



**Exploring Social Identity in  
Soviet & Russian Film**

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# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

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Sample Activities

Conclusions





## PROJECT MOTIVATIONS

- How do we compensate for the lack of "community" in the foreign language classroom in the year of virtual learning brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What does it mean to belong? to forge a social identity, especially in a time of global crisis?
- How do we engage students with cultural material virtually?

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

- **Form:** Week-long cultural intervention in the intermediate Russian language classroom
- **Focus:** "Social identity" and "belonging" (принадлежность) in the Soviet context
- **Films:** *Cheburashka* (Episode II) (1971); *Stilyagi* (Hipsters) (2008)
- **Features:** bCourses project site populated with the two films; curated video clips; relevant scholarship; and asynchronous activities

# SCHEDULE OVERVIEW



**PART I: CHEBURASHKA**



**PART II: STILYAGI**



**CONNECTIONS & CONCLUSIONS**

# Brief interlude...



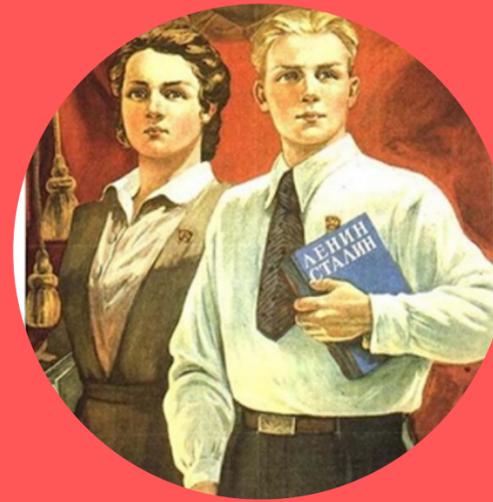
## Cheburashka & Gena

Beloved Soviet cartoon characters



## Young Pioneers

Soviet Youth League  
(ages 9-15)



## Komsomol

Soviet Youth League  
(ages 14-28)



## Stilyagi

Members of a Counter-culture  
Youth Movement

# CHEBURASHKA



"Oh, Pioneers! I wish I could march like that..."



"Let us join you!"  
"You? in our unit? Not possible!"



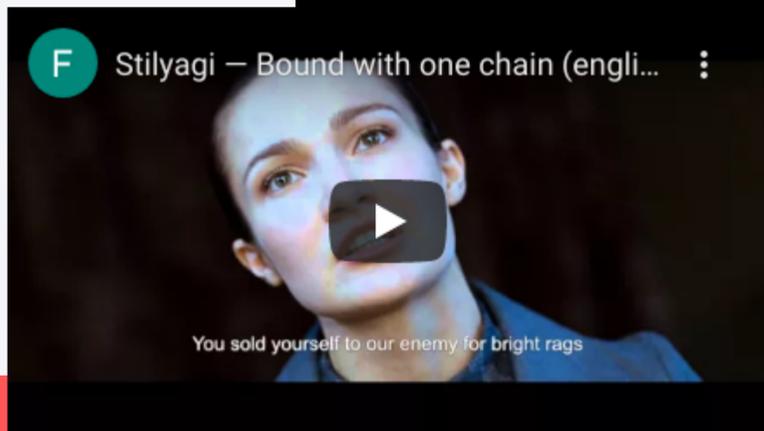
"Unit - get in order! Attention... march!"



# STILYAGI SAMPLE ACTIVITY I:



F Stilyagi – Bound with one chain (engli... ⋮



You sold yourself to our enemy for bright rags

A video player interface showing a thumbnail of a woman's face. The text "F Stilyagi – Bound with one chain (engli... ⋮" is at the top left, and "You sold yourself to our enemy for bright rags" is at the bottom left. A play button icon is centered over the thumbnail.

## SAMPLE RESPONSES (TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN)

**Student 1:** "The people in the clip are wearing the same clothing: the women have simple dresses and the men are wearing coats, shirts, and pants. All the clothes are dark. In the clip a Komsomol meeting [is taking place]. The meeting is about the Stilyaga named Mels. He is the only person with light-colored clothing in the room. The music of **the song is very severe and the people singing behave like one big animal, and this animal is bigger, much bigger, than Mels.**"

**Student 2:** "I think that the person named Mels was excluded from the Komsomol for dressing stylishly. These people are all Komsomol members and the unhappy young woman is their leader. She is very serious and she wanted Mels to stop dressing fashionably. [The Komsomol members] are wearing very drab, ugly clothing and everyone looks like everyone else. **The song in this scene was sharp and militaristic.** Mels couldn't have been feeling good about himself; **it's difficult to watch someone get shunned / shamed.**"

**Student 3:** "The young woman from the Komsomol is singing about communist unity. She scolds Mels because he dresses like Americans. It seems to her that Mels's clothing is **an insult to the memory of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin.**"



The cover artwork for the Nautilus Pompilius album "Separation" that includes the song, "Bound by One Chain"

# STILYAGI SAMPLE ACTIVITY II: LYRIC COMPARISON

## From the film version of « Bound by One Chain » (2008):

You dared to encroach on the holy of holies.  
Where are your ideals? You spat on them!  
You sold yourself to the enemy for bright rags,  
And you can easily part with conscience and honor.

But you won't win – our chain won't break  
Bound by one chain, bound by one aim.

...

You dare not dance to the music of the Fatties;  
Dare not wriggle and betray us!  
Such a person like you shouldn't be near us,

When we are stepping in order.  
The party is our mother, the Komsomol – our father!

...

We don't sing to someone else's tune.  
Our joyful bugle plays a wakeup call!  
Bound by one chain, connected by one aim...

## From the original version of «Bound by One Chain » (Nautilus Pompilius, 1986)

Mutual responsibility smears like soot  
I take someone's hand but feel an elbow  
I look for eyes, but I feel a look  
Where above one's head is another's behind  
Behind a red sunrise, a pink sunset.  
Bound by one chain, connected by one aim...

...

Here you can play the trumpet to yourself  
But no matter how you play, you only play a retreat  
And if there are those who come to you  
There will also be those who will come after you.

...

Here the standard of work is considered exhaustion

...

Here the first resemble the last.  
And are equally tired  
Tired, maybe, of being bound by one chain...

# LYRIC COMPARISON: CULTURAL REFERENCE FOCUS

**From the film version of « Bound by One Chain » (2008):**

You dared to encroach on the **holy of holies**.  
Where are your **ideals**? You spat on them!  
You sold yourself to the **enemy** for **bright rags**,  
And you can easily part with conscience and  
honor.

But you won't win – our chain won't break  
Bound by one chain, bound by one aim.

...

You dare not dance to the music of the **Fatties**;  
Dare not wriggle and betray us!  
Such a person like you shouldn't be near us,

When we are stepping in order.  
The **party is our mother, the Komsomol – our  
father!**

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We don't sing to someone else's tune.  
Our joyful bugle plays a wakeup call!  
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Here you can play the trumpet to yourself  
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And if there are those **who come to you**  
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# Lyric Comparison: Music Focus

## From the film version of « Bound by One Chain » (2008):

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# Lyric Comparison: Social Identity / Community Focus

From the film version of « Bound by One Chain » (2008):

You dared to encroach on the holy of holies.  
Where are **your** ideals? You spat on them!  
You sold yourself to **the enemy** for bright rags,  
And **you** can easily part with conscience and honor.

But **you** won't win – **our chain won't break**  
**Bound by one chain, bound by one aim.**

...

You dare not dance to the music of the Fatties;  
Dare not wriggle and **betray us!**  
**Such a person like you shouldn't be near us,**

**When we are stepping in order.**  
The party is **our mother**, the Komsomol – **our father!**

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And if there are **those who come to you**  
There will also be **those who will come after you.**

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**Tired, maybe, of being bound by one chain...**

Что такое  
«принадлежность»  
в советском контексте?



К анализу советского мультфильма  
«Чебурашка » (1971) и фильма Валерия  
Тодоровского «Стиляги» (2008)



# Materials Referenced in Presentation

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