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NIELS BOHR AND THE
EVOLUTION OF THE SERIES
LIVES OF REMARKABLE PEOPLE
FROM THE THAW TO THE
STAGNATION**

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THE SOVIET BIOGRAPHY OF NIELS BOHR AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE SERIES *LIVES OF REMARKABLE PEOPLE* FROM THE THAW TO THE STAGNATION

Abstract: This paper presents a microhistorical investigation of the conflict that arose in the editorial office of the series of scientific and artistic biographies *Lives of Remarkable People* (*Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei*, thereafter – *ZhZL*) in preparation for the publication of Daniil Danin's book *Niels Bohr* (1978). Based on Danin's extensive correspondence with the editors, preserved in his collection at the Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts, the paper reconstructs the stages of the conflict between 1970 and 1976, including the nature of editorial claims and the author's disagreements. The analysis of the conflict incorporates Danin's biographical context. By the early 1970s, Danin had gained recognition as an author of popular science books on physics. Niels Bohr had a controversial reputation in the USSR, being a foreign member of the Academy of Sciences who traveled to the Soviet Union and the author of the idealistic Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics. The publication conflict regarding *Niels Bohr* serves as a case to investigate the shifting ideological agenda and evolving perceptions of working relationships within the editorial office of *ZhZL* during the transitional period between the “Thaw” and “Stagnation” eras in Soviet history. This study also sheds light on the less apparent involvement of the USSR Writers' Union functionaries in the resolution of this conflict, and the attitudes towards modern science and scientists among conservative circles of the Soviet intelligentsia in the 1970s.

Keywords: USSR, Thaw, Stagnation, cultural policy, editorial and publishing process, *Lives of Remarkable People* Series, “scientific-fictional literature”, biographies, Niels Bohr, Daniil Danin, microhistory

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Introduction

Discussing the unifying principle of all microhistorical research, Giovanni Levi emphasizes “the belief that microscopic observation will reveal factors previously unobserved” [Levi, 2001: 101]. Microhistory addresses the logic of “the concrete types of behavior and attitudes (and even motivations) of certain people,” that could not be explained by the view “from above” [Bessmertnaya, 2019].² In my opinion, the application of microhistorical research enables us to clarify the periodization of cultural history which is often based on broad generalizations and “grand narratives”. As Jacques Le Goff pointed out, the very procedure of periodizing history contains “the idea of transition, of one thing turning into another; indeed, when change is sufficiently far-reaching in its effects, a new period represents a repudiation of the entire social order of the one preceding it” [Le Goff, 2015: 4]. Thus, the perceptions of periods could be based on value judgements. Conversely, the investigation of a single case at the intersection of periods can provide insights into the nature of societal and cultural changes.

Following the contemporaries of the events, many researchers describe Soviet history through major periods, for instance the “Thaw” (*Ottepel'*)³ and the “Stagnation” (*Zastoi*).⁴ However, such names are slightly mythologized, and the delineations between them are not readily apparent. Scholars highlight Khrushchev’s resignation and the invasion of the Eastern Bloc’s troops of Czechoslovakia in 1968 as the final point of the Thaw period and the beginning of the Stagnation period [Pyzhikov, 2002; Aksiutin, 2010; Chuprinin 2020]. The implementation of heightened repression and censorship in culture and science are also considered as the end of this relatively liberal time. As case studies, scholars refer to Khrushchev’s argument with young innovative artists at the exhibition in Moscow Manege in 1962 [Gerchuk, 2008; Reid, 2005], the trials targeting cultural figures [Eggeling, 1999], and the resignation of Alexander Tvardovsky, who was editor-in-chief of *Novyi Mir*, in 1970 [Tu, 2022]. However, the transition from the late 1960s to the early 1970s is sometimes described by witnesses and researchers through hybrid terms: “late Thaw,”⁵ “long Thaw,” [Csicsery-Ronay, 2004] [Oukaderova, 2017] and “early Stagnation.”

How did the cultural actors change their strategies and motivations under new political circumstances in the beginning of Stagnation? This paper presents a microhistorical analysis of the institutional and cultural transformations within the editorial office of the biographical series *Lives of Remarkable People (Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei*, thereafter – *ZhZL*) that covers the period from the Thaw to the Stagnation. This biographical series was established before the Bolshevik revolution, revived during the Soviet era, and continues to be published in Russia to

² Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by the author.

³ The transliterations from Russian to English in this paper follow the guidelines of the Library of Congress. On the history of the concept of "Thaw" see [Kozlov & Gilburd, 2013].

⁴ On the emergence of the concept of "Stagnation" see [Bacon 2002].

⁵ Interview with Alexei Levinson, 06.02.2022. Author’s personal archive.

this day. The selection of subjects for series has established a national biographical canon. The identifiable design and style of the books contributed to their popularity amongst readers and collectors [Trigos & Ueland, 2022; Lovell, 2000].

As a case study, this article examines conflict in the editorial office between 1970 and 1975. It was a time when the journalist and non-fiction writer Daniil Danin worked intensively on the biography of Niels Bohr for the series. Although parts of his book had already been published in periodicals, during the editing of his manuscripts in the *ZhZL* office, Danin experienced significant censorship and political pressure, his manuscript underwent numerous revisions, and the author was subject to unfounded criticism. In order to provide a clear understanding of this event, in the first part of the paper, I briefly outline Danin's biography and Niels Bohr's reputation in the Soviet context. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the conflict timeline and the actors involved. To provide a broader context, the following section examines the cultural, managerial, and ideological transformations of the *Lives of Remarkable People* series during the period between 1960 and 1975. To conclude, I present the resolution of the conflict and detail the exact changes that occurred in the ideological climate and strategies of cultural figures during the early Stagnation in comparison to the Thaw.

The analysis of the conflict is based on archival sources preserved in the personal collection of Danin (fund 3149 of the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art). These sources include copies of Danin's letters to the editors and original letters from the editorial board in 1975–1976. The collection also contains reviews and comments of the editors on the book manuscript. In order to reconstruct the broader context of changes in the editorial staff of the *ZhZL*, I used the documents from the personal collection of Sergei Semanov in the Manuscripts Department of the Russian State Library. In addition, I conducted research interviews with Semyon Reznik, who served as the editor for *ZhZL* from 1963 to 1973. The wide range of sources used in this paper allows me to explore the institutional logic of cultural production in the late Soviet Union, which was initially studied by Polly Jones [Jones, 2019] and Catriona Kelly [Kelly, 2021a, 2021b]. This case also sheds light on the system of the censorship [Sherry, 2015], and the perception of the Western cultural phenomena in the USSR [Gilburd, 2018], and late Soviet anti-Semitism [Brudny, 1998; Shnirelman, 2002], because, as will be clear from further analysis, the editorial claims against Danin had anti-Semitic overtones.

Daniil Danin's Background

In the early 1970s, when the conflict in the *ZhZL* office took place, Daniil Danin was an accomplished Soviet writer and popularizer of science. He was born in 1914 in Vilna (now Vilnius, Lithuania) to a Jewish family that moved to Moscow during World War I. In 1937, he

began his career as a literary consultant for *Znamia* magazine and started publishing under the pen name Danin (his actual surname was Plotke). In the late 1930s, he attended the Moscow Literary Institute and maintained contact with new young poets [Gromova, 2009: 46].

Soon after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, in July 1941, Danin joined the “writer’s company” of the 8th division of the Moscow People’s Militia [Budnitskii, 2021]. By October 1941, he had been transferred to the regular army to work as a literary employee for the frontline newspapers. In 1942, Danin was inducted into the USSR Writers’ Union and continued to publish critical articles. Upon his demobilization in 1946, he began working for the commission of the Writers’ Union on literary theory and criticism. Three years later, Danin fell victim to the campaign against cosmopolitanism. An article in *Pravda* stated,

At the head of the formalist critics – bourgeois aesthetes was D. Danin, who inherited the nefarious methods of cosmopolitans, who in his time poisoned Mayakovsky and lauded Boris Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova. [...] The cosmopolitan Danin demanded writers to depict the “conflict in consciousness,” the split consciousness, the moral and ideological inferiority of the Soviet man in their works [Gribachev, 1949].

After being expelled from the Communist Party, Danin spent a year with a geological expedition along the Angara River in Siberia. He returned to literary work only in April 1950, when the charges had been dismissed. Obviously, the period of the state repression transformed Danin into an anti-Stalinist and a liberal intellectual according to the ideological standards of Soviet Russia.

In the mid-1950s, Danin shifted his focus to popularizing natural sciences after serving as an internal reviewer for *Znamia* and the criticism department of *Novyi Mir* over the previous few years [Danin, 1996: 274]. His education also aided in this endeavor, as he had studied at the Moscow State University Department of Chemistry from 1933 to 1936, and at the Physics Department from 1936 to 1941. In 1957, Danin published two books, *For Man* (“*Dlia cheloveka*”) and *The Good Atom* (“*Dobryi atom*”) which explored the history of atomic physics and Soviet atomic physicists. In 1961, he released a collection of essays entitled *The Inevitability of a Strange World* (“*Neizbezhnost' strannogo mira*”). These works were written within the discourse of “scientific-fictional literature” (“*nauchno-khudozhestvennaia literatura*”), “a new type of literature located at the intersection of literary fiction and science journalism,” as Matthias Schwartz pointed out [Schwartz, 2021]. In the USSR, this style emerged in the mid-1930s, progressed through the postwar years, and remained in the Thaw period. According to Schwartz, Danin was its “most prominent advocate” [Schwartz, 2021: 421] in the late Soviet era. Starting from 1960, he headed the editorial board of the anthology *Paths into the Unknown: Writers Talk About Science* (“*Puti v neznaemoe: Pisateli rasskazyvaiut o nauke*”). In 1967, he

published the biography of Ernest Rutherford as part of the *Lives of Remarkable People* series which was reprinted a year later. The idea of writing a book about Niels Bohr emerged after the release of *Rutherford*, whereas the editors of *ZhZL* suggested Albert Einstein as a subject. By this point, Danin had established himself as a physics non-fiction writer and was well aware of the behind-the-scenes mechanisms of the Soviet literary system.

The Reputation of Niels Bohr in the Soviet Union

Niels Bohr had a controversial status within the Soviet public sphere. On the one hand, he had been a foreign member of the USSR Academy of Sciences from 1929 and visited the Soviet Union three times (in 1934, 1937, and 1961) [Belokon', 1962]. He praised Soviet science and the Soviet project in general, naming it “a grandiose social experiment” [Kovaleva et al., 1997: 459]. The Institute of Theoretical Physics in Copenhagen, which Bohr headed from 1921, hosted Soviet physicists such as Lev Landau (in 1930) and, from the late 1950s, scientists from the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research and other Soviet academic institutions.

On the other hand, the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, developed by Niels Bohr, Werner Heisenberg, and colleagues, was viewed as idealistic in the Soviet philosophy of science. The Copenhagen interpretation’s principle of complementarity provides one of its core tenets. According to this principle, microcosmic phenomena can be satisfactorily explained by utilizing two classical yet oppositional models. Microscopic objects demonstrate both the properties of classical particles (a corpuscular model) and waves (a wave model). This fact led physicists to question the validity of the concepts of classical mechanics for microcosmic phenomena. According to the Copenhagen interpretation authors, quantum mechanics does not describe micro-objects themselves but their properties which can only be recorded by classical measurement tools; therefore, repeating the same experiment can produce varying results. Epistemologically, the Copenhagen physicists revisited the principles of determinism.

An article by Mikhail Omel'ianovskii demonstrates how the Copenhagen interpretation was perceived in Soviet philosophy. Being an expert in dialectic materialism, he argued in 1962 that the works of Copenhagen physicists portray reality in a “fundamentally subjective” way [Omel'ianovskii, 1962: 88]. The idea of uncontrolled interaction between the objects of the microcosm and the measuring instruments in his judgment was far from “the concept of objective reality”. As the Canadian historian of science Alexei Kojevnikov pointed out, this strategy of criticism was typical for other Soviet philosophers as well [Kojevnikov, 2004: 222-224].

In addition to the problems concerning the acceptance of the Copenhagen School’s theses in Soviet philosophy, Niels Bohr’s biography had significant political implications in the Soviet

public sphere. After the end of World War II, Bohr consistently opposed the use of nuclear weapons and the beginning of the Cold War, emphasizing the ethical responsibility of scientists for the political use of the results of their research. The famous Soviet physicist and political dissident, Andrei Sakharov, recalled in his memoirs that he wrote *Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom* (1968) under the influence of Bohr's and Einstein's pacifist articles [Sakharov]. For Danin, Bohr was a symbol of contemporary science, which changes people's perceptions of the world: it is no coincidence that the original intention of the book was a comparative biography of Bohr and Pablo Picasso, who changed his painting styles many times throughout his life [Danin, 2012: 45]. Thus, the book on Niels Bohr was a relevant statement in an ideologically polarized environment.

The book about Niels Bohr was divided into four parts with an epilogue. The first part "A Man of Verticality" ("*Chelovek vertikal'i*") was focused on Bohr's family background, childhood, and education. In the next part, "Rise and Solitude" ("*Vozvyshenie i odinochestvo*"), Danin wrote about the beginning of Bohr's scientific career, his experiments conducted at Cambridge, World War I, and the beginning of his work on quantum mechanics. The third part, "Years of Hopes Realized" ("*Gody sbyvshikhsia nadezhd*"), presented the intellectual history of the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics and Bohr's interactions with colleagues from his Institute. The last part of the biography, "Alone with Mankind" ("*Naedine s chelovechestvom*"), described Bohr's scientific work during the interbellum, his visits to the Soviet Union, his anti-fascist and anti-war activity, participation in the US nuclear project, and his post-war antinuclear statements. The basic principle of the text was the entanglement between the chronicle of Bohr's life, his interactions with his colleagues, and the evolution of physics in the 20th century.

The Conflict in the Editorial Office

Daniil Danin had been working on the manuscript since 1969, when he made his first business trip to Copenhagen. He gained access to a unique corpus of material in the Niels Bohr Archive, which included the Archive of Sources for the History of Quantum Physics. This collection comprised a series of interviews conducted between 1961 and 1965 by a team of historians led by Tomas Kuhn. In the foreword of his book, Danin highlighted the invaluable importance of these sources. He contacted a range of individuals, such as the archive director, Leon Rosenfeld, and Bohr's relatives, former assistants, and students [Danin, 1978: 546-547].

Under the terms of the contract, Danin was required to submit the manuscript by December 15, 1971, but asked for a postponement. In May 1973, he again asked for more time to

finish his research.⁶ These delays were considered to be standard procedure within the Soviet planned economy: an author was permitted to postpone the scheduled deadline twice. When Danin completed the manuscript in January 1975, three parts of a book had been published in the magazine *Nauka i Zhizn'* (*Science and Life*) without any censorship and were welcomed by the readers. Nevertheless, after five months of the manuscript being edited in the *ZhZL* office, Danin regretfully stated in September 1975 that this process had “reached a dead end”.⁷ His letter to the publishing house director was accompanied by an unusual document: a nearly 30-page “*ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska*” (explanatory note) regarding the manuscript’s revision during the editing period.⁸ My reconstruction of the conflict, which occurred in the summer of 1975, is based on a comparison of Danin’s explanatory note with the letters sent to him by the editors.

Every book manuscript in the *ZhZL* underwent an expert review prior to being approved. Vladimir Kartsev, a researcher at the Institute of the History of Natural Science and the author of biographies on Isaac Newton and James Maxwell in *ZhZL*, reviewed Danin’s book. He suggested that Danin should remove the “sublimity of style” and simplify the explanation of the principles of quantum mechanics. In the mid-June of 1975, Danin revised the text and received feedback a few weeks later from Andrei Efimov, the book’s editor.

According to Danin, the beginning of the editing process was typical: the editor “said [...] that I had the right to accept his demands to the extent that I considered fair.”⁹ Nevertheless, Efimov asserted that the book’s depiction of Nazism was restricted to the Holocaust. It should be noted, however, that his statement contained anti-Semitic undertones. In the USSR, references to the Holocaust were often censored since the Nazis exterminated not only the Jews but also other ethnic groups [Grytsak, 2010: 133]. Danin could not agree with that interpretation and listed the “many other faces of evil” (“*raznoobraznoe zlo*”) mentioned in his book. These included the Nazi’s anti-communist actions, the Munich Conference, the Anschluss of Austria, and the occupation of European countries. In addition, he disagreed with the remarks that scientists are portrayed as “the highest caste of the initiated, who [...] are not affected by the questions that concern humanity,” whereas the book consistently emphasizes the political significance of their research.¹⁰

⁶ Letter from Editorial Board to Danin, 29 May 1973, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv literatury i iskusstva (hereafter - RGALI), fond (f.) 3149 (Daniin Danin’s personal collection), opis’ (op.) 1, delo (d.) 404, list (l.) 50

⁷ Letter from Danin to the *ZhZL* editorial director Sergei Semanov, 12 September 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 397, l. 28.

⁸ Daniil Danin, *Ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska o redaktirovanii rukopisi knigi «Nil's Bor» (ZhZL, iun'-sentiabr' 1975)*, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, 397, l. 29-57. The title “explanatory note” in Russian is associated with paperwork language.

⁹ Daniil Danin, *Ob'iasnitel'naia zapiska... l. 30.*

¹⁰ Thus, for example, the 4th part of the book “Alone with Mankind” is devoted to Bohr’s attempts to stop the creation of nuclear weapons, meetings with Winston Churchill, conflict with Werner Heisenberg in 1941 because of his work in the German atomic project, Bohr’s pacifist views in the 1950s.

A month later, on July 28, 1975, Danin submitted a revised manuscript to the editorial office. He reported having made approximately 400 corrections.¹¹ Despite this fact, he got a second letter from the editor two weeks later, pointing out a need for “major revisions.” Efimov’s main suggestions included (1) to add a “Marxist-Leninist assessment” of the causes of the two world wars and the emergence of fascism (as a “spawn of the imperialist bourgeoisie”); (2) to give a “political assessment” of the participation of Bohr and other physicists in the US atomic project; (3) to show “the decisive role of the Soviet Union in the defeat of Hitlerism”; (4) to point out the significance of the “Great October Revolution” and the difference between Soviet and “bourgeois” science.¹²

In his response, Danin emphasized that the editor’s ideologically tainted evaluations diverged from the original documentary style of the book. To show this, he cited a fragment of the manuscript:

The war charged on for a long time.

“Business as usual,” Churchill said knowingly. And he didn’t even add “bloody.” This was to be seen by those who did not declare war but fought [Danin, 1978: 157].

Reflecting on the quote, Danin emphasized the usage of minute detail to show the political dimension: “The image of the bloody business combined with Churchill’s name unambiguously fulfills the alphabet formula about the imperialist nature of the beginning of the war. [...] The use of documentary details and imaginative journalism, rather than bare political formulas, nowhere leads to misconceptions.”¹³ Although Danin’s interpretation of the concept “business as usual” differed from its original meaning (Churchill meant the maintenance of daily life, not commercial activity), he used this example to explain to Efimov why he avoided writing “straightforward political declarations.”

Danin disagreed with other Efimov’s comments as well. He recalled that Bohr was an anti-fascist and it motivated him to join the US nuclear project because Efimov’s second comment was on this issue. In the text, Danin expanded the fragments about Soviet physicists and Bohr’s interest in news about the Red Army’s victories. He insisted that Bohr was not “excluded” from politics even in his later years since he published an open anti-war letter to the United Nations and participated in the creation of CERN (The European Organization for Nuclear Research, located in Switzerland).

Meanwhile, the conflict between the writer and the editor was escalating. On September 8, Danin received a third letter from Efimov, which was written in an “insulting and instructive

¹¹ Daniil Danin, *Ob"iasnitel'naia zapiska...* 1. 36.

¹² Letter from Efimov to Danin, 11 August 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 404, l. 55-58.

¹³ Daniil Danin, *Ob"iasnitel'naia zapiska...* 1. 39.

tone.”¹⁴ At the beginning of the letter, the editor pointed out Danin’s unwillingness “to show good will, i.e., to treat in good faith (*otnestis' dobrosovestno*) the editorial comments.” Unlike his previous letters, where Efimov commented on the content of the whole text, here he focused on Danin’s specific ideological errors. For instance, the phrase “invisible international fellowship of nature researchers” seemed to be a fault:

The fallacy of this formulation has already been pointed out many times. Let me remind you that the “International” is a historical reality. And it is simply blasphemous to so name this mythical association of scientists, some of whom would later work on the creation of the atomic bomb for the USA, and others for the fascist Germany.¹⁵

Responding to the editor’s criticism, Danin pointed out that in this quotation he was referring to a scientific term – “invisible international colleges.” Actually, Bohr’s team in Copenhagen included citizens from various countries. As Alexei Kojevnikov noted, this was Bohr’s conscious decision which can be explained by political (Denmark’s neutral status) and institutional circumstances. Theoretical physics at that time was still a new discipline and its funding was limited, so it was cheaper and faster to invite a foreigner who had recently defended their thesis than to train scientists on the domestic Danish market [Kojevnikov, 2020].

Criticizing Danin’s work, Efimov claimed the following: “Almost all of your corrections contain errors and the list of remarks I have provided could be greatly expanded.”¹⁶ Efimov considered the use of the conjunction “and” in the phrase “communists and anti-fascists” to be a mistake (commenting by “What? Communists are not anti-fascists?”). He also perceived the metaphor “Mediterranean humanity” to be erroneous, characterizing it by a phrase “the term you invented does not correspond to Marxist provisions on class social formations.”¹⁷ Even though these remarks may seem minor and personal, they had a common meaning. It is clear that Efimov aimed to question Danin’s loyalty to Soviet ideology and his dedication to “universal humanism,” which could be interpreted as unpatriotic in the Soviet context. Danin, who experienced persecution in the mass ideological campaigns of the late 1940s, must have understood this implication but could not openly express his sentiments about the meaning of the editorial claims. In his explanatory note, he refers to them as “reprimands” (*vygovory*) and “micro-mockeries” (*mikro-izdevki*).¹⁸

From Danin’s point of view, expressed in his correspondence, the conflict with the editor took place for three reasons: (1) “the misunderstanding of the documentary style of the book;”

¹⁴ Daniil Danin, *Ob"iasnitel'naia zapiska...*

¹⁵ Letter of Efimov to Danin, 4 September 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 404, l. 58-62.

¹⁶ Letter of Efimov to Danin, 4 September 1975...

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Daniil Danin, *Ob"iasnitel'naia zapiska... l. 53.*

(2) “unreasonable requirements for the author;” (3) “the careless attitude towards the author's efforts in reinforcing the socio-political themes in the book.”¹⁹ Thus, Danin disagreed with Efimov on the specificity of a biography as a genre and the limits of authorial autonomy.

The conflict reached its pinnacle in October 1975. In response to Danin's explanatory note, the head of the *ZhZL* editorial office, Sergei Semanov, referenced the current political context for the first time, stating: “The recent provocative uproar (*voznia*) surrounding a renowned prize and a particular scandalous physicist once again highlights the necessity for a critical political approach.”²⁰ Undoubtedly, he was referring to Andrei Sakharov, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 9, 1975. After that, the editors of *ZhZL* avoided any mention of international solidarity among scholars and the independent role of scientists in addressing the nuclear threat without the involvement of the Soviet leadership.

Discussing the protracted conflict two months later, Danin recalled the working conditions of the *ZhZL* editorial office in the 1960s, when he started to work with the series:

Rutherford, which has been published twice in *ZhZL*, is written with the application of the same method and is partially devoted to the same epoch as *Niels Bohr*. But if this book had undergone even a tenth of the changes that have now been suggested to me, it would not be scientific-fictional, nor would it be widely known.²¹

Why did Danin's manuscript face significant editorial resistance despite being published in periodicals and receiving approval from *Glavlit*, the state-level censorship institution? To answer this question, I reconstruct the institutional changes within the *ZhZL* editorial office from 1960 to 1975.

The Editorial Board of the *Lives of Remarkable People* Series from 1960 to 1975: Changes and Inertia

The series of biographies *Lives of Remarkable People* was originally founded in 1890 by the Russian publisher Florenty Pavlenkov who invented a format of a biographical library that included short and popular individual biographies. From 1890 to 1915, Pavlenkov and his successors who managed the series after his death in 1900, published more than two hundred volumes on 140 non-Russian and 60 Russian figures [Trigos & Ueland, 2022: 9]. Soon after the series was closed in 1915 by Pavlenkov's successors, Maxim Gorky attempted to revive it. The

¹⁹ Ibid. 1. 56.

²⁰ Letter from Semanov to Danin, 21 October 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 404, l. 68.

²¹ Letter from Danin to Semanov, 21 December 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 397, l. 63.

years of war and the revolution postponed these plans, but during his European exile, Gorky became acquainted with the modernist experiments in the genre of biography in the works of Virginia Woolf and André Malraux [Trigos & Ueland, 2022: 13]. After his return to the Soviet Union in 1932, Gorky used his contacts with party officials to revitalize the series. In the political climate of the 1930s, the series took on the propaganda task of creating the image of a new Soviet man. According to Gorky, biographies should be “understandable to the masses,” rely on historical documents and context, and provide “pedagogical models to inspire imitation” of the hero [Trigos & Ueland, 2022: 17]. Initially, the series was published by the State Journal and Newspaper Publishing Collective (*Zhurnal'no-gazetnoe ob"edinenie*), but in 1938, several years after Gorky's death, it was transferred to the *Molodaia Gvardiia* publishing house which belonged to the Communist Youth League (Komsomol). As a result, the initial editorial board, which included Alexander Tikhonov and Mikhail Koltsov, resigned, and the youth became the target audience. However, Gorky's legacy remained important to the editors of the series in subsequent periods.

In 1960, when Daniil Danin began working with the series, it had already been headed for several years by Iurii Korotkov, a former Komsomol activist from Voronezh who had been transferred to the Central Committee of the Komsomol in 1950 and then, in 1953, to the *Molodaia Gvardiia* publishing house.²² After being promoted to the head of the *ZhZL* editorial board, he reframed the concept of series. During World War II, the biographies were almost entirely devoted to figures of Russian history, therefore, the series was renamed “Great Russian People” (*Velikie Russkie Liudi*). Even though the initial name was returned after the war, the isolationist narrative was persistent in the books of the late Stalinist period. For example, in the letter to the Central Committee of Komsomol written in 1956, the director of *Molodaia Gvardiia* publishing house recognized the “decline” of the series: “There are almost no books about remarkable people of foreign countries in the series, and many books of the series are written in a barren, inexpressive style and unengaging design.”²³

In order to solve these problems, Korotkov proposed to *Molodaia Gvardiia* to make a planned publication list of 200 biographical figures representing the main regions of the world and various branches of arts and sciences.²⁴ He used the term “tram biography” (*tramvainaia biografiiia*) to describe the type of the book he wanted. Korotkov wanted a volume of the *ZhZL* to engage the reader to such extent that it could be read in public transport [Pomerantseva, 1987: 105]. Under Korotkov's guidance, the number of editorial staff members increased from two to

²² “Korotkov Iurii Nikolaevich (1924-1989)”, in *Moskovskaia entsiklopediia. Tom 1: Litsa Moskvy. Kniga 2: I–M* (Moscow: Fond Moskovskie entsiklopedii, 2008), 264.

²³ Letter from “Molodaya Gvardia” publishing house director to the Komsomol Central Committee, 6 August 1956, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii (hereafter – RGASPI), f. M-1 (Komsomol Central Committee), op. 32, d. 818, l. 86.

²⁴ Interview with Semyon E. Reznik, 1 February 2022. Author's personal archive.

seven. He also established an informal division of responsibilities according to thematic areas (revolutionary figures, science, literature, etc.). Although the “long list” of 200 subjects had not been completed, the books of the “Korotkov period” attracted a wide readership and were published in large print runs. By the mid-1960s, they were perceived as important public events by the members of intellectual and creative communities. For example, the Russian sociologist Alexei Levinson recalled that biographies of Bertolt Brecht (published by Lev Kopelev in 1966), Federico Garcia Lorca (Lev Ospovat, 1965), and Pyotr Chaadayev (Alexander Lebedev, 1966) were interpreted as critical reflections on Soviet reality utilizing the “Aesopian language” [Turkov, Iskander, Levinson, 2003].²⁵

The environment in which the editorial board worked began to change in 1966. Chadayev’s biography received a critical review by the historian and corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences, Nikolai Druzhinin, in the leading party journal *Kommunist* [Druzhinin, 1966]. After Druzhinin’s review, the work of the *ZhZL* editors was examined by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Komsomol. As a result, Korotkov was admonished and told there was a “the need for a stricter approach to manuscripts accepted for publication.”²⁶ In the language of Soviet bureaucracy, this was criticism without being an official reprimand. The same year, the magazine *Znamia* published a polemical article on Kopelev’s *Brecht* by the established critic and literary scholar Alexander Dymshits [Dymshits, 1966]. Kopelev viewed the article as a signal of the deteriorating political climate, especially since he had joined the burgeoning political dissident movement in the 1960s [Orlova, Kopelev, 1990: 204]. The publication of the book about Nikolai Vavilov, finished in 1966 by the *ZhZL* employee Semyon Reznik, was delayed for political reasons. After several attempts, the book was finally published in 1968 [Reznik, 2013]. The editorial staff interpreted these events as the beginning of a party campaign against “Korotkov *ZhZL*.”²⁷

In 1968, Valerii Ganichev became the new director of the *Molodaia Gvardiia* publishing house. Prior to this, he served in the propaganda and agitation department of the Komsomol Central Committee. Like his predecessors, he was a member of an informal group surrounding Sergei Pavlov, the first secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee from 1959 to 1968. The Komsomol officials in this faction (labelled “*pavlovtsy*”) sympathized with Russian nationalist ideas and aimed to impede the Westernization of the Soviet youth during the Thaw. For example, Pavlov and his followers implemented new social practices under the Komsomol’s supervision to control and supervise youth behavior through the “brigades of the People’s Militia.” Moreover, the Komsomol officials aimed to enhance the psychological mobilization of

²⁵ On the concept of “Aesopian language”: [Loseff, 1984].

²⁶ Letter from “*Molodaya Gvardia*” editor-in-chief to the editorial office of “*Kommunist*”, 19 June 1968, RGASPI, f. M-42 (“*Molodaya Gvardia*” Publishing House), op. 2, d. 1644, l. 12.

²⁷ Interview with Semyon Reznik.

adolescents through activities like a paramilitary game called “Zarnitsa” [Mitrokhin, 2003]. That is why liberal-minded editors perceived Ganichev’s appointment to the publishing house as a turn towards conservatism. In an interview, Reznik used a later term “national patriotism” to describe Ganichev’s views.²⁸ Unlike the previous directors, Ganichev could undertake more radical actions owing to the changing political climate of the late 1960s. He wrote in his memoirs:

From what point could I begin a patriotic spiritual Russian business (*delo*) at the publishing house? Of course, starting with the series *Lives of Remarkable People*. I realized that it was necessary to change the [thematic] proportions, to devote as many books as possible to national history, to the devotees (*podvizhnikam*) of Russian culture and science. There had existed infinite hypocrisy and deceit in this series before me [Ganichev, 2013].

In 1969, Korotkov was dismissed on Ganichev’s initiative. Ganichev handed over the post of editorial director of *ZhZL* to Semanov, a historian who had worked in the propaganda department of the Komsomol in Leningrad in the 1950s and had become close to underground circles of Russian nationalists [Mitrokhin, 2003, 186]. In fact, Ganichev recalled Semanov’s internal evolution by the late 1960s: “I made inquiries [...]. Isn’t he ‘a man of the sixties’ (*shestidesiatnik*), a supporter of the ‘Thaw’? No, this disease has passed, and now he is fascinated by national history and Russian culture” [Ganichev, 2013]. It is worth noting that Semanov, unlike Korotkov who considered *ZhZL* to be his primary life pursuit, did not promptly embrace this role and viewed it as temporary.²⁹

In July 1969, Semanov presented his proposal for a new cultural agenda for the *ZhZL* in his analytical note titled “On the Editions of the Biographical Series *ZhZL*”. Firstly, from Semanov’s point of view, it was necessary to “strengthen the educational value of the series under the current circumstances, when there are nihilistic tendencies among young people towards moral, political, cultural, and historical values”.³⁰ Secondly, Semanov expressed disappointment with the fact that biographical figures from the Western cultural canon appeared more frequently in the series than people from Russian history:

Among the *ZhZL* books, we find biographies of Dante, Rubens, Spinoza, Campanella, and many others. This is all very well, but it only casts a shadow (*otteniaet*) on the protracted neglect of the heroes of our

²⁸ Interview with Semyon Reznik.

²⁹ In his diary of 1969, he wrote: “Everyone wants me to head the *ZhZL*, but they themselves prefer the roles of advisors and ideologists. Who would want to do very important but hard work?”. [Semanov, 2012].

³⁰ Sergei Semanov, *Ob izdaniakh biograficheskoi serii ZhZL*, July 1969, Otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki (hereafter – OR RGB), f. 887 (Sergei Semanov’s personal collection), karton (k.) 1, d. 23, l. 1. In the language of the time, the phrase “to strengthen the educational value” was a commonly understood euphemism for ideologization acceptable in the Soviet public sphere.

national past. [...] Biographies of Peter the Great, Suvorov, Kutuzov, and Admiral Makarov have not appeared in *ZhZL* since the 1940s.³¹

Additionally, Semanov critiqued Victor Shklovsky's *Leo Tolstoy* and Daniil Danin's *Rutherford* for their "excessive volume" and "gigantomania." It is likely that the books' length was just one of the reasons for Semanov's criticism, since his diaries from this period contained frequent anti-Semitic remarks. As the editorial director, Semanov worked behind the scenes to limit the number of publications by Jewish authors [Semanov, 2012: 219, 222, 223, 226].

The early years of the *ZhZL* office under Semanov can be described as a combination of changes and inertia.

On the one hand, Semanov reorganized the staff and dismissed Jewish editors, for example, Marat Brukhnov who edited the translated works and Semyon Reznik who edited scientific biographies, including Danin's *Rutherford*. Such changes disrupted the informal allocation of responsibilities between editors that had been formed by the 1960s. As Semyon Reznik said in the interview:

He (Semanov) didn't want the editor to have any autonomy. When I was being fired, I said to him: "I advise you to choose one person for editing the books about scientists." He answered: "Yes. Thank you. Very good advice." He immediately gave two manuscripts about scientists to different editors. He didn't want any of us to be personally involved in any section. He wanted correctors (*pravshchiki*), not decision makers.³²

The cultural canon of Semanov can be divided into several parts. Firstly, it included state and military leaders from the Russian Empire. In 1972, he authored a book on Admiral Stepan Makarov and published Oleg Mikhailov's book on Alexander Suvorov in 1973. Nikolai Pavlenko's biography of Peter the Great (1975) was also among the books devoted to imperial history. In this aspect, his cultural outlook was comparable to the "national bolshevism" or "Stalinist Russocentric" culture of the 1940s, analyzed by Brandenberger [2002]. Secondly, Semanov was interested in publishing on Orthodox intellectuals. In 1972, he edited a collection of essays titled *Russian Writers of the 17th Century*. This included biographical works on the *protopop* (a priest of higher rank in the Eastern Orthodox Church) Avvakum Petrov (written by the journalist Dmitiy Zhukov) and Simeon of Polotsk (written by the historian Lev Pushkarev). Lastly, Semanov attempted to publish books with an "anti-Zionist" meaning. One of them was Alexander Agaryshev's work on the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser who fought against Israel, which was published shortly after his death in 1975.

³¹ Ibid. I. 6.

³² Interview with Semyon E. Reznik. Galina Pomerantseva (senior editor of the series from the early 1950s) also recalled the rejection of the division: [Pomerantseva, 1987: 175].

On the other hand, during the early years of Semanov's appointment, the series persisted in publishing books that contradicted his ideas. Such works included Boris Nosik's biography of the theologian and philanthropist Albert Schweitzer (1971) and Boris Gribanov's book on Ernest Hemingway (1970). The work on these editions started in the mid-1960s and could not be halted by Semanov due to the planned economy. In addition, personal connections between the authors and editors remained stable. It is important that Danin signed his contract with *ZhZL* for *Niels Bohr* during this time of transition, when the ideological agenda and managerial principles of the series were transforming. The conflict with the editors enabled him to document the outcome, which involved violating the "rules of the game" established in the 1960s.

Motivations of the Actors and the Resolution of the Conflict

The context outlined above sheds light on the conflict between Daniil Danin and the editorial staff. In 1970, the contract stated that Reznik (the editor of *Rutherford*) would edit the manuscript. However, after Reznik's dismissal in 1973, the work was assigned to Andrei Efimov, who had no prior experience working with biographies of scientists. Efimov, who arrived at *ZhZL* in the early 1960s after completing his studies at the Moscow Polygraphic Institute, was hostile towards Danin and instigated conflict intentionally while working on his book. In 1967, Danin made a diary entry regarding Efimov's "sympathetically mocking smile" at the moment of *Glavlit's* censorship intervention in *Rutherford*. At this moment, a fragment about Petr Kapitsa's ban on returning from the USSR to Cambridge in 1934, sanctioned by Stalin and the Politburo, was cut from the layout [Danin, 2012: 75].³³ In a 1978 addendum to this note, Danin emphasized that by the mid-1970s, Efimov "had transformed into an Orthodox monarchist [...] and now the sleepless stimulus of his editorial vigilance is to beat the Jews and save Russia!"³⁴ In the interview, Semyon Reznik, who interacted closely with Efimov in the 1960s, reflects on his political shift and his alignment with Semanov's ideas in the early 1970s.³⁵

Semanov may have regarded Niels Bohr's biography as conflicting for several reasons. Bohr's association with the Western world and his secular philosophy clashed with the editorial director's ideological platform which predominantly relied on ethnic nationalism, monarchism, and religiosity. The representations of the physicists in the culture of the 1960s frustrated Semanov. In a diary entry from 1969, while discussing the trend of professions, he sarcastically quipped: "At the end of the 1950s, the geologists passed into oblivion (*ushli v nebytie*), and the physicists came to the throne (*votsarilis'*). They prevailed for the entire decade, and their

³³ Note from 8 February 1967.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 25. In Russian Danin used the set expression "*bei zhidov – spasai Rossiuu*," illustrating far-right anti-Semitic sentiment.

³⁵ Interview with Semyon E. Reznik.

superiority was unparalleled and all-encompassing” [Semanov, 2012: 218].³⁶ Danin realized that the editorial board’s resistance was severe for these reasons. The most plausible objective pursued by both Semanov and Efimov was to slow down the manuscript’s editorial preparation, heighten the level of emotional tension, and force the manuscript’s withdrawal.

Meanwhile, correspondence between Danin and the editors continued. On January 6, 1976, he received a response from Semanov who recalled the editorial board’s “good will” for accepting the manuscript, which was 2.5 years overdue. Semanov reiterated the main theses of Efimov’s second letter on the need for “party evaluation” of scientists and referred to the events surrounding the physicist Sakharov, describing it as a “dirty campaign.” In the letter, he strictly set the following terms:

Either you will start more benevolent cooperation with the editorial office, or the editorial office will be forced, unfortunately, to break off all business relations with you as an author who has not fulfilled the terms of the contract.³⁷

Six days later, Danin had a meeting with Valerii Ganichev, the director of the *Molodaia Gvardiia* publishing house. Ganichev took a neutral stance in the conflict, agreeing with Danin’s position and suggesting the need for a new editor for the manuscript.³⁸ Nevertheless, at the end of January that year Danin was surprised to learn that the editing was again assigned to Efimov.

In mid-May, Efimov completed his third review of Danin’s manuscript. As before, he emphasized the book’s lack of a “class approach” in the interpretation of historical events and figures. For example, when discussing Bohr’s peacekeeping initiatives, Danin presented a too neutral account of Edward Wood, the Earl of Halifax and the British ambassador to the United States, who, from Efimov’s point of view, was considered to be “a follower of expansionist pretensions.”³⁹ However, this review contained a new, previously unmentioned claim. Efimov noted that the fragments on Einstein should be censored due to the fact that he was a “Zionist”: “there is a photograph of Ben-Gurion and Einstein, and the latter does not feel any hardship in the company of this politician” and “Einstein performed at a concert organized by the Zionists in a synagogue.”⁴⁰ Thus, Efimov referred to the concepts of the official Soviet anti-Israeli propaganda of the 1970s to blame Danin. These new comments seemed to Danin to be a violation of work ethics. In a letter addressed to Ganichev, he insisted that the conflict was meaningless and that it served as “a deliberate mockery of a writer who refused to comply.”⁴¹

³⁶ Note from 3 February 1969.

³⁷ Letter from Semanov to Danin, 6 January 1976, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 404, l. 73.

³⁸ Letter from Danin to Ganichev, 18 May 1976, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 397, l. 65-72.

³⁹ Andrei Efimov, *Review on the manuscript*, 26 April 1976, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 469, l. 15.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* l. 21.

⁴¹ Letter from Danin to Ganichev, 18 May 1976... l. 67.

At the end of May 1976, the head of the *ZhZL* editorial office was replaced by the philologist Iurii Seleznev (1939-1984), who was ideologically close to Semanov. According to Reznik's recollections, Seleznev was unwilling to alter the established work order.⁴² However, after further correspondence between Ganichev and Danin, Seleznev informed the writer on June 16, 1976 via telegram that the manuscript review had been completed and requested that the writer prepare the manuscript for printing.⁴³

The reasons for the sudden approval, just one month after a harsh third review, can be attributed to Danin's appeal to influential figures in the Soviet literary community. In an article on social cooperation mechanisms within the late Soviet cultural production system, Ilya Kukulin, Maria Maiofis, and Maria Chetverikova introduced the concept of backstages.⁴⁴ These were communicative episodes wherein the participants discussed the norms governing literary institutions and the community's functioning, which were typically unwritten. These conversations also explored the ways to change or circumvent these norms [Kukulin, Maiofis, Chetverikova, 2022: 86].

A similar backstage for Danin were conversations with Reznik, the editor of his first biography. Reznik recalled: "Since I was no longer working there and had no internal obligations to the editorial office but I knew the ins and outs (*vnutrenniuiu kukhniu*), he would call me sometimes, asking me for advice: how, what [to do]."⁴⁵ Perhaps, during this communication, Danin decided to contact Georgy Markov (1911-1991), the first secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers.

Danin sent a letter to Markov on December 27, 1975, when the probability of the book's publication was still uncertain. Danin thanked him for his "attention and support" and also provided details of the conflict with the editorial board because Markov planned to have a conversation with Ganichev.⁴⁶

The reason for Danin's gratitude may have stemmed from Markov's speech at the Plenum of the Board of the Union of Writers of the USSR in March 1973. In this speech, Markov listed Danin as one of the authors who had excelled in "propagating science and technological advancements" and effectively depicted the work of scientists [Markov, 1973: 14]. Since the other writers and journalists listed by Markov (Boris Agapov, Gennadiy Fish, Vladimir Chivilikhin, etc.) did not publish books in *ZhZL*⁴⁷ the literary secretary noted Danin personally, but not as one of the authors of the series.

⁴² Interview with Semyon E. Reznik.

⁴³ Telegram by Seleznev to Danin, 16 June 1976, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 404, l. 79.

⁴⁴ The authors took this notion from the works of Irving Hoffman but reinterpreted it.

⁴⁵ Interview with Semyon E. Reznik.

⁴⁶ Letter from Danin to Markov, 27 December 1975, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 397, l. 64.

⁴⁷ In his report, Markov mentioned another regular author of *ZhZL*, Oleg Pisarzhevsky (1908-1964), but he had been dead for many years by then.

In the 1970s, Markov was associated with the “secretary prose” (*sekretarskaia proza*), i.e., literary works by the leaders of the official writers’ unions in the USSR which lacked readers’ attention. For instance, in his diary of 1986, Anatoly Chernyaev, Mikhail Gorbachev’s assistant for international affairs, called Markov “a symbol of *Brezhnev*” in Soviet literature [Chernyaev, 2008]. Moreover, Markov showed support for conservative-nationalist ideology by mentioning Vladimir Chivilikhin in his speech. In fact, Chivilikhin was a member of the “Russian party” and one of the eleven “signatories” of the pogrom letter “What does the ‘*Noviy Mir*’ oppose?” (1969). However, unexpectedly, Markov’s position was not limited to this. Several times in the report, Markov emphasized the importance of “entertaining” essays focused on various facets of scientific and technological advancement, including nuclear power, space exploration, chemistry, cybernetics, genetics, the implementation of new technology, and the expansion of the oil and gas sector [Markov, 1973: 14, 17-18, 20].⁴⁸ Speaking in support of Danin in his communication with Ganichev, Markov was likely influenced by his values connected with the Soviet idea of the importance of scientific and technological progress and promoting new advancements in science and technology. Ganichev, in turn, saw the publication of the book about Bohr as a chance to demonstrate loyalty to a higher literary authority.

Conclusion: The Case of Danin’s *Niels Bohr* as a Mirror of Cultural and Societal Changes

The editorial history of *Niels Bohr* by Daniil Danin reveals the transformation of the work ethics and principles within the editorial office of *ZhZL* since its text had been published in *Nauka i Zhizn’* without any difficulties. Danin highlighted a deviation from the “microclimate” of the 1960s, which occurred in *ZhZL* soon after the beginning of the Stagnation. In a 1978 diary entry, he acknowledged mastering “skillful letters, apt calls, and counter-demagogy” [Danin, 2012: 25]⁴⁹ during the conflict, indicating that he had learned the “rules of the game” in literature that had been relatively new to him. What was novel, however, compared to the institutional design of the 1960s, was the idea that the publishing trajectory of a book could be determined by behind-the-scenes agreements. The administrators and editors who sought to raise difficulties for unfavored authors faced resistance; one effective method was seeking support from powerful figures within the literary system. Contrary to the stereotype, the members of the literary establishment did not necessarily act as reactionaries. In the publication of *Niels Bohr*, Georgii Markov’s support helped Danin to overcome pressure from anti-Semitic editors.

However, the editors of *Lives of Remarkable People* reevaluated the hero of the biography and the techniques of biographical writing. As a representation of a global

⁴⁸ These topics were close to the genre of “scientific-fictional literature”, studied by Schwartz: Mattias Schwartz, “A new poetics of science...” [Schwartz, 2021]

⁴⁹ Addendum from 1978 to the note from 8 February 1967.

independent science and an individual whose work prompted reflections on the ethical and political duties of a scientist, Niels Bohr was perceived as a potential threat by the editors of the 1970s *Lives of Remarkable People*. Seleznev clearly mentioned it in his review:

The idea of your manuscript can be interpreted as follows: the trouble of the World and mankind is not that there is capitalism and bourgeois ideology with all its consequences, but that the World and mankind with their states, parties, governments do not want to obey their true prophets, i.e., “high-brow technocrats”.⁵⁰

As David Holloway has shown, the activities of Soviet physicists in the 1960s can also be seen as a part of the formation of civil society: having gained relative intellectual autonomy within the framework of the “atomic project,” the scientists attempted to expand the autonomy of other disciplines (e.g., biology, which had suffered from the “Lysenkoism”⁵¹). As a result of this autonomy, some physicists, most notably Sakharov, began to develop political concepts critical of the Soviet system and based on the principles of scientific rationality [Holloway, 1999]. These attempts were politically persecuted in the 1970s.

The case of *Niels Bohr* was impacted by political motives, the 1975 campaign against Sakharov, and the government’s anti-Semitic views, which were reinforced by the personal beliefs of Efimov and Semanov. Danin’s story highlights the potential stress experienced by the authors working for Soviet publishing institutions under these circumstances. Furthermore, deeper ideological disagreements between the author and the editors on the objectives of the scientist’s work and the method of writing his biography were among the contributing factors. Thus, the publication history of *Niels Bohr* problematizes the perception of scientists and contemporary science in different ideological factions of late Soviet intelligentsia.

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⁵⁰ Yuri Seleznev, *Review on the manuscript*, 1976, RGALI, f. 3149, op. 1, d. 469, l. 35.

⁵¹ Lysenkoism (*Lysenkovshchina*) was a Soviet political campaign led by against genetics and science-based agriculture in 1930s-1950s.

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