



Children of Victory: Young Specialists and the Evolution of Soviet Society

David Ruffley

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Born after 1940 and finishing higher education between 1965 and 1982, a generation of Russia's best, brightest, and most privileged came of age in the Brezhnev era. Using recently declassified archival material to uncover both personal and professional beliefs, this study explores the formative experiences of this group, who now hold key positions in all parts of the government and society. Comparison of these official documents with letters, petitions, and complaints published in the Soviet press provides new insight into the dynamic interaction between the Brezhnev regime and Soviet times.

Confined by the Brezhnev regime's parameters and stability, young Soviet specialists developed an ethos that focused personally upon humanism and individualism, and professionally upon dignity and autonomy. Censored and manipulated, they came to hold a complex system of beliefs, frustrations, and expectations that stood in stark contrast to many of the ideals of the Soviet Union. Ruffley analyzes the ethos of this generation via the prism of domination-resistance studies to offer unique insight into a generation largely ignored by conventional historical inquiry.

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