, including a letter dated 28.8.37 from Babel'.

7.10: Fund 1677 (A.K.Voronskij), RGALI (Russian State Literature and Art Archives) ¹

Fund 1677

GAU MVD SSSR
Central State Archive of Literature and Art
of the SSSR

Inventory No. 1
1920-27

I. Manuscripts by A.K.Voronskij

<u>Sequence</u>		<u>Date of beginning and finalization</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1.	The article "Pesni severnogo rabočego kraja (on the collections "Snop", "Krasnaja ulica" i "Kryl'ja svobody" of the Ivanovo-Voznesk poets Michail Artamanov, D.Semenovskij, Vasilij Smirnov, Ivan Žilin and others)		
	handwritten	1920	6
2.	The review of the tales of Michail Slonimskij "Šestoj strelkovyj" and Michail Zoščenko "Rasskazy Nazara Il'iča gospodina Sinebrjuchova"		
	handwritten	1922	8
3.	The article on the "Kuznica" writers		
	typed	1923	02
4.	The article "On Gor'kij"		
	typed	1926	24
5.	The article "Iz sovremennyh nastroenij (Po povodu odnogo spora)" (About the correspondence between Vjačeslav Ivanov and M.O. Geršenzonij concerning cultural questions).		
	handwritten	undated	71
6.	The article "Lenin o prodovol'stvennom voprose naloga, svobodnoj trgovle, kooperacii, gosudarstvennom kapitalizme i kommunizme"		
	typed	undated	31

¹ The present list is translated and based on my copy of Voronskij's file (fund 1677) in RGALI, made on 30 September 1996.

7.	The article "Literaturnye siluety (O Vsevolode Ivanove)"	handwritten	undated	32
8.	The article "O tekuščem momente i zadači RKP(b) v chudožestvennom literature"	handwritten	undated	8
9.	The article "Publicističeskije nabroski. Uèl's o Sovetskoj Rossii"	handwritten	undated	11
10.	A receipt signed by Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij for a fee for an article about Sejfullina and Lebedinskij (sic) in the collection "Contemporary literature in the school".		17 June 1925	1

II. Letters to Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij

11.	From A. Velikopol'skij		29 March 1926	2
12.	From Vikentij Vikentevič Veresaev		undated	
13.	From G.P. Zacharov with enclosed poem "Poët"		11 April 1927	4
14.	From N.S.Komol'cev. Enclosed with his poems "Pesnja", "Razdum'e" and "To S. Esenin".		8 April 1927	2

In all 14 units stored

Inventory completed by scientific employee (signature)
22 August 1951

Confirmed by technical archive employee Tuninskij 11 July 1962.

Aleksandr Konstantinovič Voronskij

Fund No.1677

Inventory No.2

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. | fund 2124
inventory 1
units 10 | Letter from Andrej Platonovič Platonov
to A.K.Voronskij | 27 July 1926 | 1 |
|----|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|

In the quoted inventory 1/oneunit has been included.

St. n.s. Voljak, 21 January 1957

- | | | | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 2. | | Letter from Andrej Sergeevič Bubnov to
A.K. Voronskij | 21 June 1923 | 1 |
|----|--|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|

7.11: Fund 602 (*Krasnaja nov'*), RGALI (Russian State Literature and Art Archives) ¹

The editorial staff of the journal *Krasnaja nov'*
Inventory No.1
1918-37

Table of contents

I. Material, sent to the editorial staff of the journal *Krasnaja nov'*

1. Prose ², units 1-241
2. Poetry, units 242-1165
3. Drama and cinema scenarios, units 1166-1196
4. Articles, reviews, notes ³, units 1197-1351

II. Material published in the journal *Krasnaja nov'* ⁴

1. Prose ⁵, units 1352-1447
2. Poetry ⁶, units 1448-1507
3. Drama and cinema scenarios, units 1508-1511
4. Articles, reviews, notes, units 1512-1608

III. Opinions on works sent to the journal *Krasnaja nov'*, units 1609-1697

IV. Correspondence of the editorial staff, units 1698-1753

¹ The present list is based on an exact handwritten copy of the *Krasnaja nov'* fund (fund 602) made by the author in the reading room of the RGALI on 30 September 1996.

² Far from all these manuscripts are dated. 75 have no date at all. However, 96 are dated April 1927 or earlier, meaning Voronskij had access to them and may have read them, while the remaining 70 are dated May 1927 or later meaning Voronskij probably did not see/read them. Two tales by Babel' "Rabbi" and "Syn rabbi" dated 1920 (9 pages, unit 4), on tale by V.P.Kataev "V osazdennom gorode" dated 1920 (number of pages not indicated, unit 75), one tale by B.Leont'ev "Nesčas't'e" dated 1926 (19 pages, unit 101). No works by Zamjatin, Zoščenko, Trockij, Frunze or other prominent names.

³ E.g. N.I. Bucharin "Proletariat i voprosy chudožestvennoj politike". Stenographic notes of speech made at the literary meeting of the CK RKP(b), dated February 1925 (12 pages, unit 1218).

⁴ There is only infrequent indication of when the item appeared in *KN*.

⁵ Mostly from after 1927. Only a few items are from before 1927, e.g. a tale by E.S. Zart (Noskova) "Devona" (unit 1374, 9 pages) which appeared in *KN* 1926#6, and a fairytale by N.N.Nikitin "Moskej" (unit 1395, 12 pages) which appeared in *KN* 1921#3:13-20.

⁶ Also here very few items are from before 1927. Many items have obviously been long in editorial storage before being printed.

V. Financial-organizational section ⁷, units 1754-1764

In all 1767 units stored. 587a, 1885a,
1642a -

Scientific employee Ljamkina, 1 September 1953

(comment on the copying of 50 units, dated 3 February 1992)

Inventory No.2
1928-1939

Manuscripts, sent to the editorial staff of the journal *Krasnaja nov'*

1. Prose, units 1-55
2. Drama, units 55-61
3. Poetry, units 62-108
4. Notes, articles, reviews, units 109-190
5. Opinions on works of beginning authors
 - 1936 units 191-217
 - 1937 units 218-244
 - 1938 units 245-270
6. Various material
 - units 271-281

In all, 281 units stored in inventory ; Scientific employee Ljamkina; 1 September 1953

(comment on the copying of 31 items, undated)

Inventory No.3

Documents singled out from fund 341 E.F.Nikitin
1921-1932

I. Manuscripts, sent to the editorial staff
unit 8 (1908-1932)

⁷ All material here dates from after 1927, e.g. "Protokol zasedanija redkollegii ž. *Krasnaja nov'* dated 20 November 1931 (unit 1755), "Archivnye opisy za 1927-32 (unit 1761, 87 pages). There is no list of subscribers, only an undated list of employees "Spiski sotrudnikov red. žurnala *Krasnaja nov'*. Spiski kraevedov i dr. dokumenty" (unit 1754, 48 pages).

II. Press cuttings from the journal *Krasnaja nov'*
units 9-10

III Chief clerks
unit 11

Additions to the inventory
units 12-14

In all, 14 units stored in inventory
Inventory was added to by scientific employee Ljamkina; 1 September 1953

(comment on the copying of 2 units, dated 3 February 1992)

Inventory No. 4
Documents, drawn from various funds
1920-1937

I. Manuscripts

- a) Artistic works (tales, notes, poems), units 1-22
- b) Articles about politics, literature and art, units 23-30
- v) Reviews, units 31-39

II. Letters

units 40-42

Head of section of secret funds of CGLA Vikulov
25 April 1950

In all, 42 units stored; scientific employee Ljamkina; 1 September 1953

+units stored 43-67

In the inventory 67 stored units have been added; 18 May 1989

(comment on the copying of 3 units, dated 3 February 1992)

7.12: CK RKP(b) resolution of 18 June 1925 on *belles-lettres* ¹

ON THE POLICY OF THE PARTY IN THE FIELD OF ARTISTIC LITERATURE: RESOLUTION OF THE CK-RKP(b), 18 JUNE 1925

1. The improvement of material welfare of the masses lately, together with the changes in their outlook which the revolution has caused, the strengthening of mass activity, the immense broadening of horizons, and so forth, is causing a large increase of cultural needs and demands. We have thus entered a phase of the cultural revolution which is establishing the necessary condition for further development toward a communist society.

2. The appearance of a new literature - primarily proletarian and peasant - is part of this mass cultural growth, beginning in embryonic forms, but simultaneously unusually broad in its scope (worker correspondents, village correspondents, wall papers etc), and ending in consciously ideological literary-artistic production.

3. On the other hand, the complexity of the economic process; the simultaneous growth of contradictory and even mutually antagonistic forms of economic life, has generated the appearance and strengthening of a new bourgeoisie; the inevitable, though not immediately conscious, attraction to it of a part of the old and new intelligentsia; the constant secretion from the depths of social life of ever new ideological agents of this bourgeoisie- all of this must inevitably have an imprint on the literary surface of our social life.

4. Thus, just as the class war in general has not ended, neither has it ended on the literary front. In a class society there is not, nor can there be, a neutral art, though the class nature of art generally, and literature especially, expresses itself in forms which are infinitely more diverse than, for instance, in politics.

5. However, it would be quite wrong to ignore the basic fact of our social life, namely, the coming to power of the working class, and the existence in the country of a proletarian dictatorship. If prior to the seizure of power the proletarian party provoked the class war for the disintegration of the society as a whole; then during the period of the proletarian dictatorship the party faces the task of getting along with the peasantry while slowly changing it; it faces the problem of how to allow a certain collaboration with the bourgeoisie while slowly driving it out. It must also solve the problem of securing the services of technicians and of all kinds of intellectuals for the revolution, and of winning them away from the bourgeoisie. Thus, whereas the class war has not yet ended, it has changed its form, because the proletariat prior to seizing power strives for the destruction of a given society, but in the period of its dictatorship gives pre-eminence to peaceful organizational work.

¹ The resolution was published in *Pravda*, 1 July 1925:6. Cf. also Maguire 1987:423-426 and the translation and brief commentary by Choate 1998:443-448.

6. The proletariat, always preserving, broadening, and strengthening its leadership, should occupy a corresponding forward position in a number of new sectors of the ideological front. The process of penetration of the dialectical-materialist outlook into altogether new fields has already begun (biology, psychology, all the natural sciences). The conquest of positions in the field of literature must in the same way sooner or later become a fact.

7. It must be remembered, however, that this problem is infinitely more complicated than other problems being solved by the proletariat. Even within the limitations of a capitalist society the working class could prepare itself for a victorious revolution, build cadres of fighters and leaders and prepare an eminent ideological weapon for the political struggle. But it could not work out the tasks of natural science or technology; and similarly the proletariat, the class which was culturally deprived, was unable to develop its own literature, its own particular artistic forms, its own style. Although the proletariat already has at its disposal infallible criteria regarding the socio-political content of any literary work, it does not have as definite answers to all questions of artistic form.

8. What has been said above should determine the policy of the ruling party in the field of literature. In this field we must primarily take into account the following: 1) correlations among proletarian writers, peasant writers, and the so-called "fellow - travellers," and others; 2) party policy towards the same proletarian writers ² ; 3) questions of criticism; 4) questions of the style and form of artistic works and of the methods of developing new artistic forms; 5) finally, questions of an organizational character.

9. The correlations among various groups of writers according to their social class or social group content are determined by our general policy. However, it must be borne in mind that leadership in the field of literature belongs to the working class as a whole, with all its material and ideological resources. The hegemony of proletarian literature does not yet exist, and the party should help these writers to earn for themselves the historical right to that hegemony. Peasant writers should receive a friendly reception and our full support. The task consists in guiding their growing cadres onto the rails of proletarian ideology, by no means, however, discouraging in their works peasant literary images, which are the necessary prerequisites for influencing the peasantry.

10. With relation to the "fellow travellers" we must bear in mind: 1) their differentiation; 2) the importance of many of them as qualified "specialists" of literary technique; 3) the presence of vacillation in this group of writers. The general directive should be for tactful and careful relations with them, i.e. an approach that would guarantee all the conditions for their earliest possible transfer to communist ideology. While discouraging anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary elements (now quite insignificant), and while fighting the ideology of the new bourgeoisie which is taking form among a part of the fellow travellers of the "change-of-landmarks" type - the party should have a patient attitude

² This point was omitted in the translation by E.J. Brown (1953) 1971:237.

towards intermediate ideological formations, patiently aiding those inevitably numerous formations to develop in the process of ever closer comradesly co-operation with the cultural forces of communism.

11. In relation to the proletarian writers, the party should take the following position: while in all ways aiding their growth and supporting their organizations, the party should prevent by all means the appearance among them of communist conceit as a most harmful phenomenon. The party, exactly because it sees in them the future ideological leaders of soviet literature, must oppose a light-minded and indifferent attitude towards the old cultural heritage, as also towards literary specialists. Equally deserving of condemnation is the position which underestimates the great importance of the struggle for the ideological hegemony of the proletarian writers. Against capitulationism, on the one hand, and against communist conceit on the other, such should be the slogan of the party. The party should also fight against attempts to create a purely hot-house "proletarian" literature. A broad grasp of phenomena in all their complexity; a literature not shut up within the confines of the factory only; a literature, not of the factory, but of a great, struggling class, leading millions of peasants - such should be the framework of proletarian literature.

12. What has been said above determines the tasks of *criticism*, which is one of the chief educational weapons in the hands of the party. While it should not for one moment retreat from the positions of communism, nor from proletarian ideology, and while it must reveal the objective class meaning of different works, communist criticism should fight mercilessly against counter-revolutionary phenomena in literature; it should expose the "change-of-landmarks" liberalism, and the like, and yet at the same time show the greatest tact, attention, and patience towards all those groups which can and will join the proletariat. Communist criticism must drive out the tone of literary command. Only then may such criticism have deep educational significance, when it relies on its own ideological superiority. Marxist criticism should once and for all drive out of its midst all pretentious, semi-literate, and self-satisfied communist conceit. Marxist criticism should have as its slogan to learn, and should resist every appearance of cheap judgment and ignorant arrogance in its own milieu.

13. While it has infallible judgment regarding the class content of literary tendencies, the party as a whole must not bind itself to any one tendency *in the field of literary form*. Giving general leadership to literature, the party cannot support any *one* faction in literature (classifying these factions according to their different views on form and style), just as it cannot by resolutions settle questions of the form of the family, though in general it does and should lead in the development of new ways of life. Everything indicates that a style appropriate to the epoch will be created, but it will be created by different methods, and the solution of this problem is not yet apparent. In the present phase of cultural development any attempt to bind the party in this direction must be rejected.

14. Therefore the party should declare itself in favour of the free competition of various groups and tendencies in this domain. Any other solution of the problem would be an official, bureaucratic pseudo-solution. Similarly it is inadmissible to decree the *legal*

monopoly of the literary printing business by any one group or literary organization. While morally and materially supporting proletarian and proletarian-peasant literature, and aiding the "fellow travellers" etc, the party cannot offer a monopoly to any of these groups, even the one most proletarian in its ideology. For this would essentially be to destroy proletarian literature itself.

15. The party must in every way root out all attempts at officious and incompetent administrative interference in literary matters; the party should see to it that there is careful selection of persons for those institutions which have authority in matters of publishing, so as to guarantee a really correct, useful and tactful leadership of our literature.

16. The party should indicate to all literary workers the necessity of a correct limitation of functions as between critics and writers-artists. For the latter it is necessary to transfer the center of gravity of their work to literary production in the real sense, taking advantage of the gigantic material of contemporary life. It is necessary also to give increased attention to the development of national literature in the many republics and oblasts of our union. The party should emphasize the necessity for the creation of literature intended for the mass reader, both worker and peasant. It is necessary to break more decisively and boldly with the prejudices of gentility in literature, and, taking advantage of all the technical achievements of the old masters, to work out a proper form understandable to *the millions*. *Only when it has solved this great problem will Soviet literature and its proletarian vanguard fulfill its cultural-historical mission.*

7.13: The obituary of Frunze ¹

Michail Vasil'evič Frunze
A.Voronskij

The first snowdrifts over Kreml' have spread a cold, fluffy cover over a new and fresh grave. Frozen clods of soil have tightly and for ever concealed the remains of a rare upholder of the revolution, a noble and dear comrade, companion-in-arms and friend of the workers.

The global, impersonal truth of the stern and rich present revolutionary epoch found one of its most perfect expressions in his personality.

He was our pride, our hope, our defence and our joy.

In him beat a brave, fearless and good heart. He combined the fighter's inflexibility and courage, the military leader, strategist and commander's calm, good, sense and tact, and the broad, warm humane feelings of love and friendship. He loved this incomparable world of stubborn weavers, family metal workers, and the unique bolshevik underground, professional, revolutionaries, the world of red-starred ploughmen's work and coarse cloth, and they also loved him dearly, respected him and believed in him.

His life was truly heroic. Pitiful self-centredness was not his way. He valued particularly highly revolutionary courage, he was always active and consistently stood by his word, he loved what they call the trials of fate. It's about him, about such people that the famous proletarian artist created his "Burevestnik" and "Song about the falcon" and the legend of Danko, for the deceased was a profet of the storm, he knew the happiness of battle and could say with more justification than others. - I fought briefly... I saw the sky, - and "his heart blazed with its wish to save poeple, lead them away from dangers, but the rays of that powerful fire glowered in his eyes".

But he was no romantic insurgent. The party of the revolutionary proletariat taught him to be courageous and brave with deft calculation. That is how he could sustain mortal blows from enemy forces and still win. Victory was his companion. Moreover, he had the congenital gift of the commander: it was no coincidence that he liked weaponry and military affairs so much.

His life was heroic, bold and wholehearted, but the most captivating (trait) about him was the lightness and simplicity with which he confronted peril. In him this amounted to childlike spontaneity. He knew the price of revolutionary duty, but this word did not define him personally: he completed the heroic so naturally and unflinchingly straightforward.

Friend and comrade!

Yes, he was a friend, like few others. For those who lived up to his hopes and ideals he would go all the way. He knew no mercy for the enemy, for the traitors and renegades. But he could be a friend. Invested with all the might and burdens of the military power of the republic, he remained till his last days so accessible and likeable. There was something homely and cosy about him, long familiar and known.

¹ The obituary appeared in *KN* 1925#9(34):277-279. The spacing of the original has been retained and I have tried to communicate the Russian phraseology at the expense of idiomatic English. Cf. also the translation and brief commentary by Choate 1998:227-230.

At the height of power some of the outstanding and remarkable people rule and direct, creating around them a circle of admiration, authority, others are strongly disciplined, while others again remain businesslike and practical, and yet others are diplomatic and adaptable. Comrade Frunze create around himself a circle of strong, heartfelt and gratifying friendship. Discipline, authority, tact and professionalism all flowed from this friendship. It is well-known how closely the deceased was tied to the textile industry of Ivanovo-Voznesensk. This was a link of revolutionary fighters, but entirely infused by friendship. That is why they remember him there so well and truly.

He was straightforward and open. He was too spiritually gifted to proceed through crooked, awkward ways. Nature endowed him with yet another great gift: an abundant instinct of life. Not only once did these powerful forces rescue him from death in difficult and dangerous situations, not only once did they prompt in him true, accurate movements of hand, eyes, thoughts and feelings. They were etched deeply in him by tsarist hangmen, excessive and inordinate workloads, family troubles - the fruits of life in him were inexhaustible. They did not betray him even during the last days of his life: he, not knowing fear in battle, on horse, with rifle in hand, expressed some doubts prior to his operation: his great instinct of life was also in this case justified.

Now, in brief and hurried words, is nor the time or place to relate the unbelievable and complicated life of this man. But this will be done. Both about the mortal months, and years, and the new wearisome years of hard labour in captivity with hypocrites and with the autocracy's police, about escape through the severe, virgin, secretive tajga, about the underground war groups at the old front, about the first revolutionary leader of the Minsk military Michajlov-Frunze, who subjected general Èvert and his staff at the Western front to the will of the revolutionary nation, about his participation in the October fighting in Moscow, with rifle in hand at the Metropol, about the seizure of an armoured car by him and a comrade during the days of the leftist-socialist revolutionary putsch, about the battles at Kermel' and Ufa, about the capture of the Orenburg kazaks, the routing of Tolstov on the Ural steppes, about the legendary Perekop, about his solitary engagement with a band of defectors, and much, much more will all be recapitulated, will be written about and retold, for the glory and exploits of the deceased are the glory and feats of the workers and peasants of our party.

Yes, all this will come to pass, but what a heavy, what an immeasurable, what an absurd loss! The loss cannot be compensated for by any eulogy, by however many volumes of memoirs.

Here lay a white-burning stone
It grows at the feet of the purple-loosestrife

There will be crystal-clear evenings over the Kremel', there will be clear summer night rays brighter than the purple of military banners, there will be the moist, living, trembling of stars in the night, but the stars of his eyes are extinguished for eternity.

Bear over with these weakened lines - the tax of grief over such an unexpected and improbable loss.

7.14: The Pereval manifesto ¹

DECLARATION

of the all-union organization of worker-peasant writers "Pereval"

The October Revolution has brought about a complete change in the field of culture and, in particular, in the field of literature. The reader's views have changed, as have his interests and needs. Their complexity, the elemental gravity towards art, demands from the writer a new approach to reality.

The effort to find a living contact between literature and life has been expressed in the formation of a variety of literary organizations and groups. These have promised to produce literature corresponding to the demands of our times. But they have been unable to create any significant works of art.

The writers of "Pereval" do not claim a right to hegemony despite their reliance on their organic belonging to the revolution, during which the majority of them received their societal training.

Having inherited from the heroic times of revolutionary struggle all the uprightness and revelatory spontaneity of their societal views and feelings, the "Perevalcy" question, in the extreme, the desirability of organizationally combining social command with creative individuality.

Having in its ranks writers who, in blood and flesh are one with our age, the "Pereval" considers it essential to take as a starting point all the gains of the revolution as bases for the further formation of the human personality in all its inexhaustible variety. The "Perevalcy" speak out against any attempt to schematize man, against any simplification, deadening standardization, against whatever reduction of the writer's personality in the name of petty everyday life.

The "Pereval" considers as a basic characteristic of a true writer the search and discovery in life of all new horizons, all ever newer shades of thought and feelings. They find it essential to discover their inner world by means of artistic methods, which constitute a complex creative process. While rejecting any conception of pure art for art's sake, the "Pereval" writers nevertheless acknowledge as a work of art only that in which the elements of thought and feeling receive a new aesthetical form.

"Pereval" considers its own tradition the only tradition of realistic conception of life. "Pereval" emanates from the richest literary heritage of Russian and world classics. "Pereval" sees its work linked with the best achievements of mankind's artistic thought. Considerations of cultural continuity, mastery and identification of the aesthetical sources which are the closest and most integral to any given writer's individuality - all this has for "Pereval" primary importance.

In their organizational work the "Perevalcy" attribute primary importance to the exposition of new creative forces, to the making of truly cultural, truly societal

¹ This is my translation of the full 4-page Russian text which is given in *KN 1927#2(49):233-236*. (Glinka 1954:19-21 only gives a summary in Russian). Care has been taken in translating as exactly as possible, thus conveying the officious style. A few clarifying words have been inserted in brackets [...].

and artistically productive writers' media. While sweeping aside all writers who have not survived creatively the October revolution, and who only externally have deferred to its authority, and who are incapable of applying themselves to the building of a new personality - the "Perevalcy" do not refuse contact with those writers, who have still not conclusively defined their course, who are searching for it, and who are attempting creatively to draw nearer to the revolution.

On the other hand, "Pereval" believes it is essential to create a public opinion which would not confuse the writer and not push him into external chronicling of selected events.

A writer who still has not found himself, who in every instance is intimidated by irresponsible criticism, is [also] ready to accept the line of least resistance, falsely selecting "prospering" reality or, conversely, is inclined to the opposite conclusions, perceiving the surrounding reality in far-fetched, gloomy terms. From this stems the "stabilized" frame of mind, decadance, disintegration, disbelief in our Soviet and socialist structure. This disbelief expresses itself when talented writers and poets begin to depart from their inner theme and conceal their ruin by external formulae and formalistic rattling. The lack of an effort to synthesize, the concealment of alienation from the revolution by means of external agitational outbursts, - all these are undoubtedly, and completely obviously, signs of the phenomenon described above. They are characteristic of groups like "LEF" and so on. These literary groups have not produced one single work of prose with contents of any significance whatsoever. Their field of activity remains exclusively poetry, which, of course, is quite significant, since in poetry one may with the greatest ease flourish the external, formal "canon".

The "Perevalcy" first and foremost stand up for the revolutionary conscience of any artist. This conscience does not allow for the concealment of the inner world. In art, where the elements of artistic feeling prevail over all other [feelings], there can be no breach between social demand and the internal mood of the author's personality.

"Pereval" has never shown solidarity either with VAPP, whose theoretical constructions contain elements of obvious Proletkul'tovščina, and who attempts to replace the concept of "hegemony of the proletariat in literature" with the concept of VAPP hegemony. "Pereval" has always been of the opinion that the ideological edifice of VAPP's critical thoughts schematizes the artist, intimidates his inner artistic independence, extinguishes [this independence's] every possibility of formulating aesthetically any shape whatsoever, appropriate to the writer's understanding and sentiment. The VAPP and *Na Postu* critique has advanced a number of proletarian writers and poets as representatives of new "proletarian" creativity. However, in their work there has been no new outlook, no new aesthetical formulation of human thinking and sentiment. By waging a most fierce and inconsistent war against the artistic integrity of individual writers from all literary groups and backgrounds, VAPP has attempted to counterimpose its own comprehension. As a result of this demonstration of weak and primitive works, VAPP today discredits the very concept of "proletarian writer", which has become synonymous with unimaginative bossiness, archaic slogans and artistic helplessness. Schematism, naked everyday description, the lack of mastery and of profound content the lack of correspondence between the inner combustion and the great ideas of the century, the step backwards in terms of

language, form and style in relation to literary progress - this is what our literature amounts to in its VAPP diversion.

"Pereval" does not claim any superiority resulting from the quality of its work, it supports the viewpoint of free creative competition. "Pereval" will always confront VAPP with a fight for the original, distinctive writer who takes part in the creation of the new man - the fighter and the builder.

To further the building of this personality, the "Perevalcy" will call on all writers who are prepared to give to the revolutionary present all their capabilities and sentiments.

Today The All-union organization of worker-peasant writers "Pereval" is disseminating its work in the provinces, attempting to unite under the banner of its artistic-societal leadership all young, truly literary, forces.

By organizing writers, "Pereval" does not give them any literary mandate. "Pereval" calls on them, first and foremost, for the creation of a truly revolutionary cultural medium, in which it will be easier to understand the boundlessness of the horizons, which has unfolded in front of the new man's enquiries.

"Pereval" formulates its artistic viewpoints in the following positions:

1. The cultural revolution, in whose period the SSSR has entered, urgently demands the expression in artistic craft the forces of new classes - workers and peasants.

2. The artistic literature of the SSSR is called on to accomplish social demand given it by the October Revolution, the workers' class and the Communist party. It must influence the oppressed classes of the whole world, organizing and revolutionizing them towards societal liberalization.

3. The identified tasks can be achieved only given a highly developed artistic word, form and style. Great substance demands an expression of the most contemporary and varied forms. From this follows the necessity to retain the successive links with the artistic mastery of Russian and world classical literature.

4. "Pereval" castigates any primitive bossiness, the reducing of artistic creativity to unimaginative vegetation, the humiliating emotional influence of artistic form.

5. "Pereval" acknowledges the author's right to choose themes according to his own judgement, provided that in his craft he will be linked organically with the present and with the social demands of our epoch.

6. "Pereval" adopts a careful and attentive stance to any artistic individual, attempting to influence him, supporting and directing the hesitant.

7. At the same time, "Pereval" casts aside all cliques, stuck in the pre-revolutionary literary period, alien to the present on account of their artistic core, and all new literary fashions, solidified in [their] dead, stabilized condition, which contradict ever-developing artistic-revolutionary thoughts.

8. In order to carry out the goals of this declaration, it is essential to create an artistic centre, around which on the basis of the resolution of the CK VKP (b) "On the policy of the party in the field of artistic literature" - should be united, while retaining their creative independent characteristics, all energetic writers of the SSSR

9. Believing in the possibility of creating such a centre, we call on all writers, sharing our views, to unite around "Pereval" in their future creative work.

The central Moscow section of "Pereval"

List of members of Moscow section of "Pereval"

M.Prišvin	M.Sosnovin	E.Bichrev	D.Kedrin
S.Malaškin	P.Družinin	E.Ėrkin	G.Berkovič
B.Guber	V.Lazarev	V.Vetrov	G.Munblit
N.Zarudin	M.Ruderman	M.Skuratov	A.Karavaeva
I. Evdokimov	N.Zamoškin	A.D'jakonov	B.Dynik
L.Zavadovskij	N.Smirmov	T.Igumnova	A.Malyškin
M.Barsukov	D.Brodskij	R.Akul'shin	G.Pakentrejger
N.Dement'ev	M.Golodnyj	Sergadžan	I.Kubikov
Ė. Bagrickij	M. Jachontova	A.Chovanskaja	A.Prišelec
D.Gorbov	F.Sergeeva	V.Kudašev	E.Strogova
N.Ognev	V.Nasedkin	L.Lavrov	I.Kataev
P.Širjaev	I.Kasatkin	L.Katanskij	T.Kornejčik
A.Ležnev	A.Peregudov	D.Fibich	D.Semenovskij
A.Jasnyj	D.Altauzen	A.Platonov	I.Trišin and others

The address of "Pereval": Krivokolennyj per., 14, redakcija žurnala "Krasnaja nov",
tel. 5-63-12.

7.15: Confirmation of Voronskij's date of death ¹

isp.vch.No.02531

The Military Collegium
of the Supreme Court
of the Union of SSR

Citizen Isaeva, T.I.

27 March 1989
4n-026766/56

Dear Tat'jana I.Isaeva, on the basis of additional information, received from the KGB SSSR in response to your enquiry, I can inform you that your grandfather Voronskij, A.K., born in 1884, was sentenced on 13 August 1937 by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the SSSR to shooting and confiscation of his belongings.

According to the court sentence Voronskij was found guilty in having been an active member of an anti-Soviet Trotskyist terrorist organization, in having created in Moscow a counter-revolutionary terrorist group, which on his instructions prepared terrorist acts against the leadership of the party and the government. The accusations against Voronskij A.K. were reviewed on 7 February 1957 by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the SSSR. The sentence of the Military Collegium of 13 August 1937 is, in view of newly revealed circumstances, revoked, and the case has been closed due to lack of criminal offence.

There is no documentary confirmation as to when and where the sentence of Aleksandr Konstantinovič was carried out but in accordance with procedures at that time similar sentences were immediately effectuated after being proclaimed, i.e. he died 13 August 1937.

As to the investigating officer who dealt with your grandfather's case, please contact the Public Prosecution of the SSSR.

Understanding the profound tragedy that you and your nearest have suffered, I beg you to accept our sincere sympathy.

Deputy Director of the Secretariat of the Military
Collegium of the Supreme Court of the SSSR

V.Polujanov.

¹ From the Voronskij family archive, cf. 7.6. fr.3-it4.

PART 8: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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donated to the Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. With the family's permission I have accessed the material and made duplicates of relevant material, cf. 7.6 with inventory of more than 100 items. Several items are listed in the bibliography, and when these are unpublished a cross-reference is made to the family archive, cf. Černobaev.

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¹ This brief index only covers the main text, i.e. parts 1-6, and not pages i-vii or parts 7-9. In the case of part 7 (appendices) I have judged it sufficient that appropriate references are made in parts 1-6. Obvious omissions in the index are e.g. art/artist/artistic(al), *belles-lettres*, Bolshevik, Communist, *Krasnaja nov'* or *KN*, and Voronskij. Their frequent occurrence makes indexation pointless.

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