The concept of informal public is used here to designate the diversity of state-independent activities and interactions in late Soviet society. Segments of this informal sphere—which is different from the official public sphere—had begun to develop at the end of the 1950s. Unlike previous periods of Soviet history, when communication had been officially controlled or had taken place in the private “kitchen” setting, the Brezhnev era of stagnation provided public places for communication that escaped total control.

The recent debates on the transformations in East Europe and Russia have made wide use of the concepts of public/private, civic culture, and civil society. These ideas have been major conceptual tools for sociological thinking on modernity in general. Since F. Toennis distinguished between gemeinschaft and gesellschaft and Durkheim claimed organic and mechanical solidarities, these concepts have shown how modernizing society differentiates into public and private realms, the boundaries of which are constantly shifting through the efforts of social actors. This means that each modern society, independent of its political regime and particular cultural patterns, develops its own public and private spheres with correspondingly different rules of the game.

Researchers have identified two versions of the public realm in late Soviet society: the official public and the informal public.
Official public life and its relevant practices were controlled by party-state ideological norms and regulated by the relevant rules of communication and social integration as established by the state. Informal public life was regulated by the diversity of rules that will be referred to by the term unwritten or common law (which will be discussed later in the paper).

The Official Public Realm and Kollektivist Practices

The official public realm was the sphere of Soviet life regulated by official rules and controlled by the party-state bureaucracy. At the level of everyday life these were the rules of conduct and interaction in the Soviet kollektives (collectives). As the concentration camp was the model for totalitarianism for H. Arendt, so for us is the Soviet kollektive a model—an ideal type—of the Soviet official public. Oleg Kharkhordin provides an incisive analysis of the Soviet kollektive in its discursive representation. In his book, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices*, Kharkhordin specifies the following rules of the game in the Soviet kollektives: mutual surveillance, collective correction, and self-revelation. These techniques were invented to produce the true kollektive as a unit of Soviet society and the relevant type of “Soviet individual.” Through the use of mutual surveillance and admonition, social control in the communist kollektive aimed at the development of the Soviet individual. Reports on comrades’ everyday life and discussions of personal lives at the assembly of comrades were core kollektivist activities and were considered important procedures in the construction of the Soviet individual. The individual in Soviet society was integrated into kollektives. It should be noted that the kollektive was the name given only to the specific type of social integration that intentionally followed ideologically approved goals.

The practically oriented theories of the Soviet kollektive were developed by Soviet pedagogical science beginning in the 1920s (one of the main proponents was A. Makarenko), as well as in Soviet psychology and social psychology throughout all of Soviet history (see, for example, Etkind, 1997). The official organizational principle of the Soviet kollektive was democratic centralism, which presumed the following rules of subordination: subordination of the minority to the majority, subordination of lower organizational bodies to higher bodies, election from bottom to top, accountability from top to bottom.

Along with the working unit, the family was another version of the kollektive, since it could be penetrated by party-state regulations. Illustrative of the kollektivist character of the Soviet family was the dependence of one’s career on family status (Tchouikina, forthcoming 2002) and the appeals of spouses (mainly women) to the enterprise party committees to restore and repair family relationships.

Both working life and family life were subjected to state-inspired observation and control. Thus we see work and family kollektives as institutions that constituted the official public sphere. The Soviet work kollektive was viewed as a patronizing system of social integration, with its educating, enlightening, and supporting roles emphasized. It could be called a quasi family. This kollektives’ charge was not only to produce goods for the Soviet economy, but to control the private lives of individuals and act as the instrument of state family policy. Family conflicts (especially during the period of high Stalinism) were discussed in the kollektive by its ideologi- cal bodies. Divorces should be avoided; sexuality should be exclusively marital and pronatal oriented; and spouses in conflict should apply to the working kollektive to “normalize” family life. The last was practiced basically by wives who thus controlled the private lives of their husbands by means of work kollektives and their party and *prosojus* (Soviet trade union) organizations. The Soviet state interfered with individual privacy through work and family kollektives.
Social life is never as simple as presented in the frame of abstract categories and the rigid divides between private and public. Totalitarian control over the individual was never achieved in Soviet society, and multiple examples of state-independent activities were evidences of this. "Places of individual freedom" are mainly within the context of late Soviet society (1960s-early 1980s). Researchers looking at the path-dependency of Russia's transformation in the 1990s have identified an informal public sphere in the late Soviet period in which individual initiatives, collective actions, and state-independent communication could take place. These initiatives were never totally controlled or suppressed by the party-state and escaped the rigid regulations of Soviet kollektives. They took place in social settings, especially in the so-called leisure sphere, although one cannot call them solely private.

Such activities could be seen as belonging to the private realm for two reasons. First, they were supposedly invisible to official public scrutiny—they were rarely mentioned in the Soviet media, which was strictly censored, and if they were discussed, it was as deviations from the true Soviet way of life: "residues of the pre-Soviet past" or "results of the spoiled influences of the corrupted West." Officialdom pretended not to see this other social life (or underlife), whose rules were different from those that were ideologically confirmed and recognized. This policy of turning a blind eye allowed the underlife to develop and flourish. Second, the "private" character of these activities was clear in that the groups engaged in them were friends and relatives.

These informal activities remained public, however, because they were observed, discussed, and recognized by Soviet oral culture: songs, verses, anecdotes, talks. They were public also because they took place not only in family circles but in public settings, such as cafes, salons, exhibitions, and concerts. We thus see the ambiguity in the classic divide of public and private that we find in political and social theory (see Weintrab, 1997).

The studies of daily Soviet life help to map and designate this informal public sphere. Researchers of late socialist society have invented different names to mark this shadow realm, such as the engendering milieu of Oleg Yanitskii, the prerequisites of civil society of Vladimir Shlapentokh, the spaces of freedom of Leonid Ionin, and the public-private sphere of Viktor Voronkov. The names given to the late Soviet informal public realm are umbrella terms that embrace diverse social practices found in the Soviet everyday, including the shadow or second economy, clientele groupings and networks, limited labor market, retail marketing, family gardens, certain legal organizations used for illegal purposes, dissident groups, the bard movement, ecological movements, intellectual movements, ethnic societies, samizdat, magnitizdat (self-made recordings and tape recordings), and the counterculture. We can add to this list of terms the concepts of "social subjects" or "subjects of innovation" used in Russian activity theory (Shchedrovitskii, 1987; Rotkirch, 1996) or other shadow fields of action (Roos and Rotkirch, 1999).

In the following we outline the theory of the informal public realm, which will allow us to see the arguments of the proponents of the concept. Russian sociologist Oleg Yanitskii evokes the idea of an informal public realm to explain the emergence of ecological movements in the Soviet Union in the late 1950s. He considers student associations for the defense of nature that were organized in high schools and universities at the start of Khrushchev's thaw to be social movements. At the same time he applies the concept of totalitarianism to the Soviet political regime after 1956. It becomes obvious that he uses the term "totalitarianism" with a meaning different from the one common in the Western discourse initiated by the works of Arendt (1973) and Brzezinski and Friedrich (1956), who depicted it as a system that provides total control over the private and public spheres. Yanitskii's totalitarianism failed—after the political openings at
the end of the 1950s—to provide total party-state control. According to Yanitskii, the system disrupted itself from within, creating niches for initiatives and uncontrolled activities. Such niches for action Yanitskii calls *engendering environments*. He describes such environment as a legitimate (and, in most cases) state organization that stimulates the emergence of organizations that become a vehicle for social movement activities, provides them with resources, including ideology, and promotes informal activities. This author defines engendering environments as both spatial public settings in universities, campuses, or editorial offices, and the space-referent social groupings that formed the mobilization potential for ecological initiatives. Students, researchers, intellectuals (Soviet intelligentsia) were the core groups of the ecological movement. Yanitskii named four types of engendering environment: (1) universities and major high schools; (2) research institutes and academic campuses; (3) Soviet professional organizations (for example, the Union of Writers, the Union of Composers); and (4) mass media (especially popular science) (Yanitskii, 1993).

From another perspective, Leonid Ionin tries to valorize the concept of freedom as relevant to the description of Soviet society and argues for its nonpolitical interpretation. He claims that the Soviet everyday provided numerous opportunities for individual self-realization: love, friendship, admiration, and single combat with nature (alpinism, tourism), literary, mythological, and fairy-tale world sentiments, scientific creative work, and alcoholic and narcotic trips (which were spheres of identification and self-realization more interesting to the Soviet person than to politics). These social practices formed the realm of freedom, where individuals could pursue their needs and interests. According to Ionin, political activity was an exceptional sphere of experience, but one that is not the most significant for a human being and for which opportunities were unavailable during late socialism. (Ionin, 1997: 35).

Describing late Soviet social life, Vladimir Shlapentokh has written about the so-called prerequisites for civil society: countercultural movements, dissident groups, the shadow economy, a limited labor market, family gardens, retail marketing. In examining the late Soviet private/public divide, he has formulated the privatization thesis. According to Shlapentokh, after the 1960s the gap between official ideology and private behavior widened and people became more oriented to their out-of-officialdom activities, to their private life and relevant interests (Shlapentokh, 1989).

Most recently, in discussing the sexual revolution in late Soviet Russia, the Finnish researcher Anna Rotkirch has referred to the phenomenon of the Soviet 1960s generation, which she compares with the rebellious baby boomers in the West. She sees the two as strikingly different. The Soviet sixties, she argues, were “the generation that was not on”: the study of daily life then shows that there were no common formative experiences that resulted in their collective identity (at least in the sphere of intimacy and sexuality). Class divisions and belonging to different social and cultural milieus were more important in self-identification than living together through the liberating experiences of Khrushchëv’s thaw. However differentiated, this generation was united by the common drive for personalization. Rotkirch prefers this term to the one used by Shlapentokh (privatization). “Personal values such as family life and leisure became increasingly important for Soviet citizens. The informal networks expanded in full bloom, and it seems that the frontiers between home and workplace became relevantly more permeable during this time” (Rotkirch, 2000). In the words of one of the autobiographers whose texts were analyzed by Anna Rotkirch, personalization developed the meaning of “living by passion,” of being faithful to one’s inner feelings and not to the official dogmas of Soviet “rationality.” Life was regulated not by the rules of Soviet kollek- tives, but by other rules (rules of passion in the sphere of intimacy, for example).
Designating the social practices of the informal realm and gaining visibility in late Soviet society, researchers also indicated that Soviet kollektives were undergoing essential change. Official activities were becoming personalized and kollektivist practices were, if followed, approached with hypocritical attitudes. After describing these approaches to the informal public, we will turn to the reconstruction of the structural opportunities that made these informal social practices possible.

The Emergence of the Informal Public

The boundaries between private and public changed during the course of Soviet history. From the beginning of the 1920s the private realm had been reduced to a minimum—as if it had been absorbed by the official public sphere. This absorption resulted from the kollektivist ideology, the practice of intrusive and abusive party-state control—the Soviet practices of everyday life. In the large industrializing cities housing policy led to the mass liquidation of apartments for individual families. This “density housing policy” resulted in living conditions in which tenants who previously had occupied individual apartments were forced to reduce their living space to one or two rooms. The remaining rooms were distributed among workers who were resettled from working barracks and basements and numerous migrant peasants. Living conditions in the kommunalkas (shared apartments) left almost no room for privacy. The climate of mutual suspicion and delations as well as mutual help and support among tenants led to intensive and pervasive social control exercised at the level of social interaction (see Gerasimova, forthcoming). Thus, the physical private space was reduced to a minimum, and the public/private division became conventional. A motto was coined: “A true Soviet citizen has nothing to conceal”; that is, no subjects are outside public discussion, including not only the ideological but also those concerning the body.

The informal public sphere began to develop with the end of Stalinism. The twentieth party congress and the official critique of the Stalinism (1956) saw new openings in the political regime that resulted in critical reflection on Soviet reality. It was the time of double messages: on the one hand, “real life” still could not be discussed in the official public sphere; on the other hand, the risks of reflexive criticisms were reduced with Khrushchev’s thaw. Such ambiguity brought into existence a new public realm. We call this realm of social life the informal public sphere. It was a societal space where almost any issue of interest could be discussed. Social practices within the informal public realm were made possible not only by political but by other major structural changes in Soviet society. Massive housing construction that started in the 1950s provided a physical space for the private sphere: separate flats, or flats containing only one household. These changes resulted in the physically perceived border between the official public and private realms. Yet the border between the private proper and informal public sphere was transparent: the private sphere in Soviet society was poorly developed. Examples of the links between the private and informal public are the famous “intelligentsia kitchens,” home as a “yard with a through passage,” certain salons and city cafes functioning as clubs. In these places people could take off their bodily and spiritual official uniforms and behave authentically in an atmosphere of mutual trust that was in opposition to official norms. Club culture began to revive in the 1960s: palaces and houses of sports and culture; unions of writers, composers, artists; diverse leisure institutions that became shelters for improvised collective initiatives. In these places activities that were supposed to be controlled by the state and performed in the format of Soviet kollektives actually had latent functions—they promoted formation of the social milieu, centered on the common interest that was not imposed but needed to be invested.

Thus we see the informal public sphere as the realm of social practices that initially emerged in private and official public settings.
but consolidated in the realm of independent activities based on social networks. In the late Soviet period the informal public emerged from the private sphere and from those segments of the official public that could be accommodated in informal activities.

Written and Unwritten Codes: The Master Norm of Unwritten Code

We need now to clarify our understanding of those rules (codes) that regulated communication and social integration in two different public realms in Soviet society. We distinguish between “written” and “habitual” codes as two clusters of rules that operated respectively in the official public and informal public realms. We are far from using proper legal terms here and introduce instead a sociological interpretation of the “codes.” Habitual code is considered here as nonlegal informal conventional regulations objectified in mundane social practices. It has the same meaning as common law, understood as law based on usage and custom; or unwritten law (as distinguished from statute law). In the period of late socialism, habitual informal codes evidently dominated in the regulation of everyday life. The social practices of the private sphere, the household economy as well as shadow entrepreneurship and countercultural activities, and even the mundane functioning of kollektives were mainly regulated by habitual codes that worked as unquestioned traditions or cultural patterns. Metastases of informal codes were forcing out written code. The dominance of the informal codes during the last socialist decades implied fundamental shifts in social life.

As for the written code, it consisted of the declarative official regulations that were at work on official occasions, such as party committees, collective assemblies, and public demonstrations on May 1 and November 7. Thus, by the end of the Soviet era, declarations of the written code worked basically in the forms of rituals and other symbolic objectifications that were performed at specific official public occasions (meetings, celebrations, anniver-
saries). The written code was also put to work when sanctions had to be imposed on those who rejected the master frame of double morality.²

Russian researcher Oleg Vite (1996) notes that both codes gained legitimacy in Russian society, even though they were inconsistent. Legitimization of the “habitual code” was based on its instrumental efficiency in the regulation of the everyday coping strategies of Soviet citizens. If Soviet individuals challenged the habitual code of double morality, it put them on the margins of the system. If they decided to follow officially proclaimed rules, and became violators of the major everyday code, the system persecuted them rigidly. This was especially the case for Soviet human rights activists. They took officially declared democratic freedoms as their life principles, and when they found out that the civil rights were not actually guaranteed—for example, that one could not publish abroad without official permission—they started to protest against it. These protests were repressed and officially condemned. The protesters were considered criminals and mentally disordered people. Soviet dissent could not mobilize mass support for the demands of democratization because habitual law provided opportunities for the flexible manipulation of the diverse resources available to Soviet people.³

The official public realm was constructed in such a way that social practices, relevant in the realm of the informal public, were excluded there. As Oleg Vite puts it, “the practical priority of the habitual code was compensated by making taboo the discussion of its practice” (Vite, 1996). The immense growth of diverse, informally regulated practices was admitted into the official public realm as the “the relics of capitalism” or “the influences of the West” that had be fought against. The official public presentation of Soviet life was to show a utopia, which was completely inconsistent with everyday experiences: outstanding construction sites, heroic labor, cultural achievements, high moral standards, humanistic slogans, kollektivist orientations. The social reality of
everyday practices was in contrast to what had been officially admitted or discussed: economic deficits, low standards of living, long waiting lines, ideological cynicism, egotism—all of which could be observed everywhere. Written code regulated kollektivist practices; habitual codes regulated the totality of everyday life. However, these habitual codes were misrecognized and silenced in the official public realm—that is, for different kollektivist practices. On the contrary, beyond the official public realm habitual codes regulated social practices and coping strategies of the Soviet people belonging to different milieus.

The diversity of habitual codes corresponded to the common law regulations in different social milieus of Soviet society: social class, ethnicity, gender, generation, religion; these are the categories that can account for the particular rules of the informal public. Despite the variability of habitual codes, there was essential commonality in their construction. We would like to call this commonality the master norm that sheltered and unified the diversity of everyday morality of different social milieus. The master norm of the Soviet everyday was that of the legitimate double standard, or legitimate hypocrisy. The only way to efficiently follow this habitual code was to misrecognize it or not articulate it on official public occasions. The essence of Soviet hypocrisy is the shared tacit knowledge and practice of double standards that each individual followed: he/she performed according to one set of rules in official kollektivist gatherings; he/she followed another set of rules in informal public and private settings. In the late Soviet period alienation from the formal code became deeper; loyalty to the rules of official kollektives was questioned. Without consistent state terror the government could not force people to identify themselves with the official public. Escapist strategies became increasingly popular, which meant that the state-official public was deteriorating.

We assume that the informal public sphere is associated not only with social practices of identifiable social groupings (which could possibly act in opposition to the authorities). We assume that every Soviet individual (including those belonging to various social strata of the Soviet nomenklatura) lived and acted in both official and informal public realms, respecting the invisible but efficient boundary between them and not confusing different rules regulating behavior in official public and informal public realms. Such double standards became the essence of social schizophrenia, which is attributed to the socio-anthropological type of the “common Soviet man” (Levada, 1993). Another word that helps to grasp this late-Soviet everyday morality is hypocrisy (double standards). The divide of the official and informal public penetrated the life of every individual, every institution, every kollektive and showed itself practically in a modus operandi that was different in kollektives and in the loose communities of cohabitants constituting a social milieu.

The Differentiated Informal Public Realm and Relevant Social Milieus

Although we have identified the master norm of the double standard, we cannot draw any conclusions about the essence of the actual habitual codes that regulated informal public and private life in different social milieus. To identify unwritten codes one has to turn to the in-depth study of late Soviet everyday life by Rotkirch (2000). The province of everyday life is the domain where tacit practical knowledge and prereflective levels of articulation are rooted (Giddens, 1984: 336-337). Tacit knowledge is not articulated if the experience of living does not problematize it: individuals follow daily, as if automatically, the routine, not paying attention to what they actually do, or how and why. By everyday life we mean routine social practices that differ along social networks or social milieus. Although researchers currently more and more turn their attention to the Soviet everyday (Lelina, Ionin, Fitzpatrick, Ledeneva) and the “pragmatic turn” in social sciences is growing in popularity, the empirical evidence of late Soviet everyday life has not yet been collected and lacks conceptualization.
There is still an insufficient conceptualization of everyday morality as a form of implicit knowledge (Rokirch, 2000: 10) as well as of the concrete social practices of everyday coping. We assume that in different fields of the informal public realm different modes of habitual rules operated; these must be empirically studied and identified. An ethnological approach to late Soviet life is a fruitful methodology that can overcome this gap.

The research task can be reformulated as follows: to discover the rules of the game as they operate in concrete social milieus. As researchers of Soviet everyday life we cannot agree with Oleg Kharkhordin, who claims that the rules of the game in the informal kollektive were similar to those in the formal ones. While his analysis of the social practices of work and family kollektive is convincing and enlightening, we find that his conclusion on the general rule of revelation (oblishenie) as a social integration practice that was implied in the informal kollektive as well as in official kollektive requires greater scrutiny. The examples Kharkhordin provides to prove the similarity between official and informal kollektive of the Soviet period are the practices of delovushchina (bullying and hazing) as the informal code of the Soviet army and social practices of prison criminal communities (Kharkhordin, 1999). However, these cases are unique: they were performed in the totalitarian institutions of the (Soviet) army and (Soviet) prison and have bared the features of those institutions that result in their reproduction of the codes of revelation. We claim that the social practices of integration vary in official kollektive and in informal solidarity groups, although no one could question that the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion are at work in both. Types of milieu and the interests invested in the practices that consolidate social milieu and makes it distinct vary; habitual codes vary respectively. Similarity of all informal codes is provided by the master norm of hypocrisy. The research task then is to ground this statement on empirical evidence.

Focusing intensive anthropological and sociological attention to various segments of informal public, we can identify an unwritten code or set of rules that has been relevant for a particular milieu or community. These rules form the cultural frame and tradition of the milieu. Some of these rules have been based on the bonds of friendship (whatever the definition of this relationship); others have been the rules of loose communication of independent individuals with similar tastes and interests. Still others are clientelist regulations, or kinship networking. However all of them are the rules of networking and exchange contacts; all the varieties of the network logics framed the types of social integrations and the moral economy of the informal public realm.

The diversity and formality of different informal codes are grasped in a Russian slang term that designates different segments of the informal public. We would like to introduce this slang term to the sociological community and grant it legitimacy as a sociological term. One has to admit that this word from the countercultural or even criminal vocabulary pushed its way into the media and professional social science field. This word is tusovka. Let us take a closer look.

**Designating the Informal Public Realm: Tusovka**

*Tusovka* is among the untranslatable: it belongs to the names that form the core of cultural and societal specificity (Boyum, 1994). Sustained untranslatables are legitimate symbols of a society globally. They are important for the understanding of a culture. In the same way the nouns *sputnik, glasnost, perestroika, babushka,* and *dacha* became part of international vocabulary, the term *tusovka* should. It is used to signify particular social interaction patterns relevant to late Soviet countercultural settings. The etymology of tusovka is still unclear. It became widely used after the second half of 1970s even though it had originated in the 1960s. Tusovka was the self-naming of countercultural milieu as well as of the places they occupied in the cities. The loose solidarity of tusovka people was based on the opportunity for face-to-
face communication between the actors at informal gatherings. These actors were unified by shared and common social practices, attitudes, and style of individual conduct and interaction. The configuration of these social practices originally contained: officially unrecognized creative work, a shadow economy for living, and a cultural and political protest orientation combined with various patterns of self-destructive behavior. A certain social contract allowed for the existence of tusovka—the place and the grouping of the counter-Soviet euphoria in the midst of the Soviet city. We would like to give to the slang term tusovka the status of a sociological (anthropological) category embracing segments of the informal public of Soviet late modernity—a specific type of communication and interaction characterized by the coherence of body, place, activities, and style. Individuals were united into tusovkas even if their shared practices were ephemeral and rules of commitment to such an ephemeral solidarity were implicit and hardly articulate. This type of communication differentiated such groupings from kollektives, which had articulated and declarative common courses with relevant overt manifestations. On the contrary, tusovka people opposed Soviet values and the institutional life course of Soviet citizens and rejected the formal codes intended to act as major regulators of their lives. Mutual support and help were provided within the network. “Broken biographies” were typical for tusovka people, since they were only marginally integrated into Soviet institutions. Many interrupted their education; they did not pursue careers, often remained jobless or had short-term work contracts, and became members of the peripheral segment of the Soviet labor force. In general they generally did not share the experiences of Soviet kollektives, including “normal” Soviet family life. Diverse countercultural milieus were integrated in tusovkas, such as that of rock musicians, Café Saigon frequenters, and the hippy system. Since the late Soviet period the term has grown to have a broader meaning. Now it designates not only countercultural milieus and their spatial referents, but all particularistic informal communication realms—

from dissident and ethnic communities to the salons and different versions of gentlemen clubs.

Soviet Dissent: The Challenge to the Master Norm

As the master code that allowed the everyday coping of Soviet individuals, the hypocrisy of double standards was challenged by a radical minority. The milieu of Soviet dissent deliberately claimed the need to follow the written code, to avoid shadow practices, and to “live by truth.” These endeavors were prosecuted by Soviet authorities as a major threat to public order. Dissenters were persecuted, criminalized, and held to be mentally unstable. Their claims were not known by the population and, even if they had been known, were not likely to receive support in the late Soviet period. Honesty and straightforwardness—the declared values of human rights activists—demanded too much courage from individuals, who knew that the only efficient life strategy was the one based on a morality of double standards. Oleg Kharkhordin claims that “while it existed on the outskirts of the official society, the dissidents’ milieu apparently shared the mechanisms of broader Soviet society. Mutual admonition supported ideals [that were an] alternative to the official ones but still dogmatic; the dissidents seemed to play the same game but with ideals of a directly opposite kind; here too we find the kollektive, albeit a secret one” (Kharkhordin, 1999: 315).

A contrary opinion is given by Ljudmila Alekseeva, a participant in and analyst of Soviet dissent and the author of the History of Dissent in the USSR (1992). She consciously counterposes dissident communities to the Soviet kollektives. Her research shows that dissident groups started in the company of friends and were later transformed into a network of protesters. She claims that “there are no formal bonds between human rights activists—neither in the core of the movement, nor between the core and periphery. There are no leaders, no subordinates, nobody can give the
orders, and one can only do what he thinks he should do if he does not have voluntary help from others. There are no duties, only the duties of one’s own consciousness (sovet). But it was because of the voluntary involvements in this brotherhood order that people acted as true activists, without any demands and sanctions” (Alekseeva, 1992: 208). The samizdat network was the network of camaraderie, which often was also the network of friends and kin (but not exclusively). The social practices of this community were exclusive, since it was the protest movement, persecuted by the regime. However, Soviet kollektivist discursive practices of revelation and dissimulation could not be followed there for reasons such as the fragility of the milieu, loose and undisciplined bonds between individuals, and rejection of double standards.

**Conclusion**

Soviet work and family kollektives were the substance of official public life in Soviet Russia. The rules of conduct were organized by the so-called written code of democratic centralism. Individual interests were submitted to the kollektive. Kollektives were regulated by the party-state. Beginning in the late 1950s, gradually from both private and privatized official settings and differentiating from them, the informal public sphere emerged—the sphere of social practices, regulated by the unwritten codes of everyday moral economy. The name given to this informal public realm in Russian discourse was tusovka. The codes of different tusovkas had an essential common ground. This commonality is the master norm of late Soviet life: recognition in word and in practice of the principle of the double standard as the major regulative norm of conduct in official and informal settings.

In the political underground the practices of camaraderie developed—in cultural settings (network groups of information and supportive exchanges), in the shadow economy (bribe and blat practices). The unwritten laws of different tusovkas presumed that some of them were traditional—for example, when people looked to traditional identities as a way to assert and improve their life chances. In other cases the unwritten codes were quite modern or even neotraditional, such as when individuals shared a common alternative lifestyle. However, the practices in tusovkas differed from those in the Soviet kollektives; some were even anti-kollektivist, although each case should be studied separately.

**Notes**

1For similar arguments see Ledeneva (1998); Lonkila (1999).

2These were the cases of dissidents’ persecution, especially in 1964, 1968, and 1982; see Alekseeva (1992). The claim of political dissent in the Soviet Union was to follow the written code: “to live, according the truth.”

3Master norm is the wording inspired by the term “master frame,” used by Snow and Benford (1992) to describe the dominant interpretation of the social and political situation and strategies of social change that is shared by Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) and the population. Master frame is the loose ideology of social movement that becomes efficient in its mobilization efforts. Here we use the term master norm to designate the common, generally accepted, but usually unrecognized rule of everyday behavior.

4Thomas Cushman and Hilary Pilkington have already introduced this term to the Western reader. Cushman describes it as follows: “Common-sense interpretations trace it to the word tusovka from the verb ‘tasovat’ meaning ‘to shuffle’ as in ‘to shuffle cards.’ The slang usage of tusovat’ia as ‘to gather,’ ‘to get together’ (1995: 226). Pilkington applies this term to the youth culture of the 1970s and 1980s to such groups as stylyagi, goznihi, panks (1994).

5Café Saigon was one of the locations for informal activities in Leningrad. The café was well known in the city and throughout Russia— even international guidebooks advertised the café as the place of the Soviet counterculture. It was a refuge of alternatives for more than 20 Soviet years (from 1964 to the fall of 1991) and has become symbolic of cultural dissent during the late Soviet period. Today we see continuous attempts to commemorate Café Saigon in Russian media, arts, poetry, folklore, and literature. See Zdravomyslova (2002, forthcoming).
References


