

должен принимать всерьез отказа женщины от сексуальных домогательств (как, например, в поговорке: «если девушка говорит "нет" — это значит "может быть"; если говорит "может быть" — значит "да"»).

Как и на Западе, анекдоты об изнасиловании основаны на мифе о том, что каждая женщина едва сдерживает свое сексуальное желание и что обычный акт не удовлетворяет ее потребностей, что она неразборчива и втайне приветствует сексуальный контакт с *любьями* мужчиной. Согласно этому мифу, предполагается, что если она и возражает против домогательства, то делает это она только «для виду», чтобы «казаться скромной». Этим объясняется частое бесцеремонное приставание к женщинам в публичных местах, как это имеет место в России. В анекдотах подобного рода женский протест против сексуального давления изображается как неискренний, как попытка скрыть тайное желание насилья над собой.

Частично анекдоты об изнасиловании реализуют еще и другую психологическую функцию: изображая женскую сексуальность чрезмерной, они помогают мужчинам справиться с тревожностью (и даже страхом) по поводу своей половой адекватности. Хотя эмоции такого рода распространены и в других культурах, у русских они проявляются особенно остро, так как из-за приверженности к алкоголю в больших дозах многим из них знакомы сексуальные неудачи, по крайней мере временные.

Еще одним фактором популярности анекдотов об изнасиловании в России является сложившаяся в русском быту инфантильная ассоциация сексуального акта с насильем, как это произошло у С. Папкева, русского пациента Фрейда, который в детстве случайно стал свидетелем коитуса своих родителей. По мнению американского слависта Д. Ранкура-Лаффера, из-за стесненности жилищных условий в типичной крестьянской избе и позже в советский период, где все члены семьи часто вынуждены были жить в одной и той же комнате, возможности такого рода наблюдений предоставлялись часто. В недавнем фильме «Вор», например, 8-летнему герою картины кажется, что любовник его матери «душит» ее. Ассоциация коитуса с насильем поддерживается и усиливается множеством русских выражений, относящихся к половой сфере.

Особенно опасными являются подобные анекдоты для подростков. В то время как взрослые рассказчики и слушатели этих текстов знают, что в действительности женщины отнюдь не жаждут подвергнуться насилью, как это изображают анекдоты, что это не более чем умозрительное развлечение, словесная реализация мужской фантазии о достигнутой женщиной, для юных слушателей, не способных еще соотносить миф с действительностью, подобные анекдоты часто становятся источником сексуальной информации; на их основе формируется представление (в данном случае ложное) о противоположном поле. Учитывая, что статистический возраст многих насильников колеблется в пределах от 14 до 17 лет, анекдоты об изнасиловании представляют собой потенциально опасный словесный материал. Бесчисленные анекдоты о безудержной женской сексуальности, выражающейся в желании быть изнасилованной, способствуют поддержанию терпимого отношения к продолжающемуся насилью над женщинами.

MASCULINITY AND NATIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN "MEN'S MAGAZINES"

Eliot Borenstein

In contemporary Russia, pornography enjoys a peculiar status in that it is doubly ubiquitous: not only has the first post-Soviet decade been marked by a proliferation of pornographic texts and images on newsstands, televisions, and even shopping bags throughout the Russian Federation, but is featured prominently in the standard litany of woes afflicting postcommunist society: AIDS, prostitution, and pornography are the unholy trinity of both publicistic and scholarly discussions of Russian life, constituting one of the few things shared by Russians across the political spectrum. It is the common denominator of a common demonology. Feminists in both Russia and the West routinely invoke pornography along with domestic violence, trafficking in women, and the sexual exploitation of Russian women in the workplace as examples of a country in crisis, while communists and nationalists point to pornography, homosexuality, prostitution, and AIDS as diseases Russia has caught from a decadent Europe and America (Goscilo 1996: chap. 6).¹ It should come as no surprise that those who actually produce pornography tend to portray their chosen métier in a more positive light. Historically, pornography has long stretched the boundaries between commerce and political expression. In Enlightenment Britain and France, pornographic literature² was often the vehicle for political satire (Hunt 1996a: 10; Hunt 1996b; Weil 1996) while in twentieth-century America, the connection between political expression and pornography has served as one of the justifications for allowing pornographic material to circulate. In the last years of the Soviet Union, freedom of political expression became almost synonymous with freedom of sexual expression; it was not uncommon for liberal political newspapers and magazines (such as the 1990 Baltic pro-independence paper *Baltija*) to combine punitory on the front cover with bare *pudenda* on the back.

What the critics and purveyors of pornography share is their belief in the political significance of porn.² Where the "liberal" publishers

of "erotic" newspapers and magazines see the mark of post-totalitarian liberation, skeptics find a sign of continuity rather than change. Rather than view the resurgence of Russian pornography as simply one of numerous manifestations of the retrenchment of patriarchy, I propose that we look at Russian pornographic newspapers and magazines in the context that they create for themselves, and thereby examine the impulse behind the phenomenon. Catering to a wide range of tastes and economic means, Russian pornographic publications frame the obligatory pin-ups and fetish shots within texts that are often so political and programmatic as to constitute veritable manifestoes of porn. Regardless of their contents, these texts perform a legitimizing function simply by virtue of their very existence. In the West, celebrity interviews and short stories by writers of mainstream fiction allow the reader of *Playboy* to claim that he subscribes to the magazine for the articles rather than the pictures. In Russia, however, this process of legitimization is inevitably entangled with questions of gender and national identity. Without a doubt, even a cursory glance confirms the almost ritualistic objectification and subordination of women, but when the men who produce these words and images reflect on their work, it is the Russian male whom they present as weak and embattled. In the textual and visual two-dimensional world of the Russian pornographic magazine, Russian men see themselves as fighting back against national and sexual humiliation.

Of course, one must be careful when making generalizations about such an amorphous set of publications as "Russian pornography."³ In the present study, I focus largely on "slick" magazines, such as the Russian edition of *Playboy*, *Makhaon*, and, most important, *Andrei*. The world of these magazines is, as *Makhaon* puts it, a "man's world" (*mir muzhchiny*); their concern with manhood is encoded in the very titles of *Playboy* and *Andrei* (a Russian name derived from the Greek word for "manly"). Certainly, the label "men's magazine" functions largely as a linguistic convention, a code to the potential buyer that, if he is looking for sexually explicit material, he will not be disappointed (although the recent launch of a Russian edition of *Men's Health* may serve to change this perception). Yet I would argue that *Andrei's* label "a Russian magazine for men" is more than merely descriptive; it offers the journal as a bracing tonic to its weakened audience.

These publications stand in sharp contrast to the other most popular "pornographic" or "erotic" publications in Russia, though they share some superficial similarities: in particular, I have in mind the often-banned, free-wheeling Russian-language Latvian publication called *Eshche* (*Encore*), and the various magazines and

books that make up the empire of "Mister Iks" (*Mister Iks* [Mister X], *Miss Iks* [Miss X], *Istushenie* [Seduction], and *Bul'var krutoi erotiki* [Hardcore Boulevard]). Where the so-called "men's magazines" define their role quite narrowly, the world of *Eshche* and *Mister Iks* is accepting and all-inclusive. The texts of the Mister Iks publications consist largely of letters from readers, and the Iks "anything-goes" philosophy is perhaps best exemplified by the regular rubrics under which the letters are grouped: "Sexual Lost and Found" (Biuo seksual'nykh nakhodok), "The Order of the Knights of Sex" (Orden rytsarei seksual'nogo obrazza), "A Volcano of Virgin Boys" (Vul'kan devstvennykh mal'chikov), "The Zone of Unspent Love" (Zona neistrachennoi ljubvi),⁴ and, most noteworthy, "The Island of Non-Standard Orientation" (Ostrov nestandardnoi orientatsii) and "The Temple of Gay Love" (Khram goluboi ljubvi). *Eshche* is, if anything, even more uninhibited in its attitude and scope; not only is nearly every possible type of sexual encounter described in its articles and letters, but anxieties of any kind play little or no role. Borders are crossed with impunity, and the post-Soviet sexual adventurer is placed on equal footing with his Western counterparts.

All of these magazines are oriented primarily toward men, and, for the most part, toward heterosexual men (for perspectives on gay pornography, see Luc Beaudoin's article in this volume). Their reader is assumed to be both Russian and male, and neither gender nor nationality (nor, for that matter, sexual orientation) are objects of extended reflection. The reader of *Eshche* and *Mister Iks* is implicitly posited to be secure in both his masculinity and in his Russianness; this is not to say that there is any particular standard of manliness or national pride required of the reader, but rather that such issues do not play a significant role in the magazines' agenda. (A case can be made, however, for *Eshche* as the embodiment of a very different type of ideological stance; see Borenstein 1999). Indeed, one might argue that such publications might ultimately be more reassuring to the male Russian reader than *Andrei*, since he can indulge himself without even contemplating his success or failure as a Russian or a man.

By contrast, magazines such as *Makhaon* and especially *Andrei* represent themselves as the veritable "rear-guard" of Russian manhood. From its very inception, *Andrei* has staked out a specific territory on the map of Russian manhood. In its first issue in 1991, the editors write:

Перед Вами первый русский журнал для мужчин. Он необходим сегодня, потому что именно мужчины более всего нуждаются в осва-

божени от стрессовой агрессивности и неудовлетворенности. Их психологическая свобода — залог освобождения общества от довлеющих комплексов искаженной эпохи.

(*Andrei* 1 [1991]: 3)

You hold in your hands the first Russian journal for men. It is essential today, for it is precisely men who need liberation from stressful aggression and lack of satisfaction more than anything. Their psychological freedom is a prerequisite for the emancipation of society from the crushing complexes of a distorted era.

Andrei has suffered more than its share of difficulties in the past seven years, and even ceased publication temporarily after most of its staff deserted for the now-defunct Russian edition of *Penthouse*; by the summer of 1997, it was only on its seventh issue, but its determination to fight for Russia's embattled masculinity has not wavered since its initial manifesto. Each issue contains articles detailing new aspects of the threat to Russian masculinity, printed under the rubric "The Rights of Men" (*Prava muzhchin*). Though the authors vary from issue to issue, the structure remains more or less constant: first, the writer decries the excesses of the "culture wars" in the West, then he exposes similar problems he sees in Russia. In 1995, in the sixth issue of *Andrei*, Viktor Erofeev wrote an essay for this section entitled "The Flight of the Cloud in Trousers" (*Polet oblaka v shtanakh*). "The Flight of the Cloud in Trousers" was central to Erofeev's subsequent slim volume of essays called *Muzhchiny* (Men, 1997), and supplied most of the material for the book's rather polemical self-advertisement. When printed in *Andrei*, Erofeev's article was preceded by a garish illustration of a monstrous female head with a woman's symbol hanging from her ear and a long, serpentine tongue sticking out of her mouth; the tongue is curled around the small, rigid figure of a faceless man, a helpless victim about to be swallowed up by this ravenous she-demon. The man's rigid pose could in itself almost be phallic, but the context deprives him of any of the prerogatives of traditional male power; not only does he look like a pawn from a chessboard, but, given that he seems to be staring directly into the eyes of the fish-like woman, he resembles the paralyzed victim of the gorgon's gaze.

After a rather typical diatribe against feminism and the controversy over sexual harassment in the West (which, Erofeev says, may culminate in the executions of former "fun-loving womanizers" [*veselye babniki*] for their past "crimes," just as former Trotskyites were shot in our country); the author informs us that "Man's fate in Russia looks different, but is no less dramatic." The

Russian man is not merely embattled, but has ceased to exist altogether: "That is, the concept has been retained in the language by inertia, out of mental laziness, but essentially, it's a phantom, a chimera, a specter, a myth (fantom, khimera, prizrak, mif)." Erofeev's explanation centers around the idea that unites his work with the editorial missions of *Andrei* and *Makhaon*: "First and foremost, it's a question of consciousness." Though Erofeev is engaging in deliberate *épatage*, he is also arguing, in a sense, for men's consciousness-raising: "A man is a man when he thinks of himself as a man." Thanks to Soviet power (which Erofeev himself admits was instituted by male Russians), the Russian man has lost the honor and freedom that are the hallmarks of true manhood. Instead, the Russian man has been replaced by a "layer cake" made up of *chelovek* (person), *muzhik* (guy), and *muzh* (husband), all of which represent circumscribed, ultimately unfulfilling roles for the potential real man (Erofeev 1995: 46).

Strictly speaking, there is nothing pornographic about Erofeev's essay. The topic and the argument are hardly new, as the burgeoning literature on the supposedly pathetic state of post-Soviet manhood attests: Lina Tarakhova's 1992 *Vospitat' muzhchinu* (Raising a Man), V.Z. Vladislavsky's 1991 *Esti ty muzhchina* (If You're a Man), and A. Nikulin's 1990 *Muzhskoi razgovor* (A Conversation for Men) all share Erofeev's basic argument that Russian men are an endangered species. These books, however, are largely pedagogical, focused on returning traditional male values to the younger generation; these are books for boys and for the teachers of boys. Erofeev's work is directed at his own contemporaries, middle-aged men who, with just the right amount of consciousness-raising, may be able to rise to the challenge of this chimerical model of male dignity. The choice of a forum for Erofeev's argument is, therefore, hardly accidental: what better way to get the attention of adult heterosexual men than by publishing one's works between pictures of airbrushed nudes with gravity-defying breasts? (Notably, other of Erofeev's essays in *Muzhchiny* were originally printed in *Playboy*, where Erofeev started publishing his essays not long after his work in *Andrei* first appeared.)

In the foreword to his story "Zhizn' i perezhivaniia Vovy V." (The Life and Experiences of Vova V.), Vladimir Voinovich provides a similar justification for "men's magazines," and, perhaps, for his decision to publish in one:

«Андрей» — журнал для мужчин. Все журналы такого рода привлекают читателя изображением голых понок и пипок, гоночных

автомобилей и сигарет знаменитых марок. Но лучшие из них перемежают эти изображения иногда довольно серьезными текстами.

(Voinovich 1995: 22)

Andrei is a magazine for men. All such magazines attract the reader with pictures of naked butts and pussies, race-cars and brand-name cigarettes. But the best of them sometimes alternate these pictures with rather serious writing.

A similar claim is made by editor L. Konovalov in his opening editorial to the first 1997 issue of *Makhaon*. As part of his ongoing battle against the Russian government's attempts to limit the distribution of pornography, he rejects the "erotic" label for his magazine: "The arts and current-affairs magazine *Makhaon* (khudozhestvenno-publitsisticheskii zhurnal 'Makhaon') is not an erotic publication." Instead, he writes, "*Makhaon*'s path lies in affirming a sense of male self-worth (chuvstva muzhskoi samotsernnosti)" (Konovalov 1997: 1). Though the same essay also rejects sexual violence and sadism, some of the more vivid attempts at "affirming male self-worth" in *Makhaon* consist of articles and photomontages about masochistic women receiving the punishment they crave at the hands (indeed, at the feet) of potbellied, middle-aged men. *Makhaon*'s path to masculine pride seems to consist of a combination of female sexual submissiveness and extended rants on the evils of Russian "pseudo-democracy", perhaps nowhere is this strategy better exemplified than by a full-page, color cartoon of a leather-clad Anatoly Chubais whipping a blindfolded blonde whose tattoo of a two-headed eagle and white, blue, and red sash suggest that she symbolizes Russia; with gritted teeth, handcuffed wrists, and pierced nipples, this woman turns her rear to the viewer as hundred-dollar bills fall from her vagina into a box marked "Xerox," apparently in response to Chubais' not-so-tender mercies (*Makhaon* 8 [1997]: 4).

Though *Makhaon* sees its greatest enemies among the leaders of Russia, it clearly has no love for the West. One article in the fourth issue (1995) blames America for the Chernobyl disaster, while Aleksandr Bratersky's "Poslednii devstvennik SSSR" (The Last Virgin in the USSR) describes the collapse of the Soviet Union in terms of seduction and rape, comparing the iron curtain to a hymen: "the people who deflowered the USSR wanted proof of her innocence—they wanted BLOOD" (D. L. i V. S. 1995: 16 – 20; Bratersky 1995: 24). In its disdain for both Russian democrats and Western culture, *Makhaon* is nothing if not consistent. *Andrei*'s attitude to the West is far more complicated, as the editors find

themselves embracing certain Western values (consumerism and sexual freedom) while raging against Western competition. *Andrei* identifies two specific threats to Russian manhood, even if its approach to both is inconsistent and self-contradictory. The first threat is homosexuality, while the second is the West itself.

Given the magazine's championing of traditional masculine roles and values, its hostility to male homosexuality should be of no surprise. The "Rights of Men" section that had been occupied by Erofeev in the previous issue was now taken up by an extended anti-homosexual diatribe written by the "famous wizard and healer, Master of White Magic, Iurii Longo" (izvestnyi koldun i vrachevatel', magistr Beloi magii Iurii Longo) (Longo 1995: 54). As in Erofeev's piece, Longo's essay starts out with a caricature of Western decadence: in American universities (the site of Erofeev's imagined executions of sexual harassers), hapless young students are subjected to homosexual propaganda and pornography, and if anyone shows the slightest sign of disgust, his photograph appears in a student newspaper with the label "homophobe" (which Longo mistakenly translates as "misanthrope"). As Russian homophobic diatribes go, Longo's piece is a model of tolerance;⁵ Longo reassures the reader that gays don't really run the entire world, and that the fashion for homosexuality will run its course by the year 2015. Instead, he writes that the gay subculture is a "shadow" of the "normal world," and invokes the famous line from Evgenii Shvarts' well-known play also called *The Shadow*: "Ten', znai svoe mesto!" (Shadow, know your place!). Longo himself seems to recognize the irony in placing the male homosexual, like the shadow, immediately behind the "normal" man. Hence the title and final sentence of Longo's essay: "Ne dyshte nam v zad" (Don't breathe up our asses) (Longo 1995: 57).

Ultimately, however, homosexuality as seen from the heterosexual cosmos of *Andrei* is a rather distant threat; Longo even expresses the sentiment that the greater the number of gay men, the less competition "normal" men will have for desirable women. But Erofeev's article hints at the specter that haunts Russian pornography: the specter of Western culture and Western men. If the Russian man is a thing of the past, the Russian woman is entirely real: "Woman consists of necessity. In Russia we have necessity by the ton. That is why Russia is feminine," writes the author of *Russkata krasavitsa* (Russian Beauty) (Erofeev 1995: 46). And because she is aware that there are no men in Russia, she is quite willing to leave the country and find real men abroad. Once again, the sexual threat is inextricably caught up with an economic one: the Russian man posited by *Andrei* laments the competition with

Western men, while *Andrei* itself is haunted both by Russia's competition with American pop culture and by the magazine's own attempts to maintain its market share against the threat of "men's magazines" imported from the United States, particularly the Russian-language edition of *Playboy*, whose contents differ from the American version only slightly. When *Andrei* calls itself a "Russian magazine for men," the accent is on both "for men" and "Russian," in what seems to be a deliberate slap in the face of the Russian *Playboy*.

Even before *Playboy* appeared, *Andrei* had already begun to stress the Russianness of both its models and their settings: In the introduction to the fifth (1994) issue, the editors lament that Russia has become a lawless, third-world country that is unable to withstand the onslaught of cheap foreign imports such as Snickers and Pepsi-Cola:

Обидно? Нам тоже. И поэтому мы работаем без выходных, и позтому — перед Вами новый номер первого русского журнала для мужчин, одного из немногих отечественных продуктов, который не «на экспорт» и за который не стыдно.

(*Andrei* 5 [1994]: 2)

Upset? So are we. And that's why we work without days off, and that's why you have before you a new issue of the first Russian magazine for men, one of the few domestic products that isn't "for export" and which is not an embarrassment.

In an editorial in the seventh issue, *Andrei*'s writers claim that, unlike the competition, their magazine is more respectful of Russian women:

«Андрей» возносит нашу женщину на пьедестал восхищения, а не пытается, подобно журналам-интервентам, которых все больше в киосках, невыгодно и предвзято представить ее рядом с иностранками, да еще обязательно так, чтобы «фирменная» модель была БОЛЕЕ сексуальна и женственна. Задача интервентов проста: доказать, что все западное лучше, дороже, сильнее — и к тому же превратить наших женщин в недорогой, готовый на все предмет экспорта.

(*Andrei* 7 [1995]: 2)

Andrei puts our women on a pedestal for admiration; unlike invader magazines, of which there are more and more in the kiosks, it does not present her in an disadvantageous and biased fashion next to foreign women in order that the "house" model be MORE sexual and feminine. The invaders' task is simple: to prove that everything Western is better, more expensive, stronger — and also to turn our women into a cheap export that is ready for anything.

Not only does the magazine that once identified itself with the allegedly Western values of freedom and democracy now take on an overtly nationalistic tone, but its vocabulary deliberately evokes the rhetoric of war: Western magazines, like Western armies, are "interventionists" and "invaders" on a hostile mission of conquest.

Though the pictures, stories, and ads in *Andrei* portray a free-spending, luxurious lifestyle available only to the wealthiest of "New Russians," the magazine's implicit nationalism makes itself known throughout. If the letters to the editor are to be believed, the readership has responded to *Andrei*'s pro-Russian boosterism. In the best tradition of Soviet-era collective letters, a group of officers from the Baltic Fleet in Tallinn write to *Andrei* in the sixth issue, for example, thanking the magazine for mentioning the 300th anniversary of the Russian fleet:

Вы действительно наш журнал. Наша национальная гордость даже, в какой-то мере. Хотя бывали кое-где и видели много разных мужских журналов, а «Андрей» ближе и приятней нашему советскому человеку.

(*Andrei* 6 [1995]: 4)

You really are our magazine. Even our national pride, to some extent. Although we've been places and seen many different men's magazines, *Andrei* is nicer and closer to the heart of our Soviet man.

The officers' letter is so full of patriotic fervor that it would be easy to forget that they are writing about a pornographic magazine rather than, say, the launching of a space shuttle; the anachronistic reference to "our Soviet man" by a group of Russian military personnel based in newly-independent Estonia only heightens the identification of *Andrei* with a nostalgia for Russia's greatness.

The officers' nationalistic enthusiasm for an "erotic" magazine seems excessive only when removed from context; the issue that prompted their letter (no. 5, 1994) featured a special photo spread dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the Russian navy. "Bronenosets Marina" (The Battleship Marina) consists of pictures of a female model wearing only a sailor's cap (with the word "Андрей" on it) as she writhes against the heavy artillery of a gunboat. Aleksei Veitsler's photos and text deliberately evoke Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, only here the film's agitprop message and homoerotic aesthetics are replaced by the none-too-subtle conventions of the heterosexual pin-up: where Eisenstein's camera lingers on the bodies of Russian sailors, Veitsler's camera interposes a naked woman between the handsome, semi-nude men.

Alluding to the incident that sparks the uprising in Eisenstein's film, Veitsler describes the tense scene on a ship in 1905, when the sailors of the Potemkin are ready to kill each other over rotten meat: "Here we'd be better off with Professor Freud than with student Ulianov [Lenin]." If only, Veitsler writes, the model Marina Pavlova were on that ship; she would have simply shouted "A kto khochet poprobovat' moego miasa?!" (Who'd like to try some of my meat?!) (Veitsler 1994: 6). Veitsler's fantasy montage climaxes in an imitation of early Soviet propaganda, with a picture of a fully-clothed Pavlova on the shoulders of three of the sailors, raising the Russian flag rather than the banner of revolution. The text makes the utopianism of this scene explicit:

И все перевернулось, как в сказке.
И экран осветился светом.
И словно волна смела красное с флага над кораблем.
И не было десятипалестин шторма.
И Крым — наш.
И флот — русский.
Только на заклепанном борту броненосца название.
(Veitsler 1994: 15)

And everything went turned topsy-turvy, like in a fairy tale.
And the screen was bathed in light.
And it was as if a wave washed the red off the flag over the ship.
And there hasn't been a [revolutionary] gale for decades.
And the Crimea is ours.
And the fleet is Russian.
Only on the riveted side of the battleship [is a new] name.

Such declarations could not have come at a more politically sensitive time. The much-trumpeted anniversary of the Russian navy took place against the backdrop of heightened tensions between Russian and Ukraine over the status of the Black Sea fleet and potential Russian claims on the Crimean peninsula. If the 1994 *Andrei* was in part a special issue for Russian sailors, it neatly combined sexual and political fantasy, one where the all-male world of the battleship was mediated by the willing body of a desirable woman, and the coveted Crimea need not be shared with anyone.

A fantasy involving the undisputed domination of a highly-prized territory must be near and dear to the hearts of *Andrei*'s editors; after all, the magazine's nationalism can be explained at least in part as a strategic move in its struggle for market share in the face of the Russian *Playboy*. But from its first appearance in Russia in 1995, *Playboy* has refused to cede any "Russian territory" to its domestic

competitors. Indeed, the inaugural Summer 1995 issue is an overt attempt to bring together two seemingly-disparate cultural conventions: *Playboy*'s emphasis on the pleasures of the "finer things" is combined with the most recognizable of Russian cultural icons. The Russian *Playboy* announces its hybrid nature on the cover with a picture that seems to be modeled on an early Soviet coin, perhaps from the 1920s; the sheaves of wheat representing agriculture and the smoke-belching factory on opposite sides of the coin are classic allegorical representation of the alliance between workers and peasants, while the sun shining from the bottom of the coin and the open book on the top would both seem to represent the enlightenment brought by the revolution. But the center of the coin, where one might expect to see Lenin's familiar profile, is occupied by that of the bow-tied Playboy bunny. Elsewhere in the issue we find a cartoon showing happy rabbit-eared men and boys marching in Red Square with placards displaying the bunny image (*Playboy* 1 [1995]: 50). If the editors are to be believed, *Playboy* was always a presence in the Soviet Union, at least in the lives of the Party elite; in an interview entitled "Viktor Sukharev: in My Luggage," the personal translator to four Soviet leaders admits that he always brought copies of the magazine back with him from his foreign travels (Lipnitsky 1995: 97).

Artem Troitsky, the editor of the Russian edition of the magazine, discusses the connection between Russia and *Playboy* as it unfolded over the decades, paying special attention to the representation of Russia on the magazine's pages. Troitsky begins his article by noting that Hugh Hefner began *Playboy* in 1953, the same year that Stalin died; elsewhere in the same issue, Vasilii Aksenov states the connection more boldly: "The new age of the Twentieth Century proclaimed: 'The tyrant is dead, long live PLAYBOY!'" (Troitsky 1995: 94; Aksenov 1995: 56). Obliquely, *Playboy* takes credit for the relaxation of Russian mores, perpetually insisting that the *Playboy* ethic of sexual freedom is the natural ally in the struggle against totalitarianism. Even as *Playboy* offers its reader the best that Western sex has to offer (including nude pictures of Ursula Andress, Bo Derek, Cindy Crawford, and Kim Basinger), it asserts its Russian pedigree. The parade of nude Western actresses is finally interrupted by a picture of Natalia Negoda, whom the magazine calls the "symbol of the Soviet 'sexual revolution'" because Negoda had posed for the American *Playboy* back in 1989 (Troitsky 1995: 33).

Yet as the magazine has established itself in the Russian market, the editors of *Playboy* have relaxed their concern with their Russian

pedigree, adding only a thin veneer of Russian content to a largely Western-style publication. By contrast, *Andrei* has, if anything, intensified its preoccupation with "Russianness," treating Russian and Soviet history as a treasure trove of erotic nationalism. A six-page feature in the sixth issue shows supposedly American porn models surrounded by the props of the Russian/Soviet space program; the magazine thus compensates for "importing" exotic American beauties by stressing the accomplishments of one of the few areas of Russian industry that could still be the source of unequivocal pride. In the following issue an ad by Upsilon makes the rather obvious connection between the launch of a rocket and male sexual response: an injectible medicine for impotence is advertised with a picture of a syringe-like rocket blasting off into space. In the space pictorial, the English-speaking models are quoted as pronouncing only one Russian word throughout the entire shoot: "Jessica, Kelly, and Christie responded to the idea of a spaceflight enthusiastically. 'Ga-garin!' they laughed, stretching the costumes of Soviet superheroes (super-geroev) over their American breasts" (Kondakov 1995: 10). And in a feature suggested by Vasilii Aksenov, but clearly inspired by *Playboy's* "Girls of the Big Ten," the cover section of the seventh issue features "Devushki MGU" ("The Girls of MGU), in which the magazine offers photographs of one naked woman from each of Moscow University's departments.

Magazines like *Andrei*, whose basic economic task is to sell sexual images of Russian women to Russian men, ultimately return to some of the fundamental questions of sexual discourse in Russia today: how are sex and the marketplace to be reconciled? If sexual metaphors characterize the "free exchange of goods and ideas" between Russian and the West (the source of both the marketplace in general and the very genres of pornography and soft-core titillation), how can the anxieties provoked by the commercialization of sex—the incursions on privacy, the threat of foreign wealth and potency—be allayed? *Andrei* points the way by thematizing those anxieties themselves, continually revisiting them in a light-hearted manner. The seventh issue of *Andrei* includes a feature that incorporates exotic locales while hurrying the threat of the "export" of Russian women into the stuff of comedy: a blonde model is photographed in various locales (and various stages of undress) in Cairo and the Egyptian desert, under the heading "Sto verbludova za russkuiu baryshniu" ("One hundred camels for a Russian girl). Capitalist exchange is replaced by Eastern barter, and the Russians girl's price, for once, is anything but practical ("We sent... the camels on their way to a friend in Tashkent. Will they get there?") (Veisler

1995: 50). The photospread depends on a sense of mutual exoticism, as well as a broad parody of cross-cultural kitsch; in the corner of a full-page photo of a naked Russian woman on a camel is a fully-clothed Arab woman on a tractor. The contrast between the "backwards" camel and the "progressive" tractor is a cliché of Soviet Socialist Realist tales of the struggle to civilize the nomads of Central Asia, but where the USSR brought communism, *Andrei* brings sexual liberation. The caption reads:

Журнал для мужчин приветствовал немногие освободившиеся женщины с Востока. В качестве солидарности с нашей борьбой за красоту тела одна из них даже забрала на трактор — символ прогресса.

(Veisler 1995: 49).

A few emancipated women of the East welcomed the magazine for men. Out of solidarity with our struggle for the beauty of the body, one of them even climbed up onto a tractor—the symbol of progress.

The Eastern locale allows Russia to take on a missionary role familiar from the days of communist internationalism, at the same time displacing cross-cultural anxieties by turning Russia into the source of sexual "export." Here Russia gets to be the West, raising the sexual question in a mysterious, repressed East.

The implicit ideological agenda of *Andrei* is to compensate for the trauma of the nation's fall from the status of a world power, especially to the extent that this humiliation is felt by the individual Russian man. The demons of the recent past are to be exorcised through sex. Hence a two-page spread in the seventh issue features semi-nude women in SS costumes against the backdrop of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, thus reinterpreting a national tragedy in terms of sadomasochistic games. The cover feature for the third issue (1992) is a woman holding an automatic assault weapon and a grenade as she poses clad in nothing but an army helmet and dogtags; this section, entitled "Konversia" (Conversion), addresses the shock and dislocation entailed by the process of refitting the country's huge military-industrial complex for a new market economy. Aleksei Veisler, the section's author, supplies the reader with photographs of the naked and busy Natalia Sergeeva, purported to be an officer in the Russian army. A life in the army has not prevented her from retaining the "traits of a real woman." Unequaled with both rifle and frying pan, Natalia realizes that it is time for her to leave the army. Her decision combines the personal and the political, in that she recognizes the exigencies of a post-Cold-War world while heeding the sound of her biological clock ("I want

to have a family") (Veitsler 1992: 82). In the final photo, Natalia stands on the beach with her back turned to the camera. The text reads:

Гвардии сержант Наташа выйдет из кипящего железа войны, как Афродита из пены... Преображенная и ожидающая счастья. Храните ее фотографии, как хранят сувениры, сделанные из корпусов межконтинентальных ракет. В память о конверсии.

(Veitsler 1992: 89)

Sergeant of the Guard Natasha emerges from the boiling iron of war like Aphrodite from the foam... Transfigured and waiting for happiness. Keep her photograph, as they keep souvenirs made from the shells of intercontinental missiles. As a memento of conversion.

Here military-industrial conversion becomes something beautiful and divine, likened to transfiguration and the birth of new life. At the same time, the attributes of military might (guns, camouflage fatigues, and army boots) are transformed into sexual paraphernalia. In the new world, the military yields to the pornographic.

A similar process takes place in a truly bizarre section of the seventh issue, published under the title "Chechnia: What the Soldiers Aren't Saying." Here, pictures of Russian soldiers fighting, eating, and sleeping in Chechnia are framed by erotic images of their fantasies, such as Eastern women in leather garb wielding whips. A pimply-faced Russian soldier stares vacantly at his food, surrounded by images of naked women caressing phallic-shaped breads. The photos are accompanied by a prose poem about the unexpressed desires of the Russian soldier; in the final two pages, the men are shown firing weapons while a poem alongside describes their eventual return to their "girls next-door with their firm behinds, whom they will have this way and that way, without extraneous words, upon their return; then [these girls] will bear them children" (Anin 1995: 92). The naked woman whose picture accompanies this text is far less threatening than previous models; her expression and demeanor really do suggest the "girl next-door," while the gun she holds is merely a plastic toy. The Russian soldier is thus shown to be dreaming of returning to a world where war is merely the stuff of fantasy, while women are the reality, even as erotic stimulant. reader has both war and sex offered up to him as erotic stimulant.

Andrei's world of male power and Russian pride thus manages to transfigure the site of the country's greatest post-Soviet humiliation into the source of reassuring erotic fantasy: in what might be considered a postmodern reinterpretation of the biblical injunction

on swords and plowshares, the phallic rifle wielded with such uncertainty by the young Russian soldier is transformed into a long, pink, plastic sex toy caressed by a nubile Russian beauty. Though the Chechen is perceived as an internal enemy, the implicit connection made by *Andrei* between men at war and men's erotic magazines suggests the specific function that such journals hope to perform in the post-Soviet imaginary: to rally the flagging spirits of Russian men, surrounded by hostile forces on all sides.

NOTES

¹ This is the first scholarly discussion devoted to the contents of contemporary Russian pornography. Goscilo's approach, while explicitly opposed to censorship, nevertheless adheres to a feminist definition of pornography as "a practice and presentation of sexual subordination, whereby female submission to male dominance (and violence) is played out in sexually explicit terms degrading to women, for the purpose of arousing a (preponderantly male) audience" (Goscilo 1996: 142). Goscilo argues that however much the defenders of Russian pornography in the late perestroika period couch their enthusiasm in the rhetoric of liberation, it is a liberation of men at the expense of women.

² According to Goscilo, "If Western pornography is the political product of the capitalist economic system, in Soviet Russia politics has been the pornographic product of a utopian imagination unrestrained by ethics" (Goscilo 1996: 160). The identification of a "pornographic" element in Soviet utopianism has fascinating ramifications; in order to see Goscilo's point, one need only recall the scene from Andrei Platonov's *Kotlovan* (The Foundation Pit) in which the crippled Zhachev surreptitiously masturbates while watching a parade of ideologically-pure Pioneer girls.

³ In the present study the term "pornography" refers to print materials only, and which, unless otherwise specified, primarily target the heterosexual male market.

⁴ These are letters from prisoners, the title alludes to the secondary meaning of the Russian word "БЭМ" ("zone"); prison camp.

⁵ Longo's essay is part of what the cover calls "two views of gays." The other is Vasilii Aksenov's short story about a Russian emigré whose missing friend turns out to have died of AIDS ("V raione Ploshchadi Dupont"; it appeared in English as "Around Dupont" in *The New Yorker*, 71 [Nov. 20, 1995]). Aksenov's story, though it contains an implicit plea for toleration of homosexuals, is not polemical, and does not even attempt to refute any of Longo's arguments.

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МАСКУЛИННОСТЬ И НАЦИОНАЛИЗМ

В СОВРЕМЕННЫХ РУССКИХ «МУЖСКИХ ЖУРНАЛАХ»

Элиот Борнштейн

В современной России порнографию принято относить к стандартному перечню зол, поразивших посткоммунистическое общество, тогда как непосредственные производители порнографических материалов склон-

ны выставлять избранную ими сферу деятельности как примету постталагтарной свободы. Однако и противников и защитников порнографии объединяет одно — и те и другие свято уверены в важном политическом значении этого жанра. Дашное исследование рассматривает русские порнографические журналы в том контексте, который они сами себе создают, и поэтому изучает побудительные причины этого феномена. Русские порнографические издания обрамляют фотографии раздетых красоток и снимки кумиров текстами, которые зачастую достаточно политичны и программны, чтобы составить настоящие манифесты «порно». Вне зависимости от содержания эти тексты самым фактом своего существования выталкивают легитимизирующую функцию. В России же этот процесс легитимизации неизбежно прочно связан с вопросами полового и национального самосознания. Без сомнения, даже поверхностный взгляд заметит проводимое в большинстве публикаций почти ритуальное овеществление и подчинение женщин, но если авторы этих текстов как следует призадумаются над результатами своего труда, то они заметят, что в их изображении именно русский мужчина как раз и предстает в виде существа слабого и борющегося с национальной и сексуальной униженностью. Такие журналы, как «Махаон» и особенно «Андрей», являют собой самый настоящий «арьергард» русского мужского достоинства. Перед Россией встает одновременно политическая и сексуальная угроза: изображаемый «Андреем» русский мужчина горько опечален соревнованием с западными мужчинами, тогда как самому «Андрею» не дают покоя состязание России с американской попкультурой и старания журнала отвоювать себе место на рынке сбыта, невзирая на угрозу со стороны «мужских журналов», импортируемых из Соединенных Штатов, особенно же — русского язычного издания «Плейбой». Хотя фотографии, рассказы и реклама в «Андрее» демонстрируют привольную и роскошную жизнь, доступную только для самых богатых «новых русских», явственный национализм журнала дает о себе знать. «Плейбой» же отказался передавать «национальные материалы» местным издателям и косвенным путем даже претендует на роль врачевателя язв российской действительности, постоянно настаивая на том, что проповедуемая данным журналом этика сексуальной свободы — естественный союзник в борьбе против тоталитаризма. Однако, поскольку «Плейбой» уже обосновался на российском рынке, его издатель уменьшил долю российских материалов, ограничившись лишь тонкой вкладкой русского содержания, добавленного к основной массе публикаций западного стиля. Напротив, «Андрей», насколько это только возможно, усилл свою сосредоточенность на «русском духе», обращаясь с российской и советской историей как с бесхозной сокровищницей эротического национализма. В повестке дня «Андрея» на главном месте стоит задача компенсировать травму, нанесенную всей нации уходом с позиций мирового господства. Журнал надеется также поднять слабейший дух русских мужчин, окруженных со всех сторон враждебными силами.