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ONOMASTIC CODE IN DYSTOPIAN NOVELS BY RUSSIAN WRITERS

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ABSTRACT: - We present the history of the emergence and development of literary onomastics, the relevance of which is currently not in doubt due to the involvement of its data for the analysis of the artistic world of different authors as linguists and literary critics. The aim of the study is to acquaint readers with those works in which reflections on the function of the proper noun in fiction can be considered as prerequisites for the emergence of onomastics. An important role in the development of science about the proper noun not only scientists, but also critics, writers and journalists, for example, V.G. Belinsky, N.S. Leskov, O.I. Senkovsky. Despite the initial interest of researchers to the etymological meaning of a literary name, in onomastic works middle of 20th century lighting find such problems, as reflected in the anthroponyms of the essential characteristics of the literary character, stylistic conformity onomastic units, social conditionality of name, etc. We point out the primary importance in the problems development of the new branch of linguistics for the 1950s of the works of such scientists as V.N. Mikhailov, R.P. Shaginyan, E.P. Magazanik, D.S. Likhachev. In conclusion we note the modern Voronezh onomastic school research specificity, founded by G.F. Kovalev, the successor of the already classical traditions of Russian onomastics. Surnames came late in human history to the world at large. They did not exist before the fifteenth or sixteenth century. Russia is no exception. In fact the very word for “surname” in Russian, familija, was borrowed from the West only in the seventeenth century, and a lot of Russian peasants did not have surnames right up to the day of the emancipation of serfs in 1861.[i] As you would expect, the upper aristocracy was the first social class to adopt surnames. They were based, for the most part on toponyms (place names). In other words, a prince whose domain encompassed the Vjaz’ma area became Prince Vjazemskij (most of these earliest surnames have adjectival type endings in -skij or –skoj). Among other names in this category are Obolenskij, Volkonskij, Trubetskoj, Meshcherskij, Kurbskij (Unbegaun intro, p. 20). To this very day Russians recognize these names as indicative of the origins of a person at the highest levels of the aristocracy in pre-Soviet Russia. It is noteworthy that two members of the Decembrists, who, in 1825, mounted an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the

government and introduce liberal reforms inspired by the West, were Prince Evgenij Obolenskij and Prince S.P. Trubetskoj.

KEYWORDS: As is common throughout much of the world, Russian surnames were derived, in large part, from (1) patronymics (father names.

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as Johnson or Jackson in English, formed by adding an ending to a given [baptismal] name) (2) names of professions or trades (Smith, Cooper or Baker in English) (3) toponyms (see above) or (4) nicknames. Although this does not always work, there is a kind of rough class gradation involved. At the highest level (a very small category) are the aristocrats with the princely –skij/skoj names just mentioned (there is another large category of –skij/skoj names that are not of princely derivation—they are primarily of non-Russian origin: Polish, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Jewish). Next come those whose names are derived by using the patronymic suffixes (-ov, -ev, or the slightly less common –in). These names make up the most widespread category to the present day. After that come the less prestigious, lower-class names that originate in trades or nicknames. Over the course of centuries, however, these two latter categories also have frequently adopted the standard patronymic endings. For example, Tkach ('weaver') or Rybak ('fisherman') became Tkachev and Rybakov, and Medved' ('bear,' nickname for a clumsy, burly type) became Medvedev (the name that Hillary Clinton recently had trouble pronouncing).

Now we can take a look at the surnames of some of the most important Russian political leaders of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, establish their derivation, and see if any conclusions are apparent.

Russians are somehow uncomfortable with un-suffixed straight nicknames as surnames; one thing that makes for confusion is the problem of differentiating such surnames in conversation from the actual name of the animal or trade. You can't say, e.g., "We were there with the Medveds," if you are referring to a family named Medved', because this sounds exactly like "We were there with the bears" (p. 29-30). For Russians the un-suffixed nickname as last name often sounds somewhat "low class" as well, probably because peasants were the last social class to acquire surnames, and, possibly, those peasants who were left with just the nickname (for their surname) were the poorest and least prestigious persons in the whole society.

Unbegaun cites an example (p. 346) indicating that the name Medvedev was more prestigious than Medved'. In 1689 the well-known Orthodox church figure, scholar and literary man, Sylvester Medvedev (1641-1691), who had become involved in a political plot, was defrocked and renamed Senka Medved'. Part of his punishment and disgrace, therefore, involved converting his surname into a nickname, which was in tune with his lowered social status. Ultimately, he was executed.[iii]

The most remarkable thing about the above information is that most recent Russian leaders have names that derive originally from nicknames. This proves that their ancestors were common folk, not members of the gentry (dvorjanstvo) or aristocracy. One might

(dangerously) speculate that the country may well have been directed onto a Western, democratic path, had there been rulers with higher-class names in power. After all, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the two/three percent of Russians who belonged to the gentry were among the most progressive and liberal. Russians with folk backgrounds haul with them through life a huge load of psychic baggage that is, basically, undemocratic and non-progressive--reeking in fatalism, superstition and irrationality. Anti-democratic tendencies are not "in the blood" or "in the genotype," as Russians are so fond of repeating, but they are present in the hardened stereotypes of cultural mores.

Folk mores die out very slowly; they are passed on from generation to generation. If your name is Medvedev (or even Medved'), that does not stop you from getting a good education. You may listen to Western rock music and be fascinated by the Internet, but you still have (at least subconsciously) all the detritus of your ancestors, the Medvedevs, piled up in your psyche. Can you overcome this? Maybe. Would the Meshcherskijs and the Obolenskijs (and various other people with "princely" names—the Golytsins, Sheremetevs, Vorontsovs or Yelagins) have had a better chance at throwing off the yoke of the "peasant/Asian" Russian mindset and setting off on more progressive paths? Maybe. But then again, that mindset is such a mighty source for Russian obscuritanism that even the most educated people and those with the most "high class" names often get themselves immersed in it. I have known a lot of Russians with candidate degrees (rough equivalent of the PhD), and most of these persons believe in the "Evil Eye."

Another sad truth: Catherine the Great (whose background was far from peasant Russia) hobnobbed with the great thinkers of the French Enlightenment, but she did not direct Russia onto the path taken by Western democracies. One final example: I have never met a Golytsin or an Obolenskij with a candidate degree, but I have met (in U.S. emigration) a family of Trubetskoys whose way of thinking and behaving could serve as an exemplar for restructuring the reactionary Russian mentality and overcoming the thousand-year-old burden of stereotypical thinking. If only we could convince these Trubetskoys to return to Russia and set about propagating their mindset to the Russian masses and the new oligarchs and the ruling elite! When I suggested this to the patriarch of the family and asked him why he did not wish to repatriate himself, he answered in one word: mental'nost' ('the mentality'). "What, exactly, do you mean by that?" I asked, and he answered with that one word again, pounding lightly with his fist on the table: mental'nost'.

In closing we might mention one other (rare) type of Russian surname (see p. 182). In the eighteenth century certain Russian aristocrats began naming their illegitimate children by dropping the beginning syllables of their names and creating new, truncated names. Among the most famous of these are (1) Pnin-- surname of the writer I.P. Pnin (1775-1805), illegitimate son of Prince Repnin (later Vladimir Nabokov used the name for the bungling old émigré professor in his eponymous novel) (2) Betskoj--surname of the famous political figure and educator under Catherine the Great, I.I. Betskoj (1704-1795), illegitimate son of Prince Trubetskoj.

This practice has recently inspired a creative (and irreverent) Russian blogger to come up with ideas about the derivation of other surnames. According to this blogger (we will not disclose his moniker here—he probably has troubles enough already), Lenin was the illegitimate son of a certain Alenin, a swineherd who lived in a village near Simbirsk. This Alenin himself, by some skewed logic,

was, ostensibly, the illegitimate son of Pushkin's fictional character, Graf Nulin (Count Zilch). As for Stalin (Dzhugashvili), he descended (illegitimately, of course) from a certain Graf Dermóstalin, whom Peter the Great had brought to Russia from Georgia. After beginning his career as a collector of offal, this Dzhugashvili performed in the dwarf retinue of the tsar, and was, subsequently, rewarded with a new name, an estate, and a title in the nobility

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