



Title	<ARTICLE>Il'ia Glazunov's Russian Nationalism : Notes from Two Exhibits
Author(s)	Krasnov, Vladislav
Citation	Acta Slavica Iaponica, 3, 18-35
Issue Date	1985
Doc URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2115/7945
Type	bulletin (article)
File Information	KJ00000034093.pdf



[Instructions for use](#)

Il'ia Glazunov's Russian Nationalism : Notes from Two Exhibits *

Vladislav Krasnov

Although lately Western scholars have begun to pay attention to various manifestations of the rise of ethnic Russian nationalism as distinct from official "Soviet patriotism,"¹ they have virtually ignored the phenomenon of Il'ia Glazunov, a Soviet painter who is also a foremost protagonist of that nationalism.² The chief reason for this lack of scholarly interest lies in the fact that not only has Glazunov been a controversial figure but he was also accused of Russian chauvinism, anti-Semitism, and of being a KGB agent.³ As a result, a sort of taboo has been raised around his name. Convinced that this taboo prevents us from a better understanding of what is going on in the USSR, I intend to break it by presenting below my analysis of a unique Soviet source, namely, the two books of uncensored comments offered by Soviet visitors at Glazunov's art exhibits which took place in Moscow and Leningrad in 1978 and 1979 respectively. In defiance of the authorities, the two books of comments had been photostated and leaked into *samizdat* circulation before they reached the West where they were published as a *tamizdat* publication under the title, *Khudozhnik i Rossia*.⁴

-
- * This paper was first presented (in Russian) at the national convention of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages on December 30, 1982, in Chicago.
- 1 See, for instance, Edward Allworth, ed., *Ethnic Russia in the USSR: the Dilemma of Dominance* (New York : Pergamon, 1980); John Dunlop, *The New Russian Revolutionaries* (Boston : Nordland, 1976), and *The Faces of Contemporary Russian Nationalism* (Princeton, : Princeton University Press, 1983); Alexander Yanov, *The Russian New Right* (Berkeley : Institute of International Studies, 1978); Albert Boiter, "Conflicting Views of Russian Nationalism," *Slavic Studies*, (Japan) No. 29, 1982, pp. 123–133.
 - 2 Allworth's *Ethnic Russia* has only one passing reference to him. John E. Bowlt dismissed him as "A Reliable Soviet Citizen" (the title of his article) in *Art News*, October 1977, pp. 109–110; and S. Frederick Starr responded to the cancellation of Glazunov's 1977 show with an article, "Soviet Painter Poses a Question" (*Smithsonian*, 8, pp. 101–104, December 1977) in which he declared him a neo-Stalinist but allowed that he is also "as much mystery as his painting." However, as early as 1972, Abraham Rothberg recognized Glazunov as an "exceptional" phenomenon in Soviet art and put his name next to Solzhenitsyn, Pasternak, and the sculptor Ernst Neizvestny in his book, *The Heirs of Stalin : Dissidence and the Soviet Regime, 1953–1970* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1972), p. 366.
 - 3 See, for instance, John Barron, *KGB : the Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents* (New York : Bantam, 1974), p. 145; and Frederick C. Barghoorn, "Four Faces of Soviet Russian Ethnocentrism," in *Ethnic Russia*, p. 61.
 - 4 *Khudozhnik i Rossiia*, published by "Grad Kitezh," Gesellschaft für Förderung russischer Kunst, D-4000 Düsseldorf, West Germany, 1980 (henceforth will be referred to, in the text, as Kitezh).

The main focus of my analysis will be on Glazunov's art as a social (that is, cultural, ideological, and political), rather than an artistic phenomenon; hence, special attention will be paid to the impact of his art on the Soviet public in the context of the rise of ethnic Russian self-awareness. I intend to steer clear of offering a judgment on Glazunov from either the aesthetic or ethical viewpoint, and do neither expect to make him a less controversial figure, nor to clear him of all charges.

Il'ia Aleksandrovich Glazunov was born into the family of a historian in 1930 in Leningrad. During the siege of Leningrad by the Germans, the eleven year-old boy witnessed how most of his relatives, including his father, died of starvation. He himself barely survived thanks to being evacuated to a village in the Novgorod *oblast'* where he first came in contact with traditional Russian peasant culture. He studied at the prestigious Repin Art Institute in Leningrad. Ironically, his first recognition came from abroad in 1956 when he was awarded a Grand Prix at an international show in Prague. In a response to this award, he was honored with his first personal exhibit in Moscow in February 1957. Since then he has been an *enfant terrible* of Soviet art.

Dominated by a starkly realistic portrayal of the starvation in besieged Leningrad, his first exhibit immediately came under attack from the stalwarts of socialist realism who accused him of a lack of patriotism, heroism, and party spirit. In a letter published in *Vecherniaia Moskva* (Moscow Evening News), party hacks of the Union of Soviet Artists dubbed his art "dubious spiritual food," incompatible with the "ideational-aesthetic" requirements of the party. They also denounced him for infusing his Russian themes "with mystical and even churchly adumbration."⁵ Glazunov's own teacher at the Institute, Academician B. Ioganson, joined the chorus of his detractors. As a result, he barely managed to graduate from the Institute, and upon graduation was sent to teach at a provincial high school.

Had it happened under Stalin, the young artist would have been doomed to obscurity, or worse. However, in the atmosphere of the post-Stalin thaw, Glazunov was able to bounce back as his non-conformism has attracted the attention of the restless young generation.⁶ Moreover, he was defended in the Soviet press by a number of art critics, and even by the high-ranking official writer Nikolai Tikhonov. During the 1960s, his art evolved along the themes of Russian national heritage.

Still, although Glazunov was allowed to hold personal exhibits abroad (in Poland, 1960; Italy, 1963) in order to promote a "liberal" image of the post-Stalin regime, his second personal exhibit in Moscow in 1964 again came under attack of the official critics, and was closed after only three days. Only in 1967 did the party bureaucrats decide that they had him broken, and he was made a member of the Union of Soviet Artists. For Soviet

5 Ibid., p. 6.

6 I personally met Glazunov on the premises of a Moscow University dormitory on the Lenin Hills around 1958. Accompanied by his wife, Nina, and Evgenii Evtushenko, he was desperately trying to show some of his pictures in students' private rooms. Together with a number of other dissidents, I helped him move pictures from one room to another. Although all of us felt the excitement of conspiring against the authorities with the "forbidden" artist, the acquaintance remained, on my part, a chance encounter.

propaganda purposes, he was frequently sent abroad (Vietnam, 1966 ; Laos, 1967 ; France, 1968 ; Chile, 1973, etc.) and gradually established himself as a "court painter" for both Soviet and foreign dignitaries (Leonid Brezhnev, Urho Kekkonen of Finland, Otto Jens Krag of Denmark, King Carl Gustav of Sweden, Indira Gandhi, Salvatore Allende, etc.). For himself, he continued to portray scenes and characters from Russian history and to illustrate the works of the classics of Russian literature, especially those of his favorite author, Dostoevskii.⁷

If the party bureaucrats had thought that they had him broken, they were bitterly disappointed when in June 1977 he defied them by cancelling his largest-ever personal show, planned to be held in the Central Exhibition Hall (Manège) in Moscow. Glazunov cancelled the show because his sponsors refused to display a number of his works which he considered indispensable, including his *opus magnum*, the huge, 10 by 20 foot canvas, "The Mystery of the 20th Century."

1. The Three Most Controversial Pictures

In "The Mystery," which he has called "a work of philosophical realism," Glazunov apparently aims at portraying a spiritual dilemma of our age by juxtaposing such major political and cultural figures as Lenin, Trotsky, Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, John Kennedy, Albert Einstein, and Pablo Picasso with the more sinister figures of Hitler, Mussolini, Mao, and Stalin. Stalin seems to dominate this century by occupying center stage. Significantly, Stalin is portrayed as lying in state on a bier floating in a sea of blood. Even more indicative of Glazunov's philosophical trust is a sympathetic portrayal of Tzar Nicholas II and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. The Tzar is portrayed as holding in his arms the murdered crown prince, Aleksei, with a Russian church tumbling in the background. The innocence of the martyred prince is emphasized by a halo. Such was the beginning of the bloody bacchanalia of the 20th century, the artist seems to be saying. Solzhenitsyn, with a zek number on his chest, is placed at the right flank of the picture, whereas, at the left, Glazunov places his own self-portrait. Thus, the affinity between the two, in their roles of principal witnesses of the age, is suggested. The only bright spot in the picture is the white-clad figure of the Savior which hovers over it all.

In spite of the obvious "anti-Soviet"⁸ implications of "The Mystery," to everybody's surprise, Glazunov not only eluded punishment but was allowed to hold the exhibit a year later. When the exhibit was opened on June 3, 1978, "The Mystery" was not there, but

7 See Glazunov, *Pisatel' i khudozhnik: proizvedeniia russkoi klassicheskoi literatury v illiustratsiakh Il'i Glazunova* (Moscow: Izobrazitel'noe Iskusstvo, 1979). Introduced by Vladimir Soloukhin, this is the last book on Glazunov that was published in the USSR after the Moscow Exhibit. Previous publications, all in small editions, include the following collections: I. Iazykova, *Il'ia Glazunov* (Moscow: Izobrazitel'noe Iskusstvo, 1973); Vasili Zakharchenko, *Il'ia Glazunov: Fotoal'bom* (Moscow: Planeta, 1978).

8 The term "anti-Soviet" is used in this article not in a strictly juridical sense but as a label which Soviet propaganda often uses in order to censure certain ideological, ethical, and aesthetic attitudes even when these do not necessarily challenge Soviet political system or violate Soviet laws.

nonetheless, Glazunov managed to show two other highly controversial pictures, "The Return" and "To Your Health!"

The theme of "The Return" is the story of the prodigal son. It depicts a young man, clad only in jeans, kneeling before a Christlike figure with features of a Russian peasant. Behind the "son"'s back, and in the foreground of the picture is a macabre scene of rural desolation, misery, sacrilege, debauchery, crime, barbed-wire, and death symbolized by a table on which a severed head is served on a plate. The scene seems to be presided over by the devilish grin of a half-concealed figure in which one may recognize Lenin. Behind the "father," and receding into the upperleft background, there are easily recognizable figures of Russia's past, including Sergei of Radonezh, the foremost Russian saint, the saintly prince Aleksandr Nevskii, Suvorov, Dostoevskii, Pushkin, Lomonosov, Chaikovskii, Peter I, a Russian beauty, and several others. The symbolism of the picture is clear: the salvation of today's "prodigal" Soviet Russia is in the return to her historical, cultural, and spiritual roots buried in the past. The only other exit from the dead-end of Soviet life seems to be suggested at the bottom where another young man seems to be escaping from under barbed-wire into a trough over which three huge, fat, obnoxious swine are standing. The swine are shown as if they were coming from a modern metropolis, symbolized by a sky-scraper. This may suggest that the "son" has rejected not only the misery of Soviet existence but also the materialist alternative to it, be it at home or abroad. Just as ominous and unappealing is the upper right corner of the picture where a black sky is pierced by a sort of missile or space craft soaring under a bright red sail.

In "To Your Health!" Glazunov portrays a typical Russian *muzhik* who could be a *kolkhoznik* or a factory worker. Shabbily dressed in a padded laborer's jacket decorated with a medal which shows that he is a veteran of World War II, he sits in front of a collage of Soviet propaganda posters and appears to be ready to down a glass of vodka. The only *zakuska* he has is a loaf of bread and a cucumber lying on a newspaper whose headline reads, "Today in the World." He has led a hard and far from prosperous life but his indomitable spirit is evinced in his mischievous and ironic smile. The main effect of the picture is produced by the sharp contrast between the reality of the *muzhik* and the boastfulness of the posters. The latter include the Marx-and-Lenin tandem, appealing for unity of the communist movement; an African calling for liberty and equality; a Vietnamese soldier proclaiming communist victory; a triumphant Soviet cosmonaut; two happy Soviet workers congratulating each other because a tractor is now doing their heavy manual work; and the hammer-and-sickle emblem of the USSR, proclaiming pride of Soviet citizenship, with a superimposed Soviet passport refracted in the glass of vodka. The suggested message is crystal clear: whatever achievements Soviet propaganda can boast of, they are paid for by the Russian *muzhik*, the veritable Soviet work-horse in war and peace.⁹ It is a Soviet variant of the old Russian saying about serfdom: "While one works with a plough, seven are waiting with a spoon (*Odin s soshkoi, semero s lozhkoi*)." The picture raises the question whether the Soviet government cares for *his* health.

9 Since one of the posters proclaims, "I am a citizen of the Soviet Union," the Russian *muzhik* may be understood as an everyman, that is the exploited working person of any nationality of the USSR.

The above three paintings indicate Glazunov's preponderant ideological thrust, characteristic of his art. It is quiet obvious that his art is not only contrary to the dogmas of socialist realism but has strong, thinly veiled, "anti-Soviet" implications. In any event, it is a far cry from anything the Soviet government has ever tolerated, much less allowed to be shown in public. Why such an exception for Glazunov? One plausible explanation is that Glazunov's popularity at home and reputation abroad are such that the government simply could not afford another scandal of forcing an established artist into open dissidence. Another possible explanation is that Glazunov may have enjoyed the support and protection at the highest levels of the KGB, Army, and Party apparatus. The third explanation (which dose not exclude the other two) is that the government decided to use his exhibits as a sort of opinion poll in order to gauge the strength of Russian nationalism as a cohesive bond for the regime, in the event they might need to repair or replace entirely the official internationalist ideology.

In any case, the Moscow exhibit cannot be explained away as a mere slip on the part of the ideological watchdogs. For one thing, it was shown for a full month as announced. Moreover, fifteen months later, it was followed by an identical exhibit in Leningrad which was also shown for a month, from September 28 through October 27, 1979. The latter was held in spite of the efforts of the Cultural Department of the Leningrad party organization, headed by G. Pakhomova, to have it cancelled or, at least, shown without the most controversial pictures. Only after Glazunov again threatened to cancel the exhibit, was the local party organization overruled by someone higher-up, and the exhibit shown in full.¹⁰

2. The Two Books of Comments

In the West, both exhibits created sensations, not only because they were allowed to take place at all, but also because they attracted the largest crowds ever in the history of Soviet art. Whereas the Moscow exhibit had some 600,000 visitors, the Leningrad exhibit was seen by nearly a million people.¹¹ On both occasions, visitors were allowed to write down their opinions in special comment books (*knigi otzyvov*) as is customary in Soviet exhibition halls. Thanks to the Kitez publication, the contents of these two comment books are now available in the West. Needless to say that in the absence of public opinion polls, these books are unique documents which offer Western scholars a rare opportunity to peep into the minds of Soviet people, a largely *terra incognita* for outsiders.

There are about 1,465 entries in the Moscow book and 622 in the Leningrad book. Together, they represent well over two thousand comments which are perhaps the largest statistical body of opinion on Soviet art available in the West. It should be kept in mind, however, that the source does not easily lend itself to statistical analysis for which it was not specifically intended. For one thing, the majority of entries are anonymous. By spot-checking, I estimate that about 57 percent of all entries in the Moscow book are anonymous, and the corresponding figure for Leningrad approaches two-thirds. Although

10 *Khudozhnik*, p. 153.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 15. These figures are especially significant because, according to the Kitez publishers, the exhibit commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Union attracted only 50,000 people in three months.

the majority of the signed entries are signed by a single person, there are many entries signed by a group of people, or else refer to some unnamed "friends" and "colleagues" who are said to share the same opinion. No attempt was made to quantify entries according to sex, age, profession, or by counting the number of signatures. Nonetheless, if we consider each entry as an act of civil expression, the totality of comments is certainly reflective of a general trend of public opinion.

A most striking feature of both books is the spontaneity, directness, and passion of expression. It is as if the volcano of public opinion, dormant for over sixty years of Soviet power, had suddenly erupted and the people who had been mute for too long suddenly acquired the gift of speech. Although the overwhelming majority of comments are positive, there is not a trace of that obligatory unanimity which has been a hallmark of Soviet propaganda. Leaving no one indifferent, the exhibits introduced a degree of polarization which is highly uncharacteristic of Soviet society. The comments themselves are widely divergent in size, form, content and tone. They range from one-word remarks, such as "Great," "Thanks," and "Agree," to lengthy essays and even poems about the virtues, or faults, of Glazunov and his works. Their language is remarkably free from the usual cant of Soviet propaganda.

Having divided all entries into three categories, "Positive," "Negative," and "Others,"¹² I have obtained the following results :

	<i>Moscow</i>		<i>Leningrad</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Positive	1,174	80.1	428	68.8	1,602	76.7
Negative	249	17.0	176	28.3	425	20.4
Others	42	2.9	18	2.9	60	2.9
Total	1,465	100.0%	622	100.0%	2,087	100.0%

That the majority of comments were "Positive" is hardly surprising, but the margin of difference is. In Moscow, eight out of every ten visitors liked Glazunov, and in Leningrad more than two-thirds did. In both cities, only two out of ten visitors disliked Glazunov's art.

3. Why Did Some Dislike Glazunov?

As far as motivation¹³ for positive and negative comments is concerned, I was able to quantify only the latter category. The results are as follows :

12 Since some entries include both positive and negative remarks, the main criterion for their classification was the prevalent tone. Admittedly, this is a rather subjective criterion, but the unusual degree of polarization of opinion reduced the number of undecided entries to a minimum. As to the "Other" category, it consists mostly of entries in which the focus of concern is on organizational matters. Most frequently, the authorities are criticized for the failure to advertise the exhibit and otherwise popularize Glazunov's art.

13 In unclear cases, the motivation was decided according to the prevalent argument.

<i>Motivation</i>	<i>Moscow</i>		<i>Leningrad</i>		<i>Total</i>	
Aesthetic	123	49.4	109	61.9	232	54.6
Ideological	96	38.6	41	23.3	137	32.2
Ethical	30	12.0	26	14.8	56	13.2
Total	249	100.0%	176	100.0%	425	100.0%

As we can see, the majority of all negative comments, 232 (54.6%) out of 425, were aesthetically motivated; nearly a third (32.2%) was dominated by various ideological considerations, while 56 raised objections to Glazunov on ethical grounds.

Let me now illustrate each category. An example of the "Ideological" motivation can be seen in a lengthy entry signed, "Kasatkin, K. B., military." Kasatkin scorns Glazunov for failing to "notice" that "the teachings of Marx-Lenin (sic!) have been triumphant in our country for sixty years." Reproaching Glazunov for his preoccupation with the theme of Russian past and his failure to glorify the Soviet army, he argues that "the Great Patriotic War and many other things are incomparably dearer to us visitors than the old Russia relegated to the past." He also reproaches the artist for his "neutrality" in the "intense battle which goes on in the modern world, the battle of two systems." Paraphrasing Gorky, Kasatkin asks a pointed question: "With whom are you, painter Glazunov?" He ends up with a threat reminiscent of the Stalin era: "Not only your future but also the fate of your past work depend on how you answer this question."¹⁴ Another visitor does not object to Glazunov's Russian theme but reproaches him for the "sadness and pessimism" with which he treats "our days"; and then indulges in wishful thinking, "if you could imbue your talent with a deep party spirit, the result would be excellent!"¹⁵ An anonymous Moscovite wishes Glazunov "to love our Soviet power. This is very much lacking in his portrayal of today's life. Our days and life are brighter than he depicts."¹⁶ Kislova, a woman from Leningrad who says she is writing "in the name of the Kirov factory workers" is "upset and shaken by Glazunov's attitude to the Soviet system, and people." She berates him for seeing "nothing bright and beautiful (in Soviet life)" and for preaching a "return" to the past. She calls it "blasphemy" that he dared to show a Soviet passport refracted in a vodka glass.¹⁷

Although the above examples are typical of the 137 (6.6 percent of 2087) negative comments which are dominated by ideological viewpoints close to the official, they are just about the only ones that rely on such clichés of Soviet propaganda as "the teachings of Marx-Lenin," "party spirit," and "Soviet system." Apparently, such clichés are considered so trite that even the most dogmatic of Glazunov's detractors avoid using them lest they undermine their own arguments.

As far as the negative comments with an ethical motivation are concerned, I counted 57 of them. None specifically intimates Glazunov's alleged KGB-connection but many vaguely allude to some kind of deal with Soviet authorities. An anonymous Moscovite writes, "One

14 *Khudozhnik*, pp. 79–80.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 133.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 191.

cannot be a people's leader and a prophet, if one had eaten well from the masters' table."¹⁸ Another anonymous visitor, a student of the Mukhina Institute of Industrial Arts in Leningrad, makes it clear that he is "not against a return to the past and religion" but nonetheless asks, "… how could they allow your exhibit to take place? How did you manage it?"¹⁹ Yet another visitor points out the similarity of Glazunov's moral dilemma with that of Evgenii Evtushenko.²⁰ In some instances, visitors condemn Glazunov for his moral compromise but seem ready to forgive him because his art works wonders. As one such visitor put it poetically,

Having betrayed and forgiven yourself,	Предав себя и простив
You touch the Wondrous.	И вновь обретая Чудо
You are your own Christ,	Вы сами себе-Христос
As you are your own Judas.	И сами себе-Иуда!!! ²¹

The majority of the negative comments, 232 (54.6 percent) out of 425, appear to be aesthetically motivated. Often authored by Glazunov's professional colleagues and other people in the art world, they are as vituperative as the positive ones are enthusiastic. The most frequent epithets are: "charlatan," "banality," "cheap imitation," "mass-culture," "profanation," "self-promotion," "weakness in composition," and "lack of professionalism." Only rarely is Glazunov accused of not following the precepts of "Soviet art" or "socialist realism." An entry, signed "The graduate students of Moscow University," enjoins Glazunov to overcome various artistic "deviations" in order to promote "socialist realism."²² An anonymous visitor accuses Glazunov of pushing "banality" (*poshlost'*) in the guise of "pseudopatriotism." "Nothing more abhorrent has ever happened in Soviet art," says he.²³ Since this visitor is one of the very few who resorts to the phrase "Soviet art," one may suspect that his main objection to Glazunov is ideologically motivated and he simply uses an aesthetic argument to disguise his pro-Soviet bias.²⁴

4. Why Do So Many Love Glazunov?

As stated earlier, the great majority of all comments, 1,602 (76.7 percent) out of 2,087, are positive. Although I was unable to break them down according to preponderant motivations, it is obvious that the overwhelming majority of them are inspired by Glazunov's Russian theme which can be defined as a longing for a return to Russia's historical, cultural

18 Ibid., p. 88.

19 Ibid., p. 166.

20 Ibid., p. 82.

21 Ibid., p. 157.

22 Ibid., p. 98.

23 Ibid., p. 174.

24 It is noteworthy that whereas in Moscow only 49.4 percent of all negative comments are aesthetically motivated, their share in Leningrad is 61.9 percent. The respective figures for ideologically motivated comments are 38.6 percent and 23.3 percent. This marked increase of the share of aesthetic comments at the expense of ideological ones may suggest a greater artistic inclination of people from Leningrad. It may also suggest that Glazunov's detractors, for whatever reason, after being routed in Moscow, got better organized to mount an attack on him in Leningrad and chose aesthetic arguments as the most effective.

and religious heritage. Not only are these comments most numerous but they are also most intensely enthusiastic and even ecstatic. Reading them is like being swept away by an avalanche of feeling or a torrent of passion. They come down on one with such a force that one realizes that they must have been pent up for quite a while only to find an unexpected release. In many entries, enthusiasm turns into rhapsody; in fact, about 28 visitors were so moved that they wrote their comments in poetry. In addition, there are dozens of entries in which quotations from the Russian classics are used to underscore one point or another. Many others were moved to use the forms of expressions that are more characteristic of old Russia than modern life. Thus, to express gratitude, they do not simply say "Thank you" (*Spasibo*) but "We bow low before you" (*Nizko tebe klaniaemsia*). These entries abound with such epithets as "genius," "magician" (*mag*), "sorcerer" (*charodei*), "Russian knight" (*bogatyr*), Il'ia Muromets, and Elijah the Prophet. Among other typical comments that echo the Russian theme are: "Bard of the Russian soul"; "Russian in everythings"; "Thank you for restoring our national self-awareness"; "For the first time I felt proud to be a Russian"; "In everything one can read the Russian truth (*rusaskaia pravda*)." But, if we were to choose the one description that best sums up the Russian theme, it must be the lead line of many a Russian fairy-tale, "Here is the Russian spirit, here one senses the true Rus'."

Although most comments refer to the exhibit as a whole, quite a few are focused on sundry variations of the Russian theme (there are "thank you" notes for the portrayal of the "Russian woman," "Russian *muzhik*," and even "Russian eyes") or praise individual works, most notably "The Return" and "To your Health." The pivotal role of these two pictures is frequently emphasized, as in this comment by V. Ianushin:

... Il'ia Glazunov is a genuine Russian artist, a true patriot of his long-suffering Motherland. One could be proud of his work even if he had created nothing but "To Your Health," and "The Return," in which his attitude to both the past and the present of our Motherland and to the Russian people is clearly expressed.²⁵

Another visitor writes that, thanks to the two pictures, Glazunov "has earned immortality."²⁶ "The Return" is an apotheosis of our life," says yet another.²⁷ A comment signed "A Russian woman" says that in "To Your Health!" Glazunov "revealed the Russian soul. How mighty is the Russian man who holds on his shoulders almost the whole globe."²⁸

As can be expected in an art show, the Russian theme is intimately intertwined with the theme of Russian art. In fact, the exhibit is often seen as a "celebration (*prazdnik*) of Russian culture," and Glazunov is compared with such giants of the Russian history genre as Vasnetsov, Surikov and Repin. Among the more modern painters, he is sometimes compared with Mikhail Vrubel', Mikhail Nesterov, Boris Musatov, Boris Kustod'ev, Pavel Kuznetsov and Nikolai Rerikh. But most frequently, Glazunov is compared with the medieval icon painter Andrei Rublev. The implicit meaning of that comparison is that what Rublev did for the liberation of the Russian spirit from the Tatar yoke, Glazunov is doing for the

25 Ibid., pp. 53–54.

26 Ibid., p. 26.

27 Ibid., p. 39.

28 Ibid., p. 51.

restoration of Russian culture from under the yoke of "foreign" Marxist ideology. Similarly, many visitors compare him with Dostoevskii. One, perhaps on account of Glazunov's use of the Biblical parable in "The Return," sees him as "a psychologist comparable in stature with Dostoevskii."²⁹ Another, referring to the cathartic impact of his art, paraphrases Dostoevskii (and, one might add, Solzhenitsyn) by saying that "Art will save the world."³⁰ There are also some who allude to Glazunov's affinity with Soviet ruralist writers (*derevenshchiki*), most notably the late Vasilii Shukshin, "because in the art of both, there are the same roots."³¹

As the majority of utterances about Glazunov's art are chiefly inspired by his themes rather than technique, one visitor attempts to explain it philosophically: "since in any creative work (art, science, literature) *unexpectedness* is the main thing, the success of this exhibit is understandable and deserved. Whenever there is an *elan vital* (*tvorcheskii moment*), the technique recedes into the background."³² This visitor is no other than Lev Nikolaevich Gumilev, the son of the acmeist poets, Anna Akmatova and Nikolai Gumilev, who was executed in 1921. Though he had been imprisoned under Stalin, Lev Gumilev managed to establish himself as a Soviet anthropologist.

Disagreeing with those critics who have denounced Glazunov for turning his back on Soviet reality, a certain Marenich argues that "our roots contain in them a promise of our greening tomorrow."

Your paintings do not lead to pessimism or a loss of faith, because they tell of the greatness of victory which has been bought at such a terrible cost; they tell of the enormity of the heroic deeds of our fathers who have preserved for us our Rus'. Your pictures inspire noble feelings, dignity, and moral earnestness which are becoming a force in our age of disbelief. Who is going to win? The invincible power of evil or we, the people?! All depends on us, and each must give his answer. You have already given your answer to us, through your work.

Let everyone answer this question about your place in the 20th century art. Who are you: the great artist of the past who picked up Rublev's fallen brush, or a prophet of a new age of Renaissance?!³³

Although comments like the above are seemingly apolitical, their unmistakable thrust is against the official ideology based on Karl Marx's teachings about class struggle. For one thing, if they mention any struggle at all, it is a struggle against evil, not imperialist oppressors or a class enemy.

Not all who admire Glazunov's Russian theme are as optimistic as Marenich. The architect Kliucharev thinks that Glazunov came too late and therefore his art is but "a requiem" to ethnic Russia. Like many other visitors, he points out that Glazunov is "the only Russian artist who has raised the national theme."³⁴ This melancholic note is echoed

29 Ibid., p. 26.

30 Ibid., p. 62.

31 Ibid., p. 105.

32 Ibid., p. 75.

33 Ibid., p. 79.

34 Ibid., p. 52.

by an anonymous visitor: "All this is Russia! Thank you. But we are now almost speechless (*bezgolosye*). And all this is very difficult, for one man!"³⁵ Such comments, and there are quite a few of them, seem to confirm the opinion of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn that ethnic Russians, in spite of their numerical predominance among the Soviet ruling elite, feel that they are just as oppressed and dispossessed culturally as any minority. That is why their attitude to Glazunov was perhaps best summed up in a pun on the artist's name that was made by one of the visitors: "*Glazu-nov, a russkomu serdtsu mil*" (New to the eye, and dear to the Russian heart).³⁶

The Russian theme is most frequently complemented by, and intertwined with, the theme of spiritual and religious revival. However, even though there are numerous references to Christ and Holy Russia, they usually lack a specifically Orthodox meaning, and there are no traces of interdenominational bickering.³⁷ One entry symbolically signed, *Vera, Nadezhda, and Liubov'* (Faith, Hope, and Charity), says: "People! Love each other! Because God is with us."³⁸ It is followed by another entry which echoes the same theme. Levin, a medical doctor, says that seeing the exhibit, "One feels a deep faith in Christ, the Savior of our poor fatherland." He reproaches the sponsors for not showing "The Mystery" and for deliberately limiting access to the comment book, because "otherwise people would have written even more."³⁹ An entry signed, "A group of like-minded students," says: "Many Christian thanks. 'The Return' is a work of genius." In an oblique reference to "The Mystery," these students regret the absence of "other works" on display.⁴⁰ Another entry reads: "In the name of a group of young believers, members of Moscow's Baptist community, I thank the painter for the brilliant depiction of the redeeming essence of Christianity." The author then condemns the "baseness and horror of a world which lacks faith," as depicted in "The Return," and promises to recommend Glazunov to all believers.⁴¹ Judging by a laconic "Thank you from the Old Believers! You show a great and acute perception of *Rus'*," Glazunov's art stands above the deepest sectarian division of the Russian church.⁴²

One anonymous author reproaches Glazunov for not going far enough in his allegedly messianic Russian theme. He particularly reproaches him for failure to portray among those "to whom we are to return," (a reference to the group of Russian personalities portrayed behind the father figure in "The Return") Nikolai Fedorov, a 19th-century Russian philosopher who thought that a literal resurrection of the dead should be a common task of all the living. Without Fedorov, the visitor argues, "Russia's mission, her 'idea,' would remain without content, or rather, her orthodoxy would not be really fulfilled."⁴³ This

35 Ibid., p. 59.

36 Ibid., p. 24.

37 I have found only two entries (Ibid., pp. 73 and 120) in which the respondents welcome a return to the "roots" but do not accept the idea of restoration of religion.

38 Ibid., p. 53.

39 Ibid., p. 78. This suggests that some people felt inhibited from expressing their pro-Christian and pro-religious sentiments, and thus are under-represented in the comment books.

40 Ibid., p. 38.

41 Ibid., p. 110.

42 Ibid., p. 77.

43 Ibid., p. 91.

is just about the only reference to Russian Orthodoxy, and even then its meaning is rather unorthodox.

Despite the intensity of Russian nationalistic sentiments provoked by the exhibits, there are few comments which seem to extoll Russia above other nations and blame foreigners for her misfortune or otherwise interpret Glazunov's art in chauvinistic and xenophobic terms. Even then, the principal target of accusation appears to be the present "alien" masters of Russia, albeit usually disguised among "other" foreigners. A certain Vladychenko writes :

Now the Tatars, then Germans, then Frenchmen, and all kinds of other 'Swedes' have been subjugating us.... A talented Russian had to endure a lot, at times giving his life, in order to make it! Still, we are united with you, Il'ia Glazunov, not just by blood and fate, but by Faith; we believe that the Russian people would never succumb to a spiritual slavery under foreigners.... No one, who is not spiritually dead, can look at your pictures with indifference.⁴⁴

More frequently, however, the impact of Glazunov's art seems to encourage a respect to other nationalities and humility toward one's own. As one visitor sums up his conclusion, "It is obvious that one ought to welcome the expression of national dignity and cultural grandeur of (all) peoples populating our Earth. Even more, one should welcome a Rebirth of Russian Culture, because we, the Russians, for too long have been brutally destroying everything that is native to us."⁴⁵

Although it must be presumed that the majority of positive comments were made by ethnic Russians (or, the Eastern Slavs whose names are often indistinguishable from the Russian ones), there were also visitors of other nationalities among Glazunov's admirers. In the Moscow book alone, I counted at least thirty names which appear non-Russian. Among them, there are seven foreigners (two from Czechoslovakia and Hungary each, one from Bulgaria, one Spaniard, one in the English language), three appear to be Soviet Armenians, three suggest a Moslem origin, and the rest seem to belong either to Soviet Jews or Germans. Typical of these comments is the one written by Kabakhan Shtanchaeva, a graduate student at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Science who apparently is of Moslem origin :

I would call this exhibit a hymn to spirituality and beauty. The spiritual might of his images is tremendous. The ethical intensity of his work is so strong that upon leaving the exhibit, one feels a state near catharsis.⁴⁶

5. Does Glazunov's Art Encourage Anti-Semitism ?

In view of the charges of anti-Semitism made against Glazunov, I paid special attention to those comments which could be interpreted as hostile to the Jews. In the Moscow book, I found two overtly judophobic statements. One is anonymous : "After sixty years of the kike power (*zhidovskoe zasilie*), finally one begins to smell *Rus'* ! Long live the Russian state !"⁴⁷ It is apparent that, whoever this anti-Semitic visitor is, he equates the Soviets with Jewish

44 Ibid., p. 45.

45 Ibid., p. 185.

46 Ibid., p. 43.

47 Ibid., p. 41.

power and sees Glazunov's art as the beginning of a revival of ethnic Russia (*Rus'*) at the expense of a waning influence of the Jews in the Soviet Union. Certainly, when he proclaims "long live," he does not mean the present Communist system but an envisioned ethnocentric Russian state. The other anti-Jewish statement is contained in the collection of poems that a certain Ivan Rukavitsyn attached to the Moscow comment book as a token of his appreciation. One of his poems, "The Secret Train," blames "godless Jews" in general, and Moisha Sverdlov" and "Lev Bronstein" (Trotsky) in particular, for the execution of the last Tzar's family. Like the anonymous commentator, he seems to equate the Soviets with Jewish power.⁴⁸

In the Leningrad book, I found just one judophobic statement. It is written in the form of a reply to the preceding comment by "L. Abramova, an editor of the publishing house Khudozhnik RSFSR," who had reproached Glazunov for creating "such a repulsive portrait of the Russian *muzhik*" (if she is referring to the protagonist of "To Your Health!" she is expressing a pro-Soviet view). Thinking that anyone bearing such a last name must be Jewish, the irate anti-Semite mistakes her for a man and uses the following abusive sentence: "You, damned kike, want to impose on us your shit! Such editors should be chased out of their chairs."⁴⁹

There are, however, among the negative comments, about half a dozen entries which express fear that Glazunov's emphasis on the ethnic Russian self-awareness may encourage judophobia or fascism. One anonymous visitor calls Glazunov *pogromshchik*, and then says: "Your ideology is transparent, and it is frightening because of its simplicity." "You are for Russia without..." he goes on, and puts the three dots in lieu of the intended "Jews."⁵⁰ A Leningrad painter, Rakhimova, says that the exhibit "reminds me of the official 'art' of Germany during the 40s."⁵¹ Her statement is apparently intended to suggest that Glazunov's Russian theme may degenerate into the racist and anti-Semitic art of the Nazi era in Germany. "The Family of Ivanovs" sees in Glazunov, "a reaction, deep crisis, and deviation from the national-democratic tradition. If allowed to develop, it may lead to fascism."⁵² The reference to "the national-democratic tradition" suggests a closeness to the official line that Soviet power represents the fulfillment of national aspirations of all "progressive and democratic" Russians. Another anonymous commentator reproaches Glazunov for playing up "base feelings, and that's how fascism begins."⁵³ There is, finally, an enigmatic remark: "It seems to me that you are a genius, but why did you castrate Sherling?"⁵⁴ This is apparently a reference to Iurii Sherling, a Jewish musician, for whom

48 Ibid., p. 71.

49 Ibid., p. 162. In addition to the three openly judophobic comments, one may suspect that some other judophobes could have concealed their true feelings under the mask of russophilism. However, their number cannot be significant if we keep in mind that the two comment books are distinguished by an unprecedented degree of spontaneity and that several people were not afraid to express anti-Soviet sentiments.

50 Ibid., p. 33.

51 Ibid., p. 172.

52 Ibid., p. 82.

53 Ibid., p. 177.

54 Ibid., p. 38.

Glazunov designed first sets of a Yiddish-language play performed in Moscow. The remark is possibly intended to suggest that Sherling's Jewishness was diminished after his collaboration with the Russian nationalist.

The above few comments expressing a fear that Glazunov's art may degenerate into fascism and anti-Semitism are greatly outnumbered by positive, even enthusiastic comments signed by the people whose names betray their Jewish origin. Thus, M. L. Rabinovich, a student of piano, calls Glazunov "Great artist, great thinker, great humanist, great man and great citizen."⁵⁵ Iulii Naumovich Kantor simply says, "Thank you that you are."⁵⁶ Rafael Abramovich Zak, from the city of Omsk, thanks Glazunov "for the *joie de vivre (radost' byitiia)* which you give us" and says that he especially liked the picture "The Russian Venus."⁵⁷ Engineer Tepelbaum says that "a palace should be built to house I. S. Glazunov's exhibit."⁵⁸ Engineer L. Vaisman's only regret is that "The Mystery" was not shown.⁵⁹ Roza Markovna Shrug calls Glazunov "an artist of genius," thanks him for the "aesthetic pleasure afforded by the exhibit" and volunteers to pose for him.⁶⁰ R. Slutsker, a 27-year old woman engineer from Sverdlovsk, writes: "Today is one of the happiest days in my life, and I feel proud to be your contemporary. You have filled my life with light."⁶¹ Economist Ia. R. Kogan calls Glazunov an "outstanding painter of our time." He is impressed by the "refined brush work and emotional charge" that emanates from his portraits.⁶² Engineer V. Vaisberg says: "Finally, I have seen a genuine, original, non-standard, humane, philosophically thinking, and most talented Russian artist. There is no question that today you are Russia's best painter."⁶³ Lastly, E. Khaikin calls Glazunov "a nationalist of genius."⁶⁴

This last comment seems to sum up the attitude of those Soviet Jews who feel that the ethnic Russian nationalism, as distinct from the "Proletarian Internationalism" which has plenty of room for official anti-Semitism, is just as legitimate as Jewish Zionism or the exodus movement of Soviet Jews. It may be difficult for the unassimilated Soviet Jews to feel the same excitement about Glazunov's Russian theme as the ethnic Russians feel but this does not mean that they do not appreciate it objectively and spend their time worrying that the revival of Russian nationalism would threaten their existence.

6. Does "Soviet Patriotism" Mix With Russian Nationalism?

Among the positive comments there are some which seem to conform to the official line that the Soviet state is but the fulfillment of the national aspiration of ethnic Russians and

55 Ibid., p. 63.

56 Ibid., p. 134.

57 Ibid., p. 63.

58 Ibid., p. 120.

59 Ibid., p. 57.

60 Ibid., p. 90.

61 Ibid., p. 126.

62 Ibid., p. 195.

63 Ibid., p. 185.

64 Ibid., p. 191. Other positive comments were signed by such names as M. G. Krol'; Neimark; Galina Gennadievna Rubinshtein; Tatiana Toints; I. A. Miller; Vladimir Semenovich Vol'man. These may belong to people with a Jewish connection.

that, therefore, "Soviet patriotism" is inseparable from ethnic Russians' pride over their past achievements. One such comment dubs Glazunov as "a great Soviet-Russian Phenomenon" and describes him as "a Leninist and Internationalist, affirmed in paintings of a genius, depicting the long-suffering Vietnam, Chile and other peoples of the progressive movement." It is signed "Bordiukov, Major-General of the Tank troops, a veteran of the Great Patriotic War."⁶⁵ Another visitor underscores that Glazunov is "*our Russian Soviet painter*," and supports that claim by a reference to Glazunov's portrayal of the workers of BAM (the Baikal-Amur railroad, the current darling of Soviet propaganda campaign). This entry is signed: "Sotnikova Engelina (sic! from Engels, not an angel), Senior Investigator for Especially Important Cases, the Chief Directorate of Internal Affairs, Lt. Col. of militia."⁶⁶ Engineer-electrician Pilipikov sees in Glazunov's art in general, and in "The Return" and "To Your Health!" in particular, "an example of implementation of the party-spirit (*Partiinost'*) in art, in the sense of Lenin's insistence of an honest fulfillment (by an artist) of his duty before the people."⁶⁷ These three comments are rather exceptional in that they attempt, rather clumsily, to present Glazunov as "a Soviet-Russian phenomenon." Moreover, at least in Pilipikov's case, one may suspect that such comments could have been written tongue-in-cheek and in order to provide an *alibi* for the suspect artist.

There are, perhaps, half a dozen comments of this kind but they are greatly outnumbered by those who see Glazunov's art in explicitly non-Soviet and even anti-Soviet terms. The teacher of art, Kuranov from Moscow, courageously signed his name under the statement that Glazunov's exhibit is "an account of the sixty years of Soviet power during which our demagogues have been shouting slogans from the high platforms, while the low masses (*nizy*) were and remain deprived of all rights."⁶⁸ Referring to "The Return," an anonymous visitor says that "the pigs are *the Fathers of the Capital* who still continue to destroy the architecture of Moscow, the most national city of Russia." He interprets the skyscraper between the pigs as a symbol of modernity "which denies and defies the right of the Russian people to retain a national school in architecture."⁶⁹ Another visitor writes that Glazunov "is the only genuine painter who is not subservient to the ruling elite."⁷⁰ Several comments criticize the sponsors of the exhibit for not showing "The Mystery" and engineer Bakuev expresses a sentiment of many when he accuses the authorities of concealing Glazunov's art from the people "so that he is better known in the West than among us, Soviet citizens."⁷¹ Protesting against the policy of tearing down ancient architectural monuments, medical doctor Zaitseva issues to the authorities this warning: "You have no right to kill the soul of the people, to obliterate its history with bulldozers. Who knows what fate may yet befall our country and how the Russian *muzhik* may serve it. Not for nothing, even Stalin, at the end of the war, raised his first toast for this long-suffering *muzhik*." Her advice is: "We

65 Ibid., p. 44.

66 Ibid., p. 66.

67 Ibid., p. 67-68.

68 Ibid., p. 122.

69 Ibid., p. 110.

70 Ibid., p. 89.

71 Ibid., p. 123.

should do as they have done in Poland: to restore our history from ruins!"⁷² Others, as engineer Stepanov, warn the authorities that, should they decide to punish Glazunov, "We, the inhabitants of Russia, will not let them hurt you! We shall raise our voice in your defense (and assist you) in every way possible, by words, deeds, letters, etc..."⁷³

Finally, a female student from Leningrad University writes that Glazunov gave her "a new strength, a new faith. This is a rebirth of Russia, as foretold: 'Russian would rise from her sleep...'" She is quoting, of course, from Pushkin's famous poem to Chaadaev, and everyone in the Soviet Union knows how it ends: "...and on the ruins of tyranny, our names will be written."⁷⁴

7. Conclusion

In an interview with Western reporters during his Moscow exhibit, Glazunov enjoined them to take his exhibit "as a new way of looking at art" in the USSR. Complaining of their preoccupation with well-established dissidents, most of whom dislike him, he used the matryoshka-doll metaphor to explain his relative position within the spectrum of public opinion inside the USSR. The Westerners, said Glazunov, only know of "the government on the outside and the dissident physicist, Andrei Sakharov, on the very inside, and they ignore all the other dolls, one outside the other, in between."⁷⁵ A few years later, when it became apparent that the dissident movement had virtually come to an end in consequence of emigration, persecution, and Sakharov's exile, Glazunov repeated the charge that the West ignores "all the other dolls." "Diplomats and foreigners who come here think dissidents are mostly Jewish and that they want to leave," said Glazunov, and then defined the position of his supporters and himself: "Another kind of dissident wants to stay."⁷⁶

The main significance of the two comment books consist precisely in the fact that, in addition to whatever they say about the state of Soviet art, they shed a great deal of light on political attitudes of "all the other dolls," that is on the wide spectrum of public opinion that is suspended "in-between" the government and those dissidents "that want to leave." In the light of this Soviet "home-made" opinion source, one can clearly see that the "in-between dolls" are far from satisfied with the current official approach to Russia's national heritage. Craving for a restoration of national self-awareness, they harbor in themselves the kind of

72 Ibid., p. 129.

73 Ibid., p. 56.

74 Ibid., p. 185.

75 Craig Whitney, "Unbridled Artist Proving Popular At Soviet Show," *The New York Times*, June 18, 1978, p. 121.

76 David K. Willis, "Currents of Nationalism, Dissent Beneath Crust of Communist Conformity," reprinted as "Soviet Memorandum" in *Christian Science Monitor*, March, 1981. It is important to remember that, in spite of being an exception among Soviet painters, Glazunov represents a very broad current of discontent which has ranged from the underground activities of Igor Ogurtsov's All-Russian Social-Christian Union for the Liberation of People (See Dunlop's *The New Russian Revolutionaries*) to Vladimir Osipov's *samizdat* magazine *Veche*, the ruralist writers and the movement for the preservation of national monuments, of which Glazunov is one of the founders. Best known abroad through the writings of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, this current of dissent can be described as the National Rebirth Movement.

dissidence that has the best chance to win a broad popular support and thus succeed.

It is apparent that a substantial majority of ethnic Russians, although it may not be as large as the over 75 percent who favor Glazunov's art, feel that they are dispossessed of their national heritage and deprived of their ethnic identity, a feeling that must be especially bitter to them as they are often thought, by outsiders, to be the *Herrenvolk* among the peoples of the USSR and a contender for world hegemony. In fact, they are but the silenced majority of the USSR. As they penetrate all layers of Soviet society and have their in-closet adherents at all levels of power, they constitute the greatest potential for a peaceful transformation of Soviet society, perhaps, along the lines suggested by Solzhenitsyn in his *Letter to Soviet Leaders*.

The two comment books contain substantial evidence that the prevailing nationalist sentiments among ethnic Russians are strictly defensive in character and respectful of other nationalities. Their overwhelming concern, no matter how viscerally expressed, is with the survival, not expansion or Russification of others. An element of chauvinism, though present, does not seem to be stronger than in any other nation with a long history of competing with super-powers. In difference from others, it seems to be motivated, not by a belief in racial or religious superiority, but by a feeling of exclusivity based on a record of long-suffering. Although an element of anti-Semitism is also regrettably present in a few comments, it is not as prominent as one would expect in a country known for its history of both official and popular judophobia. However, unlike the official Soviet anti-Semitism which is chiefly focused on the Jewish religion, Zionism, and the state of Israel, the comment books give vent only to the popular variety of judophobia which seems to be chiefly concerned with the role of the Jews in the October Revolution and in the establishing of the "internationalist" Soviet state. What these judophobes seem to be ignorant of, is that that State has been hostile not only to Russian nationalism but to Jewish and any other nationalism as well. Although some Soviet Jews apparently feel that the rise of ethnic Russian nationalism *à la* Glazunov may threaten their well-being in the USSR, many more realize that his art undermines the official ideology which shackles all peoples of the USSR, including the Jews.

Therefore, if Soviet leaders had indeed commissioned their trusted party scholars to analyze the two comment books in lieu of taking an open poll, they must have been greatly alarmed by the results. The fact that the official attitude to Glazunov – to tolerate but not to favor – has not since changed suggests that they simply do not know how to cope with the swell of ethnic Russian self-awareness and just hope that time is on their side and the problem will go away.

In his lead article, "Russian Nationalism," in the collection *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Adam Ulam concedes that Solzhenitsyn, whose views "it has become fashionable in certain Western circles to deride," "has one very perceptive insight: the hold of Soviet Communism can be loosened *only* if it is shown to be incompatible with Russian nationalism" (emphasis supplied).⁷⁷ This is exactly what the two comment books show. In any case, my analysis of this unique Soviet source supports those Western scholars who, like

77 Adam Ulam, "Russian Nationalism," in *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*, ed. Seweryn Bialer (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 13–14.

Donald Treadgold, have held the opinion that "In Russia, the whole heritage of Orthodox Christianity, the liberal aspirations of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the entire precommunist corpus of village tradition, ceremony, and the arts, and other elements have been subjected to prohibition of scholarly study, direct attack, or grotesque and deliberate distortion by state fiat."⁷⁸ It also lends support to their argument that ethnic Russian nationalism does not have to be antagonistic to other nationalities of the USSR and must be viewed as an ally of the free world. The fact that the Soviet government has been able to create and maintain a semblance of symbiosis between communism and Russian nationalism is due, at no small degree, to the unwillingness of the West to admit the legitimacy of Russian nationalism for unfounded fear that it may develop into an alternative worse than communism.

78 Donald Treadgold, "Alternative Western Views of the Sino-Soviet Conflict," in *The Sino-Soviet Conflict: A Global Perspective*, ed. Herbert Ellison (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982) p. 352.