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Literaturnaia gazeta Digital Archive

From 1929



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History of *Literaturnaia gazeta*

Literaturnaia gazeta was established on April 22, 1929 with the support of the “father of Soviet literature”, writer Maxim Gorky, who borrowed the name of the 19th century publication, founded by a group of authors led by Alexander Pushkin. This is the reason the masthead of *Literaturnaia gazeta* included the silhouette portraits of Pushkin and during some periods, Gorky.

In 1932 *Literaturnaia gazeta* became the official organ of the Union of Soviet Writers, the government-controlled organization which controlled most literary publications and the employment of writers in the USSR. In the post-World War II period, the scope of *Literaturnaia gazeta* expanded from an exclusively literary newspaper to more of a literary, social and political publication, becoming one of the most authoritative and influential publications in the country. Poetry and prose was published along with culture and everyday life, portraying a more human side in Soviet society.

The tone and focus of *Literaturnaia gazeta* did change with every new editor-in-chief, however, a major transformation occurred in 1967 when the prominent Russian intellectual Aleksandr Chakovsky headed the 16-page weekly, which became the only newspaper of its kind in the USSR. As the press-run grew to 6.5 million copies in the 1970s and 1980s, it became the most popular newspaper with intelligentsia, who fondly dubbed it “Literaturka”.



Why It's Important Today

Literaturnaia gazeta was truly significant in the cultural life of the Soviet Union. While all officially published works were restricted in Soviet times, compared to the party-run Pravda and the government-run Izvestiia, this newspaper was more likely to push the limits of censorship in expressing views on the social life and culture. Unlike many other Soviet newspapers, *Literaturnaia gazeta* refrained from simply re-publishing official party statements and resolutions.

For those studying Russian, Russian literature, and comparative literature, *Literaturnaia gazeta* is undoubtedly an important resource: its pages carry literary criticism; excerpts from works of literature; articles on economics, sociology, ethics, daily life, scientific progress; information for discussion and debate. Contributors to *Literaturnaia gazeta* included the best prose writers of the era: Isaak Babel', Mikhail Bulgakov, Veniamin Kaverin, Leonid Leonov, Yuriy Olesha, Boris Pil'nyak, Yevgeniy Zamyatin, and Mikhail Zoshchenko.

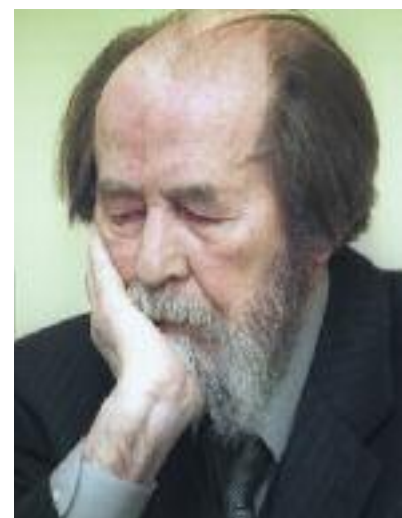


Soviet humor, which very much influences Russian language and humor today, was honed in the pages of *Literaturnaia gazeta*. Good-natured satire was intelligently used as a cover to speak to the many frustrating and unpleasant aspects of Soviet life that were rarely acknowledged in other publications. Many of the articles, commentary and especially political cartoons of “Literaturka” were promptly noticed and widely discussed among friends and colleagues.

***Literaturnaia gazeta* is now available in a complete online archive, from the first issue in 1929, in full-image and searchable text**

Now online access to *Literaturnaia gazeta* on microfilm, converted the images into PDF, and then scanned the files through an optical character recognition process to create an online digital and searchable resource. Researchers can search the text in *Literaturnaia gazeta*, as well as browse or navigate between pages. The interface allows users to zoom or pan, even export results as Adobe PDFs, in an enhanced format that keeps intact every page of this historic newspaper’s original layout and design, including photos/graphics.

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- See photos, maps, diagrams, and cartoons from Soviet times, now accessible as never before



ПРОБЛЕМАТИКА ВЫЛАЗ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ РЕАКЦИИ

Шведская академия словесности и языкознания присудила Нобелевскую премию по литературе за 1958 год поэту-декаденту Б. Пастернаку за его, как говорится в постановлении, «значительный вклад как в современную лирику, так и в область великих традиций русских прозаиков». Это сенсационное, пропитанное лозгом и андеграундом решение встречено восторженным ревом реакционной буржуазной прессы. Печать капиталистических государств и не пытается скрыть, что выходка шведских консерваторов от «словесности» вызвана одним фактом — изданием в ряде капиталистических стран романа Б. Пастернака «Доктор Живаго», ибо все другие его произведения почти неизвестны на Западе.

Присуждение награды за художественно убеде, злобное, исповедное нежелание к социализму произведение — это враждебный акт. Советские писатели, как Б. Пастернака, не особенно чужды этому писателю, действительно великие традиции русских прозаиков.

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CUT and PASTE



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