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"Changing Patterns of Russian Political Discourse:  
A Dictionary of Russian Politics, 1985 - Present"

An Executive Summary

The changing patterns of Russian political speech since 1985 reflect the breakdown of "command" political structures and increasing recourse to a "war of words" over the tokens of legitimacy: nation, the West, the restoration of history, ecology, human rights.

Background. Totalitarian states use political discourse to create an illusion of legitimacy: words in these "logocracies" are stripped of their normative meanings and given new meaning by those who control usage. As the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu puts it, the Soviet regime historically has been an oligarchy characterized by a monopoly on language.¹ The monopolistic practices began with Lenin’s efforts to replace the French revolutionary vocabulary with a special terminology of Leninist coinage and usage, but it was Stalin who perfected the monopoly on language. Linguistic choice diminished as he strove for axiological contrast with no linguistic neutral ground; the regular use of superlatives eliminated grounds for differentiation; the language was extensively bureaucratized and militarized, in an effort to reduce the dichotomy civil-military; finally, East and West took on Manichean properties in the language, with loan words stigmatized and Slavic roots revered. Quantitatively, the end result of this rigid control over

language was that, until the 1960’s, the standard vocabulary of
Soviet newspapers had been reduced to 1,500 words, with
practically no new political speech evident.

Language dissidence, in reaction to the Leninist and
Stalinist legacy, became the hallmark of political speech in the
1970’s and 1980’s. Many of the terms that were canonized early
in the Gorbachev era derive from the dissident struggle to open
up a political discourse stifled by the State-Party monopoly.
The loan word "consensus" arrives in Russian in the writings of
Andrei Sakharov, and then migrates to Gorbachev’s vocabulary, as
do several of Gorbachev’s early policy labels: for example,
Sakharov’s "Memorandum to the General Secretary TSK KPSS Comrade
L.I. Brezhnev," 1972, long circulating in samizdat and only
officially published in the registered press in 1990, is the
earliest identified source of the pattern of proximate occurrence
"glasnost’-demokratizatsiia in opposition to zastoi."

Glasnost’. The logocratic practice that dominated Soviet
Russian political speech for seventy years remains visible in the
new words coined since the emergence of glasnost’ in 1987;
indeed, glasnost’ is prima facie evidence of logocentric policy.
"Perestroika" is a prominent example of the state’s remaining
capacity to strip a word of meaning: it is so discredited
linguistically that it is now the object of parodies, such as
"perestroikirovani" and the pejorative "perestroishchiki". The
tendency in Soviet politics toward "an all-embracing idle chatter
spilling over into linguistic meretriciousness" was criticized as
one of seven centrifugal tendencies in Soviet society in a prominent 1989 analysis of Soviet politics.² It is more likely, however, that diversification of political discourse is a welcome development in a society starved for pluralism.

Countervailing linguistic strategies have also developed in the period of glasnost', many of them marked linguistically by the political struggle with the logocracy:

-- words coined in the dissident and later the democratic press are "coopted" into official discourse;

-- foreign loan words are borrowed heavily from English, mostly from the domain of the social sciences;

-- words with negative, often anti-nationalist connotations are attributed to the democratic opposition;

-- words from a military vocabulary are used to legitimize bureaucratic functions;

-- structural features of the language are employed to create categories of political opposition to the status quo ante;

-- words are coined to fill "empty sets" in the Leninist political vocabulary.

It is clear that political discourse is increasingly an arena for the struggle to disestablish the centrist logocratic tradition.

Language, Nation and the West. Political speech has been most reactive to the idea of nation unleashed by glasnost'. The 18th century term "rossiiane" has been retrieved to refer to the

²Academician G.V. Osipov et al, Sotsial'naia i sotsial'no-politicheskaiia situatsiia v SSSR: sostoianie i prognoz, Moscow: Moscow State University Press, p.4.
ethnically Russian population, as distinct from the Russian-speaking (руссоязычный) population that has preempted the term русский. Archaic syntax and other stylistic devices are employed in order to evoke Russian as distinct from modernized European roots.

The most heated battles occur over the legitimate term for a political phenomenon. Conservatives introduce вестернизм as a term to stigmatize the liberal tradition of западничество; entrepreneurial activity is lampooned by the ludicrous coinage индивидуалистик; overtones of National Socialism ("Lebensraum") are invoked in жизненное пространство; Solzhenitsyn bids to replace перестройка with a set of terms deriving from обустраивать.

Structurally, the language is employed to undermine an opponent's political doctrine, and often etymology (Slavic versus Western European) is one of the weapons as well. Thus, the democratic reformers attack the Center for its псевдоперестройка, while the hardliners counter with лжеперестройка; Centrists try to retain the socialist mantle with a campaign against лжесоциализм. The language is employed semantically and structurally in order to fill in the blanks in political development that has been retarded by the exclusive Leninist politics. A Leninist language in which there was only the term социалистический выбор is augmented by the coinage демократический выбор. The democratic opposition's policy of "дейстрективизм" is visible in the category of coinages that utilize the prefix "де-": "деоффисиализация," "дезсоветизация,"
"demonopolization," "departization," "deideologization,
"destatization," "depoliticization."

It is likely that the August coup d'etat and its aftermath (dubbed the "August Revolution") will perpetuate the tendencies the previous six years of linguistic change have established. "Debolshevization" has been added to the list, while the banishment of the Party has provided Soviet politics with the opportunity for a new term -- partization -- that is in harmony with its root. Although Communist authority remains in what are now termed "Communist refuges," most former Party members became what are derisively termed "Communist mutants." The struggle over a Western reference point in new vocabulary continues in post-coup speech (parteigenosse), as the massive borrowing of Western terms to describe unprecedented phenomena continues, e.g., "collaborationist," "Regent of the Russian Monarchy," "junta" and "putsch."

"A Short Dictionary of Russian Political Terms 1985-Present" (available upon request from the offices of the National Council for Soviet and East European Research), documents the use of a representative 300 new political terms. It is the core of the 2,500 entry "Keywords in Russian Politics since 1985: A Lexical and Critical Commentary," to be completed by September, 1992, and published by Oxford University Press in 1993.

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Changing Patterns of Soviet Political Discourse,
1985 -- Present

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Soviet political discourse is undergoing a process of change in the era of perestroika. In order to better understand the nature and extent of these changes we have to compare the patterns of the present day and traditional Soviet political speech.

The Soviet state as a totalitarian system is often called a logocracy, or government by words, functioning to create an illusion of legitimacy, one that conceals reality while it retains an encoded connection to it. A specific feature of Soviet political discourse has been that its primary element, the word, is stripped of immanent meaning and given new meaning by those who control its use.

Vaclav Havel pointed out in his speech on the occasion of receiving the West German publishers' and book dealers' Peace Prize that the essence of the dissidents' fight for civil rights against the communist totalitarian regime often consisted in unmasking a communist terminology with its fictional semantics and restoring the real meanings of words.

He said:

At last I reach the beautiful word "peace." I have read it for forty years in our country on every roof and in every report. An allergy to this beautiful word has been created in me and my compatriots, because I know what it has designated for forty years: armies, powerful and gaining in strength, which allegedly are defending peace.

Several Don Quixotes of "Charter-77" and their younger colleagues of the Independent Association for Peace succeeded in rehabilitating this word and restoring its original meaning despite the lengthy process of systematically stripping the word "peace" of its proper sense and, moreover, filling it with a meaning opposite to its dictionary meaning.
We had to pay dearly for this semantic "perestroika," i.e., for turning the word "peace" upside down. Almost all the young leaders of the Independent Association for Peace have served prison terms of several months. But it was important: one word was saved from total devaluation. And this, as I am striving to explain here, is far from saving only one word. It is saving something more important.

All the important events of the real world -- beautiful and ugly -- are always preceded by a prelude in the sphere of words.¹

Characteristic features of totalitarian language were described many times in some detail. The first to do it was Victor Klemperer who in 1946 gave a brilliant first-hand description of the political language of Nazi Germany, calling it "the Language of the Third Empire" (Lingua Tertii Imperii) or Nazi-Deutsch.²

The role of a "new language" as a tool of totalitarian oppression in the Soviet Union was better understood only after an analogous language has been formed in Nazi Germany, although its main features had been properly analyzed by A.M. Selishchev as early as 1928.³ After the introduction of the term "Newspeak" by George Orwell in 1948, has been borrowed into many languages, bringing a better recognition of the terrible consequences of language manipulation in totalitarian societies. Since Poland began its struggle for reforms earlier than other East European communist countries, much has been accomplished there to describe communist "Newspeak." A special study of the language of communist propaganda was published in Warsaw in 1979.⁴ In the most recent Soviet discussions, the analogy of the German Nazi language and Soviet Russian Newspeak has been advanced by some democrats as an axiom.⁵
The main features of the Soviet political language, which formed in Lenin's time, but achieved full development under Stalin's rule and persist to this day are the following:

1) a tendency to axiological contrast and a lack of neutral expressions;
2) ritualism linked with pragmatism;
3) a magical character, that is, a tendency to create a pseudoreality;
4) arbitrariness as regards the choice of themes;
5) the redefinition of concepts;
6) propagandistic expression together with the widespread use of superlatives;
7) the bureaucratization of language;
8) the widespread introduction of military terminology;
9) the widespread use of abbreviated forms.6

The epoch of glasnost initiated an open discussion of many sombre aspects of the Soviet political system, including the manipulation of political language. For example, Anatolii Strelianyi, a popular liberal essayist, called the current practice of tabooing certain concepts by not giving them direct and clear designations "communist bashfulness." He wrote: "We would rather have our tongues ripped out than openly call a private craftsman a private craftsman, a workers' enterprise a workers' enterprise, a gathering of citizens meeting freely and independently of the authorities a free and independent gathering."7

Commenting on the fact that even the latest edition (1979) of the Soviet Encyclopedic Dictionary omits the entry ложь (lie) which is a key notion for the understanding of the nature of Soviet political language and all the law terminology, the Soviet philosopher G. Guseinov writes:
The key word, rejected from the beginning by ideology... is squeezed into a zone of total specific silence: in the house of a hanged man nobody mentions the rope.

The social force, which seized the language, first said that it will eliminate only the superfluous in the language, but then promised to eliminate everything that is not "truth." The speaker of language, who loyally adapted himself to the conditions of the experiment to remain its user, needs exact instructions, and he finds them at every step. As every latest instruction, introducing new rules, eliminates all the preceding ones, the language speaker is developing strong speech habits: suspicion of the truthfulness of the text and respect for the truth of the subtext, contempt for dimwittedness, a preference to define an object instead of its cognition via the word...8

Speaking of the same techniques of Soviet political language manipulation, a Soviet lawyer, N.S. Barabasheva, observed that George Orwell's thesis, "no concept, hence, there are no realia", was widely practiced in Soviet legal literature. For example, the entry проституция (prostitution) is absent in the latest edition (1987) of the Soviet Encyclopedic Law Dictionary, which leads to the inference that in 1987 prostitution did not exist in the Soviet Union. She writes that the formula "под руководством коммунистической партии" ("under the leadership of the Communist party"), common in Soviet legal acts, was endowed with a magic quality -- success in an activity, without Party responsibility for its execution.9

The description of the brainwashing techniques of Soviet propaganda is a popular subject in the contemporary Soviet liberal press. These are:
1) tagging (positive tags for everything communist, negative for everything non-communist);
2) preaching of hatred for everything non-communist;
3) manipulation of information (telling of semi-truth and lies);
4) concealing the true views of their opponents;
5) borrowing of slogans (for example, the "Moral Code of the Builder of Communism" was modeled on the Christ's Sermon of the Mount).\textsuperscript{10}

Much of what is called the process of glasnost and perestroika has been played out not in reality, but in the sphere of words. Leading Soviet sociologists see one of the main reasons for the failure of this process of glasnost and perestroika in "all-embracing idle talk which is turning into mere verbiage."\textsuperscript{11} In their verbal exchanges both Soviet reformers and counter-reformers are using the same traditional devices of Soviet political discourse. Perestroika did not bring with it the destruction of the traditional Soviet political language with its tagging habits and use of hackneyed phrases. Its main structure and patterns survive, and new branches are simply grafted onto the old tree. Vaclav Havel warned the international community of this phenomenon:

- The splendid word 'perestroika' which is giving hope sounds today throughout the entire world. All of us believe that hope for Europe and the whole world looms behind this word.

But I confess that in spite of this, I am speaking of fear that this word must not become a new incantation, must not turn into a cudgel, with which someone is thrashing us. I am not worried about my own homeland: on the lips of its rulers this word sounds approximately the same way as "Our Gracious Sovereign the Emperor" on the lips of Shveik.
I am worried about something else: that the same statesman who rules now in the Kremlin is tossing accusations (maybe out of despair) at the striking workers, or mutinous nations and minorities, or unwanted ideological minorities that endanger perestroika. I understand that it is immensely difficult to fulfill this gigantic task which he took upon himself, that everything is hanging by a thread, and almost anything may tear this thread, and then all of us together will fall into an abyss. But, nevertheless, I ask: this "new thinking," does it contain serious traces of the old thinking? Do not we hear an echo of old stereotypes of thinking and power-language rituals? Does not the word "perestroika" begin here, there, and everywhere to remind us of the word "socialism," especially when it is used to beat about the head the same man who was for so long and so unjustly beaten with the word "socialism"?12

Evaluating the signs of successful survival and persistence of traditional Soviet totalitarian discourse after 1985 we may indicate some of the salient features of the modern Soviet political speech that confirm this trend:

1) preservation of traditional keywords of Soviet political discourse: контроверсия (counter-propaganda), экономический саботаж (economic sabotage), враг перестройки, нация (enemy of perestroika, nation), саботажники (saboteurs), террористы (terrorists), агенты (agents), Отечество (Fatherland), etc.;

2) preservation of the long-practiced and proven techniques of denigrating an opponent:
a) calling any opponent of the communist regime a fascist (e.g., демократы are often referred to by Soviet conservatives as фашисты [fascists], hence they are also called either демократы-фашисты [democrats-fascists] and демофашинты [demo-fascists]);

b) tagging an opponent by a word in inverted commas or preceded by лже- (false-) and псевдо- (pseudo-) (e.g., democrats are called by the conservatives "демократы" ["democrats"], лжедемократы [false-democrats], and псевдодемократы [pseudo-democrats]);

c) borrowing the terminology of the opponents (e.g., Soviet democrats, who were on the Soviet left, were calling Soviet conservatives правые [the rightists], the Soviet Communist party in its counterattack on the democrats in early 1991 started to call them правые [rightists] in order to denigrate them and to turn the tables on them);

3) preservation of the traditional Soviet political terminology, and enhancing its status by the use of the attributes новый (new), обновленный (rejuvenated), e.g., новый Союз (new Union), обновленный Союз (rejuvenated Union), новая Федерация (new Federation), обновленная Федерация (rejuvenated Federation), or by adding the word обновление (renovation), e.g., обновление социализма (renovation of socialism), обновление форм и методов работы партийных организаций (renovation of the forms and methods of the work of party organizations), обновление Компартии (renovation of the Communist party), etc.

Soviet rulers over the years seem to have used up most of the positive attributes for embellishing the word социализм (socialism) - победивший социализм (triumphant socialism), развитый социализм (developed socialism), зрелый социализм (mature socialism); now, when
the crisis of socialism in the USSR is an open secret, they can call only for обновленный социализм (renovated socialism); but they could not find any counterslogan to the liberal "социализм с человеческим лицом" ("socialism with a human face"), borrowed into Russian from the Czechoslovak communist reformers of 1968 and now widely used by Soviet democrats while the Communist ideologists prefer to use its variant -- гуманный социализм (human socialism); they had to adopt the slogan of Western social democrats "демократический социализм" (democratic socialism);

4) the basic structure of core communist slogans has hardly changed in recent years (the aim is communism, the principal moving force -- the Communist party, the main subject -- the Soviet people, the main function of a man -- work). But as the Soviet Union is transforming into a multiparty society there are certain changes in the use of communist slogans. They become more universal in character and more varied. Comparison of the October revolution anniversary slogans for 1988 through 1990 reveals that, as the party was in retreat under the pressure of the democratic forces in these years, the essence of the core slogans was preserved, though the frequency of the main Communist symbols was decreasing (e.g., in 1988 Lenin was mentioned twice as великий Ленин (great Lenin), once in большевики-ленинцы (Bolsheviks-Leninists), once in марксизм-ленинизм (Marxism-Leninism), once in ленинская национальная политика (Lenin's national policy); КПСС (CPSU - the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) three times, of them once as партия (the Party)\textsuperscript{13}. In 1989 Lenin was mentioned only once and CPSU twice, one of them as партия (the Party), but all other words and expressions above (Bolsheviks-Leninists, Marxism-Leninism, Lenin's national policy) were
dropped. In 1990, Lenin was mentioned once, and CPSU also once, named simply as партия (the Party), while the other words of the 1988 slogans mentioned above were not used at all.

Gorbachev's aim in introducing perestroika in 1985 was not to destroy the communist doctrine, but to adapt it to modern conditions. It would be appropriate to mention here that his very choice of the terms перестройка (restructuring), гласность (glasnost - openness, but not свобода слова [freedom of speech]), демократизация (democratization, but not демократия [democracy]) shows the limits of his reformist approach. It would be instructive to learn what the Communist Party ideologists understand by glasnost. In the latest Soviet dictionary of political terms we find:

Glasnost - the maximal openness and truthfulness in the activity of state and public organizations. Glasnost presupposes the absence of zones closed for criticism... But at the same time glasnost is not synonymous with universal permissiveness, undermining of Socialist values; it is invoked to strengthen socialism, the socialist code of morals.

Reading this definition it is difficult to understand what glasnost is -- is it the maximum truthful description of events or is it the necessity to strengthen "the socialist code of morals." For in the past years the first was often sacrificed for the sake of the second in the USSR.

The limits of Soviet political innovations, as reflected in political vocabulary, can be shown by the following example. The Moscow mayor Gavriil Popov published in 1990 his program of political and economic reforms in which he liberally used new political terms coined by the Soviet democrats, all of which started with the prefix де- (de-):
дефедерализация (defederalization), десоветизация (desovietization),
dенационализация (denationalization), etc. Sensing the dangerous
character of all of these terms which imply the destruction of existing
Soviet structures, the conservative Soviet mass media viciously attacked
Popov:

It happens that under the simple and understandable "Down with...!" a
pseudo-theoretical basis is built, and then after a naked and primitive
negation an elegant "de-" is born: defederalization, desovietization,
depolitization, etc. In order to let you understand the truth I suggest
that, instead of all of these "de-", use only one: "de-Popovization". Try it,
and you will understand a lot.¹⁸

On the other hand, communist hard-liners are calling their opponents
dеструктивные силы (destructive forces) who aim at the "демонтаж
социализма" (dismantling of socialism).

The era of perestroika, which lasted for at least five years (1985-
1990; now we often hear of постперестройка [postperestroika]) may be
divided into two periods: 1985-1987 -- "аппаратная перестройка" (perestroika done by the apparatus) and after 1988 -- "демократическая
перестройка" (democratic perestroika). If during the first period it was
the party and state apparatus who set the pace of perestroika from above,
during the second period their firm control over the process got out of
hand.

It is during the first period that most of the terminological
innovations came from above and, precisely, from Gorbachev himself. It
was as if the populace, frightened by decades of repression and used to a
carefully supervised political vocabulary, first tasted some new, very
limited freedom of expression. During the second period, however, this
situation changed drastically and new terms started to be coined by the larger society.

The real innovator in political vocabulary was not Gorbachev himself but his closest advisers and speech writers (such as A. Iakovlev, G. Shakhnazarov, and others) who, extremely well versed in the history of Marxism-Leninism and Russian history and well acquainted with the writings of Soviet dissidents and with modern Western political culture, suggested to Gorbachev new terms and expressions.

Why does Gorbachev consider перестройка (perestroika) to be the most important of his three slogans гласность (glasnost), ускорение (acceleration) and перестройка (perestroika)? A possible explanation for it was suggested by M. Kaganskaia. Gorbachev's perestroika is the second Soviet perestroika. The first one was introduced by Stalin in the 1930s. Stalin used two synonymous terms ренструкция (reconstruction) and перестройка (restructuring). The first one meant technical reconstruction, the building of industry, and the second -- the restructuring of consciousness, the creation of a new Soviet man, who will be an atheist and a devoted communist. Stalin also used the word перестройка to designate restructuring of Communist party organizations. It is symptomatic that L. Kaganovich, who was Stalin's right hand man, suggested recently in an interview that Gorbachev's perestroika is a continuation of a process started in Stalin's times.

He said:

We have to act decisively, to explain to the people what has happened, because the people suffer without an explanation. A wide discussion should be started, but they say that it is against perestroika. Why? Not at all. I am for perestroika, for reforms. My report of the XIII
Party Congress on the organizational problems of the Party started directly with the word "perestroika".  

Gorbachev defines perestroika as "революция сверху" (revolution from above) which has to create обновленное общество (renovated society). Developing this idea of renovation, Gorbachev writes:

...It will be a renovated society. We began such a serious matter, a very difficult one. But it is possible to interpret and evaluate facts in various ways. There is a parable: a wayfarer approaches people who are building an edifice and asks the builders: what are you doing? One of them answers with irritation: look, we are hauling the devil's stones from morning to evening... Another one got up from his knees, straightened himself up and said: you see, we are building a Temple!

Gorbachev sees Soviet society renovated by perestroika as a Temple (he writes the word Храм [Temple] with a capital X). At the same time he sees perestroika as a direct continuation of the Bolshevik October Revolution. By using the word perestroika as a key word of his reforms Gorbachev is pursuing a polemical objective: his second perestroika will be an exact opposite to Stalin's first perestroika, associated with terror. His perestroika will be done by the whole Soviet society, and not by the proletariat only, and it will bring renovation to the whole society.

By the same reasoning the key word glasnost could not serve as the centerpiece key word because it is directly associated with Tsar Alexander II's liberal policies, removed in time and not immediate in Soviet history.

The term "новое политическое мышление" (new political thinking) is a new one (as its synonym Gorbachev uses философия (philosophy). Both refer to international relations and are connected with
an appeal to "деидеологизация межгосударственных отношений" (de-ideologization of intergovernmental relations) and "приоритет общечеловеческих ценностей" (priority of universal human values).

But some of his other terms are closely connected with the Russian cultural tradition and Orthodox Christianity. Such are the terms "соборность" (conciliarism) and "мир" (mir, the Russian village community). The first one was introduced by the founder of the Russian slavophile movement Alexei Khomiakov (1804-1860), and the second was one of the main concepts of the slavophile movement. Other of his terms, such as "духовность" (spirituality), "духовное возрождение" (spiritual revival), "нравственность" (morals), "нравственное очищение" (moral purification), "милосердие" (charity), refer to purely religious values.

It can be easily shown that most of Gorbachev's key words and slogans were borrowed from the vocabulary of Soviet dissidents of the 60's and 70's, and particularly from the Samizdat writings of A. Sakharov and A. Solzhenitsyn, who called for "ликвидация застоя" (liquidation of stagnation), for "гласность" (glASNost), "конвергенция систем" (convergence of systems), "консенсус" (consensus), "правовое государство" (law-governed state), "духовность" (spirituality), "демократизация" (democratization). For example, Solzhenitsyn wrote in 1969: "Glasnost, honest and full glasnost - this is the first condition of a healthy state in any society." Sakharov demanded in his memorandum to L. Brezhnev "the liquidation of stagnation." The word "glasnost" is mentioned in this memorandum nine times.

Having heavily borrowed political terms from dissidents, Gorbachev seems to interpret them in his own way. He was more than once accused of it by Soviet democrats. A leading Soviet democrat Ju. Afanas'ev wrote:
The followers of the Advanced Teaching in the person of the
President of the USSR (who was "elected" in the worst traditions of the
Stalinist "constitutional democratism") and his team willingly operate
within the whole set of democratic terms borrowed from "the former
dissident" A. Sakharov, among them with the term "consensus".

However, in this case, as in his other pseudo-rhetorical exercises, M.
Gorbachev puts into "consensus" a meaning which is different from the
one accepted throughout the world; while the universal democratic
practice understands by "consensus" a general agreement on the basis
of mutual compromises, for the General Secretary of the Central
Committee of the CPSU this term means a universal unconditional
agreement, in essence, with a directive given from above by the Central
Committee on the basis of an "unanimous decision" taken there by the
anonymous "decision makers".

Other important key words of Gorbachev's program, such as
приватизация (privatization), pluralism, рынок (market),
рыночная экономика (market economy) were almost never mentioned in
Samizdat and were borrowed by him from the West, probably mediated
through Poland and Hungary, where these ideas were widely discussed
and tried out.

It would be interesting to compare the patterns of discourse in the
official Soviet propaganda under Stalin, in the Samizdat literature of the
60's and 70's and in the Soviet mass media today. The most fascinating fact
is the continuity of key words, ideas and slogans of struggle and
confrontation in all these three types of texts. We find in all of them such
key words as враг (enemy), предатель (traitor), борьба (struggle),
война (war), бой (battle), фронт (front), соратник (comrade-in-arms), etc.
This kind of confrontation mentality developed by the Soviet system during decades of its indoctrination activity remained and remains a telling characteristic sign of most of the political texts produced in the USSR. It is especially strong today when terms like враги перестройки (the enemies of perestroika) and враги нации (the enemies of nation) are freely traded on the Soviet political scene by all sides involved in political debates.

The sources of modern Soviet political terminology are multiple: Western ideas, traditional Russian political thought, Russian Orthodox religion, Soviet opposition to Stalin in the 20's and 30's, etc.

Western terminology, especially Western economic terms, form perhaps the most significant stratum of neologisms in modern Soviet political and economic discourse. Such are the terms рыночная экономика (market economy), свободный рынок (free market), бизнес (business), бизнесмен (businessman), имидж (image), рейтинг (rating), менеджер (manager), презентация (presentation), маркетинг (marketing), конверсия (conversion), плюрализм (pluralism), фермер (farmer), спонсор (sponsor), etc.

It is slightly absurd that the Soviets are introducing new designations of institutions and posts according to a Western pattern, though the essence of the regime has hardly changed: президент (president), вице-президент (vice president), парламент (parliament), муниципалитет (municipality), etc.

In introducing Western terminology, modern Soviet rulers caused a wide reappraisal of the semantics of terms of Western origin which were borrowed into Russian before, when they usually referred to Western realia. For example, the word бизнесмен (businessman) previously
referred only to Western businessman and had the negative connotation of a wheeler-dealer. Nowadays, it refers also to Soviet businessmen and its connotation is, as a rule, a positive one. The words коррупция (corruption), мафия (mafia), рэкет (racket), рэкетир (racketeer) referred once only to Western realia, while now the definition of these words in dictionaries has to be revised as they denote also realia of modern Soviet life.

Another source of new terms are authors like Trotsky, who was in opposition to Stalin, and leading figures of the Russian emigration. Trotsky was the first to introduce into Russian the expression Сталин и его команда (Stalin and his team) which has gained wide currency now; we hear today of Горбачев и его команда (Gorbachev and his team), Ельцин и его команда (Yeltsin and his team), etc.

A term coined by Trotsky in 1932 is сталинизма (Stalinism) which is widely used today. The Russian emigre religious philosopher N.A. Berdiaev (1874-1948) introduced the term русская идея (Russian idea), which espoused Russia's moral and spiritual superiority over the world, particularly over the West, and Russia's mission to save the world from decadence. This notion was also discussed in the Samizdat in the 70's and 80's.

Today the term русская идея has become common and even acquired an antonym. Speaking of their own national aspirations, individual Soviet republics speak of their национальная идея (national idea) which is the opposite of the Russian idea.

National movements in the present-day USSR provide a rich vocabulary of new political terms. In this way many new borrowings from the languages of the republics are entering modern Russian political discourse. These are the new names of republics: Татарстан (Tatarstan),
Кыргызстан (Kyrgyzstan), Молдова (Moldova), республика
Якутия-Саха (Republic of Iakutia-Sakha), Приднестровская республика
(Dniester Republic), Гагаузская республика (Gagauzian Republic); the
names of armies and military units in the republics: Армянская
национальная армия (Armenian National Army), Мхедриони,
Шевардени, Тетри Георги (Mkhedrioni, Shevardeni, Tetri Georgi --
names of Georgian military organizations), айсарги (aiszargs -- the name
of a Latvian voluntary para-military organization), etc; the names of
Republican national institutions and posts (usually a revival of
designations used in the pre-Soviet period), e.g.: in Moldova -- примар
(mayor), примария (municipality), жудец (region), триколор (traditional
Rumanian flag), etc; names of various national movements: интерфронт
(Interfront – organizations of the Russian speaking population, supporting
the Central Moscow government, in Baltic republics and Moldova),
Народный фронт (popular front -- organizations in a number of republics
supporting reforms and the national sovereignty of a republic), Рух (Rukh
- the biggest national movement in the Ukraine), Саюдис (Sajudis - the
Lithuanian national movement), etc.

In the conditions of confrontation of the local population and the
Russian language population in the national republics the following terms
have been coined: русскоязычные (Russian-speaking population --
denoting people of any nationality living as a Russian-speaking minority in
a national republic), оккупанты (occupiers), мигранты (migrants),
колонисты (colonists) -- names given by the national majority to the
Russian-speaking minority in a republic (particularly in Baltic republics
and Moldova).
The Nazi racist terminology has been borrowed by the members of the Russian nationalist organization Pamiat': нудомасоны, жиломасоны (Judeomasons), каде (Jew, cf. German Jude), etc. This movement created terms сионизация (zionization -- the influence of Jews in Russian society) and дезионизация (dezionization -- the freeing of the Russian people of Jewish influence), and красные сионисты (Red Zionists -- Jews in high government positions).

A. Shafarevich introduced the terms русофобия (Russophobia -- hatred of Russians by the Jews), Большой народ (Big people -- the Russians) and Малый народ (Small people -- the Jews) in his book On Russophobia, a genuine Soviet version of Mein Kampf, published in 1989, but written and distributed in Samizdat for over a quarter of a century before.26

Traditional Russian political terminology, swept aside by the October revolution and used since to denote only historical realia, has been revived together with the reinstatement of corresponding realia: гласность (glasnost), мир (mir, Russian village community), дворянство (gentry), атаман (ataman, Cossack chieftain), казачий круг (Cossack council), земство (zemstvo, the elective district council in Russia, 1864-1917), уезд (uiezd, the lowest administrative division), биржа (exchange), биржевик (stockbroker), etc.

As some of the new political parties in the USSR (by some counts there are over 1500 such parties) accepted names of parties which existed in tsarist Russia, corresponding terms have been revived: кадет (cadet, constitutional democrat; the constitutional-democrat party was a major liberal-monarchic party in Russia[1905-1917]), монархист (monarchist, member of monarchist organizations in Russia in 1905-1907, which formed
In 1911 the Русский монархический союз [The Russian Monarchic Union], меньшевик (Menshevik, a member of a social-democratic movement formed after a split with the Bolsheviks in 1903; it existed in Russia until 1918), эсер (a member of the socialist-revolutionary party which existed in tsarist Russia in 1901-1918), etc.

The authorship of many new political terms can be precisely established. For example, the term заединщики (zaiedinshchiks - the name of an influential group of Russian nationalist writers, who strive for an "integral and indivisible Russia" [за единую и неделимую Россию]) was coined by the literary critic Tatiana Ivanova in 1988; the term обустра́нть and обустра́йство (to organize and organization) was introduced by A. Solzhenitsyn in 1990 as an alternative to перестрой́ть and перестройка (to reconstruct and reconstruction); the term манкурт (a person who forgot his historical roots) was first introduced by Ch. Aitmatov in 1981, негласный помощник (covert assistant, an euphemistic designation of a KGB informer) was introduced by the head of the KGB, V. Kriuchkov, in 1990.

One of the intriguing aspects of the present liberals' and the hardliners' speech is the use by both sides of basically the same Soviet political terminology (the old Stalinist one plus its many new elements, especially in the sphere of economics) to turn the tables on an opponent. Thus we have пропаганда and контрпропаганда (propaganda and counterpropaganda), реформа and контрреформа (reform and counter-reform), нежная революция (gentle revolution, i.e. a nonviolent revolution, a term borrowed in 1989 from Czech) -- нежная контрреволюция (gentle counterrevolution, i.e., a nonviolent counterrevolution). While it was the liberals who started to call the hard-
liners необольшевики (Neobolsheviks), this term is now applied to them by the hard-liners. Both sides call each other враги перестройки (enemies of perestroika).

The prognosis for the future development of the Soviet political terminology looks as follows. The basic body of terms and expressions of the totalitarian period will remain in use, being permanently revised and enriched by new elements. The main problem seems to be not the conservativism of the terminology itself, but the self perpetuating bureaucratic style of speech used by all the opposing forces. O. Latsis writes: "We have to admit with sorrow that the democratic press of our day is no less prone to express itself in stock phrases than the bureaucratized press of old times. Only the set of cliches has changed. The place of the Great Lenin is occupied by the Evil Lenin, the place of the Glorious Way -- by 73 Years of Continuous Mistakes, and instead of movement into a Bright Future they demand now the Return to Civilization." 28

The essence of the old Stalinist totalitarian regime has been thoroughly described and criticized in the USSR (cf. its description by terms like тоталитаризм (totalitarianism), командно-административная система (the command-administrative system), командно-репрессивная система (command-repressive system), советская империя (the Soviet empire), etc. But the struggle for reforms and for their successful implementation will take a long time and its outcome is far from certain. The patterns of Soviet bureaucratic speech have permeated Russian everyday speech too deeply, and even under the best scenario of quick and effective democratic reforms it may take at least a generation to be
gradually squeezed out of usage and replaced by a new, cardinally different kind of Russian political language.

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