

Russian Literature and the Power of Media

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Abstract—Russian literature became famous for its history. Social and political changes have influenced the role of the development of Russian literature. This paper discusses the power of the media to help the development of Russian literature. Starting from the discovery of the letter Cyrillic by Saint Cyril and Methodius in 988, and subsequently developed to be widely known throughout the world. The problem in this paper is how unique the development of Russian literature relates to the power of the media. And the purpose of this paper is to know that media power greatly influences the development of Russian literature. Through a historical approach, the paper presents several periods of Russian literature; Ancient Russia, the Soviet Union, Glasnost, and Post Glasnost. Starting from the invention of printing machines that influenced the world of literature, where literary works were printed and spread throughout the world. The number of readers of literature are increasing. The author became more widely known. The impact of social and political developments in Russia is shown in literary works that tell the life of the people. In the Soviet era, some works were banned. But the authors can publish their work through Samizdat and Tamizdat. The situation changed after Gorbachev declared glasnost and perestroika. The freedom of writing is given to the writer. In the late 1980s many works previously circulated in the form of samizdat were officially published. Furthermore, in the 20th century, the internet became part of the literature. Free online availability of twenty or more prominent literary magazines has prompted critics to question whether the electronic version will reduce people's reading interest. But not everyone likes reading literature through online.

Keywords—internet, literature, Russian, samizdat, Soviet Union, Tamizdat

I. INTRODUCTION

Authors deliver their imagination by using literary works as the medium, its becomes the bridge to connect their idea to the reader. In the relationship between the author and the reader, literary works have different roles. First, to transfer information from the author to the reader, and Second, literary works also become a text created by the author and as a text that is perceived by the reader.

Literary work is an imaging of the social culture created from the imagination of the author. The imagination comes from the author's idea. Wellek and Warren in [1], states that the term literary as the work of "imaginative", but not all literary works is the imagination. Some literary works are created purely from the author's imagination, but others are created based on real experience or observation of a reality. This reality can ultimately lead to the phenomena of life that can become a problem.

Sapardi Djoko Damono in his book *Politics, Ideology, and Hybrid Literature* said that when Britain encountered the initial process of industrialization, the people are not familiar with television, radio and recording devices; which is known only print media. The so-called "text" is written material, which is generally a book or newspaper. Now, the so-called text is also heard from the radio and watched on television Damono [2]. First, it was a sound, after that came the picture. We are in this world to communicate, the language we first create is sound, if we do not use the movement as a language. Or, in this paper, we just specify the first tool we designed is a sound, afterwards new images. Images can be imitations of a visible (human, animal, etc.) or concepts born in the man's mind [3].

Man can never be separated from literature. Europe is one part of the world that has a very long literary history. Russia is part of Europe but also part of Asia. The story of Russian literature begins with a year that is very important for Russian political and cultural history. In 988 when the ruler Kievan Rus formally accepted Orthodox as a new religion for the empire. Prince Vladimir became the first person to be baptized. Russian Literature started when two missionary brothers from Thessalonica, Kirril (826-869) and Methodius (815-885) discovered Cyrillic [4]. Religious and liturgical books were translated into Cyrillic.

In connection with the discovery of the Cyril had an impact on the development of Russian literature.

The problem in this paper is how unique the development of Russian literature relates to the power of the media. While the purpose of this paper is to find out that media power greatly influences the development of Russian literature.

This paper describes the history of the development of Russian literature through a historical approach. Historical approach in the general is an investigation of a problem by applying the solution path from a historical perspective. Using historical approach, people could understand the development of Russian literature from one period to another with a variety of events and situation, as well as the social situation and conditions of the people, as well as the development of media that also influenced Russian literature.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II presents the Russian literature and the power of media. Finally, Section III concludes this work.

II. RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND THE POWER OF MEDIA

This section presents the Russian literature and the power of media.

A. Ancient Russian Period

The spread of Orthodox influenced the development of ancient Russian literature. Missionaries spread religion, and also write them. One of the monks from monastic center of Kievan Rus, Nestor, wrote a Reading about the Blessed Life and Massacre of Martyr Boris and Gleb. This became the first work from ancient Russian literature. People began to recognize letters and literary works. Initially only monks and nobles learned it. But these days people know literature. The development of literature is inseparable from the influence of the media.

Discovery of printing machines in Germany in 1440 by John Gutenberg who was introduced printing machines to Europe. Since then, printing has become widely known in Europe. The printing revolution is considered a milestone of the second millennium, ushering in the modern period of man history. This discovery influenced the production of works, where printed literary works, and their spread throughout the world. The number of readers of literature is increasing. The author became more widely known.

Literature is defined as fiction in prose, poetry or drama. Influence of literary is very large, and sometimes the themes created a threat to the authorities. Russian literature is printed and distributed in various places. In the era of Catherine, the Great, literary works were printed and widely publicized. The establishment of the Smol'nyi Institute by Catherine the Great in Saint Petersburg which educates upper-class women to be able to behave well in society, and study moral education, as well as language and literature.

Literature continues to grow, and the author begins to emerge. Western influences have an impact on the literary genre. Romanticism emerged in 1790 which emphasized emotions and individual freedom. Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin (1799-1837) wrote poetry Eugene Onegin (1823-1831) and achieved popular success when Eugene Onegin was published in 1833. As a result, since the 1830s interest in reading Russian society began to change [5].

But the Russian people is not allowed to criticize the authorities and use literature as a medium to discuss the issues that exist in society. Literature became a medium of social criticism. The emergence of realism became the expression of the reality of Russian society in the 19th century. The injustice felt by the Russian people is revealed through literature. Nikolay Vasilievich Gogol (1809-1852), Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy (1828-1910), Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-1883), Anton Pavlovich Chekov (1860-1904), and Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevski (1821-1881) raised theme of reality of social life and becoming best seller. The famous Russian critic, Vissarion Grigoryevich Belinsky (1811-1848) argued that Russian literature expresses all evil and injustice in society, and the close interconnection between literature and society is characteristic of Russian realism [6].

B. Soviet Union Period

The victory of the Bolshevik Party in October 1917 made a change in the lives of the Russians. The party forbids publishing literature that does not support the government. Meanwhile, authors who support government policies and interests of parties, nations, and communist

ideologies are given honor, awards and facilities. However, Soviet leaders recognized that literature could be used to bring forth works that arouse enthusiasm and enlighten society.

In contrast, to encourage people to increase love for the country, people read "Sovietisation" as popular literature. The Soviet leadership recognized that the language of flat bureaucrats was not suitable for society [7]. Literary works that were banned from appearing in the Soviet Union appeared in the West, such as those of Maxim Gorky and Boris Pasternak. Gorky published a work entitled *Mother*, a novel written in 1906 about revolutionary factory workers. The novel was first published, in English, in *Appleton magazine* in 1906, later in Russian in 1907. In his novel, Gorky describes the life of a woman who works in a Russian factory who does manual labor and fights poverty and hunger, among other difficulties. The main character is Pelageya Nilovna Vlasova. Her husband committed physical violence with Pelageya. He left the responsibility to his wife to raise their son, Pavel Vlasov. Pavel is involved in revolutionary activities. He is illiterate and has no interest in politics. Pelageya is very caring and caring for Pavel's new activities. As his mother, he wants to help him. Pavel is shown as a revolutionary figure. However, Pelageya, moved by his motherly feelings and, despite being uneducated, overcame his political ignorance to be involved in the revolution.

Boris Pasternak was famous as the author of *Doctor Zhivago* 1957, a novel that tells the situation in the Russian Revolution 1905, and the Second World War. *Doctor Zhivago* was refused to be published in the Soviet Union. Then it was smuggled into Milan and published in 1957 and distributed with CIA assistance in Europe. Pasternak was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958. But the Soviet Union forced him to reject the prize, even though his descendants later accepted it in 1988.

Literary works can be published through *Samizdat* (cover a wide range of informally circulated material, and took various forms: political tracts, religious texts, novels, poetry), and *Tamizdat* (individuals reproduced censored and underground publications by hand and passed the documents from reader to reader the process). Lovell defines *samizdat* as books, magazines and other written material that are produced independently, expressing artistic ideas and trends that cannot be raised in publishing, especially those that deviate from social and ideological norms [8]. The trend for self-publishing began in the late 1950s and increased significantly after the Soviet court sentenced Sinyavsky and Daniel in 1966, where the two authors were convicted for publishing anti-Soviet literary works through foreign publishing. Lovell continued to explore the development of *samizdat* during the 1970s and 1980s. He explained that technological advances made it possible for *samizdat* to be produced and circulated in greater numbers, its presence became more stable because Soviet society became more open to literary production. However, Lovell also stated that works produced not only the work of individual authors, but also journals appeared in the form of *samizdat*. *Samizdat* production generates money that is not small. Even changing hands for money, which

represents a change in the informal network where samizdat originally circulated. In the late 1970s, samizdat and Tamizdat, served as important tools for cultural dissemination and information [8].

Samizdat's production is available in the form of handwritten copies or manuscripts and typed. Carbon paper is used to facilitate the production process. Using a pen to copy text in a newspaper manually, a copyist can make three clear and readable copies. When using a typewriter, he can make five copies at a time. In the 1970s, literary works that appeared were printed by printing machines, and were copied using electrophotographic photocopiers.

Books that are banned from publishing are very interesting to read. The opportunity to read it after receiving a copy from the author, or from abroad not only stimulates the development of samizdat, but also makes samizdat very popular. Meanwhile, tamizdat, which was an uncensored work sent abroad to be published and later sent back to the Soviet Union, was also widely distributed among Soviet readers. The existence of Samizdat, the Soviet people not only had the opportunity to read novels, and study political issues, but also read the works of famous writers. Soviet society did not get these literary works for the first time from bookshelves in bookstores, but from one hand to another in the form of clandestinely hand-written carbon copies. The works of Boris Pasternak and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and many novels, and poems are widely recognized throughout the Soviet Union.

Unpublished works by the author, privately circulated in the form of manuscripts to several friends, and copied by hand, were given to frontline soldiers who circulated them with passion and deep feelings. Patriotic novels became famous among warriors to inflame their spirits. Boris Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova received many letters from frontline soldiers who cited their works. Readers ask to sign a copy of their works as proof of the authenticity of their work. But, the party did not like Pasternak and Akhmatova.

C. Glasnost Period.

In the XXVII party congress in 1986, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union declared a stagnant and economic reform of the party by introducing glasnost/openness, perestroika/ restructuring, and democracy/democratization. Gorbachev made a new approach to overcome this problem. He introduced a reform program that embodied two concepts thoroughly. The concept of perestroika began with a reshuffle of the top members of the Communist Party. It also focuses on economic issues, replacing centralized government planning that has characterized the Soviet system with greater dependence on market forces. The accompanying glasnost concept seeks to alleviate the strict social controls imposed by the government. Gorbachev gave greater freedom to the media and religious groups, and the public to express the different views.

The collapse of the Soviets ended the period of censorship, ideological manipulation and freedom of restrictions. Initially, Radio and television were dominated by the Communist Party, and were seen as the main tools for

propaganda. Until the mid-1980s, most television programs consisted of direct or indirect propaganda peppered with high-quality art. But during the glasnost period, innovative television programs helped create a situation where the Soviet state was destroyed.

Government control of the media began to weaken, and in 1989 official censorship was completely removed. Most of the press was privatized, but the important elements remained under government control and regulation, especially television news media. Among the leading newspapers, Rossiyskaya Gazeta/Russian newspaper is the official organ of the government and has extensive circulation. Moskovskii Komsomolets/Moscow Komsomol is an independent newspaper, also widely read. There are also several independent newspapers, such as The Moscow Times which publish in English.

Russian literature has changed with the appearance of previously banned works, exiled writers or emigrants. Some magazines can publish works by emigrant writers such as Vladimir Nabokov, and Igor Severianin. While the work of Igor Severianin was published in Yunost magazine in 1987, which truly represented an era of freedom and openness, free from contemporary works, and became phenomenal when the return of writers was pushed into their homeland. This era became a reunion between people who were brought into exile abroad, and those who felt exiled in their own country. Authors who have been rehabilitated for decades by citizenship status like Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, and Marina Tsvetaeva.

There is also the phenomenon of the re-emergence of prohibited works rejected by the government, including the authors Mikhail Bulgakov, Anna Akhmatova, and Alexander Tvardovsky. Their works appeared in Novyi Mir, and Druzhba Narodov. One of the works of the early Russian emigrants was the work of Vladimir Nabokov. One of Nabokov's most famous works, Lolita was published in the full version in early 1987. During this glasnost period, many literary works that had previously circulated in the form of samizdat were officially published.

D. Post Glasnost Period

After 30 years of glasnost declared by Gorbachev, the freedom to write literature continued. Glasnost and perestroika policies cause two fundamental changes to the pages of the literary journal. First, changes in ideological attitudes that appear in periodical published magazines. Before the perestroika, the Soviet press was considered a vehicle of education and ideology Shneidman in [9], and Second, changed the shift of content in literary journals published in the second half of the 1980s [9]. Rapid media development has an impact on the development of literature.

The internet appears to provide new colors for literary connoisseurs. Literary works appear in online journals so that they provide different ways for readers when reading literary works. The printed version of the paper was replaced with the virtual version. By providing an online version of their publications, literary magazines are trying to attract a new generation of readers, while maintaining the support of their "traditional" readers. Changes to the electronic version of the literary magazine have prompted

questions about the sustainability of the paper edition and voiced concerns whether the journal will be responsible for the sustainability of the journal itself [10].

The availability of leading online literary journals accessed free has prompted critics to question whether the electronic version will be the death of the printed version of paper. This is interesting to observe because the target audience is different. The older generation likes to read the printed version that continues to be available in several libraries, as well as people who cannot access journals through the internet, or those who are not interested in doing so.

III. CONCLUSION

Russian literature has a long history, since the discovery of the Cyrillic. Since then, the literature has grown rapidly, and the authors publish their work. Literature and government policies cannot be separated. When the Bolshevik party came to power, many of the works of literature were banned from being published. Many writers did not like this situation, and they moved abroad. The works of the emigrant writers were published in the West. Samizdat and Tamizdat became popular publications among Russian authors.

But things changed after Gorbachev declared glasnost and perestroika. The freedom of writing is given to the writers. In the late 1980s many works previously circulated in the form of samizdat were officially published.

Technological advances have an impact on the development of literature. Literary works can be read online through the internet. But not everyone likes it. Some readers prefer to read by holding a book. The younger generation likes because they don't need to hold books to enjoy literature. While people who are not familiar with technology prefer reading books while holding books.

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