

## Editorial

### In the world of "thick" literary magazines. In memory of the Russian poet Valery Dudarev

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For the past two centuries, Russia has been a literature-centered country. The word of a great writer was perceived as a word of a shepherd. In many ways, Russian man and his soul could be understood through the works of Russian classics. The literary life was pulsing through the country, it was equated with the socio-political life, and therefore a variety of literary movements, groups, associations and, of course, literary magazines were developed. The latter allowed writers to speak from a large rostrum and thereby taught readers the morality, instilling aesthetic tastes.

The heyday of thick literary magazines or "tolstyaky", as the editors called them, fell on the 1950-60s. At that time, magazines "Neva", "Yunost", "Nash Sovremennik", "Moskva" were created. Many of these magazines were published monthly, which is almost impossible to imagine in today's globalized world. Why? In Soviet times, literature, the printed word was controlled by the state and, accordingly, magazines were financially supplied. An editor-in-chief of that time needed to be just a good editor-in-chief who would be responsible for the quality of the magazine he published – in aesthetic, ethical and political terms. Certainly, this is a tremendous job: accepting and analyzing manuscripts, their review and personal communication with the authors. At that time it was still impossible to imagine communication by e-mail... What has changed today?

After transformations in the power system, the regime in the 1990s in Russia, literature and high-quality artistic word seemed to have faded into the background. "Tolstyaky" began to live their own lives. On the one hand, writers got rid of the state supervision, on the other hand, magazines actually

ceased to receive financing. Editors-in-chief, who were in charge of well-known publishing houses in those difficult years, faced a difficult moral choice: to close the publishing house (they were even sold) or survive in a market economy. The Russian poet, a very young man at that time, Valery Dudarev, who represented a legendary art and socio-political magazine "Yunost" in the literary arena, faced such a difficult choice.

Valery Dudarev, who died at the end of 2019, headed the magazine in 2007, but long before that, back in the 1980s, he came to work for the famous publishing house as a novice poet and brought his poems. After several publications and the publication of the first books "On the Slope of the Twentieth Century", "Where the Forgotten Flowers Grow", a quiet but confident voice of the lyric poet was noticed by accomplished poets, masters of Russian literature: Bella Akhmadulina, Andrey Voznesensky, Novella Matveeva. The critics paid close attention to the poet's talent. Lev Anninsky, a patriarch of the new Russian literature, was the first to write about Dudarev in 2005. The question is not about the positions held, the place of an editor-in-chief, which the young poet had not thought about at that time, but about the fact that Russia was still in a fever in the 2000s, art and literature were also involved in a "fever", a game with a reader and meaning. Dudarev was not like that. His poetry, his main and title image of a white willow emerged from the works of Tyutchev F.I. and Yesenin S.A., whose name the poet used to defend and even made a symbol of the magazine, placing Favorsky's famous engraving on the publisher's products (T-shirts, calendars, badges).

Thus began the literary fate of Valery Dudarev – from the author of the magazine, secretary, head of the Poetry Department to the editor-in-chief. Probably, the latter was the hardest job.

Today it's not enough to be a good talented poet, as well as to be a famous person, even if reliable companions, literary classics, support you. An editor of a large publishing house is a public figure and, at the same time, a person who does a draft, sometimes unnoticeable work. The publication of a thick monthly literary magazine requires full engagement of a person – both spiritual and physical, because the editorial office of "Yunost" received up to a hundred letters a day. Certainly, it is absurd to believe that all letters could be answered in time or to print all the works sent by authors for consideration. However, the value of the editor-in-chief's work lies in the fact that this person largely determines the development of literature – according to Valery Dudarev, he must "introduce" a new name into the literature. Perhaps, a writer can be judged not only by the one who writes about him, but also by the person he writes about.

Dudarev, who used to pay tribute to classical literature, published the works of accomplished poets and writers (Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Mikhail Zadornov, Albert Likhanov, Vladimir Krupin, Leonid Bezhin, Andrei Shatskov, Natalya Yakushina, etc.), famous critics (Lev Anninsky, Alla Marchenko, Maria Mikhailova, Maxim Skorokhodov), as well as young aspiring,

sometimes completely unknown writers. The editor-in-chief's poetical mind once noted Taya Larina, who now feels confident in literature, she is a winner of the famous Triumph Youth Prize (2009), a writer of Russian small cities Igor Mikhailov, who worked for a long time in the magazine, a writer Ildar Abuzyarov, an employee of "October" magazine, a young poet Anatoly Arestov, who timidly sent a selection of poems six months before Valery Dudarev's death. The editor "introduced" all these people and many others to literature, helped them choose their writing fate.

Certainly, many critics and dissatisfied readers may say that in the period when Dudarev worked as an editor-in-chief, in the magazine there were no such famous popular writers as Zakhar Prilepin, Boris Akunin, Daria Dontsova and other authors, but Valery Dudarev never chased fashion. First of all, he helped novice writers whose books had not been published yet. He also paid great attention to writers from the former friendly republics of Russia. The development of national literature on pages of the magazine was one of the editor's main goals. This is exactly how Bair Dugarov's poetry, Rakhimzhan Otarbayev's prose, Flyur Galimov's novel appeared in "Yunost". Valery Dudarev did his job with encouragement and, one might say, burned himself out at work. It remains to wish strength and courage to the new editor-in-chief of the famous magazine, a young writer and successor Sergei Shargunov to cope with today's polyphony and not to lose his voice.